

SHAPING CITIES FOR YOUTH

Key Findings and Recommendations: Volume 1

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FEBRUARY 2020

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This project was part of the Healthy Future Mobility Research Programme, funded by the Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Highlights

Transformational decisions are being made about the future of our cities, in response to issues such as climate change, new technologies, and land use. The government has also signalled a much-needed transition away from car-dependence in cities towards public and active transport. Up until now, decisions about city planning and transport have tended to build in privilege and injustice, and in the end contribute to unequal wellbeing outcomes by income and ethnicity. It is critical that future decisions undo these injustices in a proactive way. This is particularly important for the young people who already experience disadvantage and health disparities.

Shaping Cities for Youth is a qualitative study that explored how place and transport impact on the wellbeing of marginalised rangatahi/youth in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland and Ōtautahi/Christchurch. We listened to young people who had experienced a time when they couldn't access education, employment, or training (NEET: Not in Education, Employment, or Training) as they talked about their current and future access needs. We also engaged with adult 'influencers' including parents, educators, employers, and youth agencies.

Our findings show how transport policy and urban planning cohere with other forms of disadvantage to undermine rangatahi/youth's access to opportunities and their holistic health. Links between the urban form, transport, and youth mental health were particularly evident, where access barriers could exacerbate and be exacerbated by mental health problems. Many young people were also experiencing racism and discrimination while trying to access work and education and when moving about their city.

Young people in this study did not separate place and movement from one another. For example, sense of place was influenced by their social experiences, the physical conditions of their surroundings, and the transport modes they used. Results suggest that urban and transport environments that foster a sense of place, control and autonomy, safety, cultural identity, and relationship-building (in communities and in the wider city) are central to improving accessibility for marginalised youth, alongside traditional factors such as cost and convenience.

"Just makes me wonder like, what am I supposed to do? It's like you know you can't really, you can't get any loans or anything without being able to pay it back, but you can't get a job without a car. So it's like, yeah, it's just a cycle that doesn't really work..."

(Youth, male, Aranui)



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Highlights

Access to work, education, social, and cultural opportunities is not spread evenly across our cities, and for many young people successful access appears contingent upon having a car, a licence, or a huge amount of support from parents/whānau, employers, education providers or other organisations. Young people themselves are aware of these injustices and the impact on their choices, which reinforce a sense of exclusion.

Adults and organisations are supporting youth to access work and education through a range of practices. However, these adult influencers are also an important piece of the scaffolding holding in place the status quo of car-dependence, while reinforcing public and active transport as temporary or non-viable.

While cars and licensure may have some immediate social and economic benefits for marginalised youth, moving forward this places them at increased risk of exposure to the negative outcomes of driving (such as road traffic injury), while other (more privileged groups) are increasingly enabled to transition to safer, healthier, and more sustainable modes.

Moreover, the current situation is contributing to tacit acceptance of trade-offs for road safety, to youth entry into the justice system, and to a focus on individual solutions to overcome access barriers rather than deeper changes to the structures holding back change.

There are opportunities to support an equitable transition to sustainable and healthy transport systems in cities. We have developed recommendations for shaping our cities to meet the needs of rangatahi/youth experiencing access barriers, whilst optimising their wellbeing now, and in the context of future change.

“...some places some people live they’ve got no public transport options... it has more social consequences than it does anything else. Coz they end up in court, and then they’ve got fines, and they don’t pay the fines coz they’ve got no money. And then they keep driving coz they still need to drive, and then they get arrested and, you know...So that’s going to have a flow on effect...”

(Employer, male, Auckland)

IMPLICATIONS

Below is a visual summary of the study implications and recommendations. More specific recommendations follow on page 5 and 6.

FEASIBILITY & USEFULNESS OF PUBLIC & ACTIVE TRANSPORT

- ❖ Deep changes for safe, **affordable**, attractive and feasible public transport, with a focus on youth equity
- ❖ **Extend** the response from driver licensing (and individual responsibility) to a broader transport system focus, in order to avoid deepening inequities
- ❖ Find ways to ensure the **cycling renaissance** and e-mobility contribute to wellbeing for Māori and Pacific youth

CULTURAL IDENTITY, MOVEMENT, & PLACE

- ❖ Culturally relevant transport and urban planning **for rangatahi Māori**
- ❖ Address **racism** in transport provision and operation (e.g. institutional racism)
- ❖ **Collaborative**, neighbourhood-level projects
- ❖ A planning framework that privileges Māori voices is central to achieving the three points above

SOCIAL ENVIRONMENTS & PARTNERSHIPS

- ❖ **Organisational** leadership and partnerships to create social environments that support the use of public and active transport (e.g. through incentives, role-modelling, and encouragement)
- ❖ **Large employers** can **advocate** for structural change

METHODS TO PRIVILEGE THE VOICES OF YOUNG PEOPLE WHO NEED BETTER ACCESS

RE-EXAMINE THE PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDE URBAN AND TRANSPORT PLANNING

A SYSTEMIC & STRUCTURAL RESPONSE
WITH IMMEDIATE, MEDIUM, AND LONG-TERM ACTIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

Eleven recommendations are below. These progress from immediate actions to more long-term, structural solutions. The key audience for each recommendation is outlined on the right-hand side.

Recommendation is aimed at...



- 1 Develop an ongoing engagement process to privilege the voices of young people in city and transport planning, particularly rangatahi Māori, Pacific, and marginalised youth. It is recommended that such processes are tested through upcoming projects, such as Safe and Healthy Streets South Auckland. An important first step is identifying and/or training people to be able to facilitate these youth engagement processes.

*Local government;
Youth organisations*
- 2 Conduct research into the experience of NEET young people in cities overseas, with high active and public transport mode shares, to compare rates, examine underlying reasons, and identify solutions.

*Ministries of Transport, Social Development, & Education;
Researchers/Academics*
- 3 Extend the response to transport barriers for youth, from predominantly driver licensing, to a focus on making public and active transport more feasible and attractive for this priority group.

*Ministry of Transport/NZTA;
Local government*
- 4 Design and test a broader 'transport education' package for young people that includes but goes beyond driver licensing, incorporating training and support for the full range of transport options.

*Ministry of Transport/NZTA;
Ministry of Education;
Local government*
- 5 As soon as possible, remove public transport costs (e.g. through a green transport card) for young people up to the age of 24 and ensure processes are user-friendly and positive.

*Ministry of Transport/NZTA;
Local government*

RECOMMENDATIONS *Cont'd*

Recommendation is aimed at...



6

Investigate ways to introduce cycling and e-mobility as transport options to youth experiencing access barriers. This should include social, financial, and environmental solutions, and testing innovative solutions in local contexts.

*NZTA; Local government;
Employers; Youth Organisations;
Iwi*

7

Support organisations (e.g. employers and youth organisations) to incentivise the use of public and active transport in order to signal these modes as a positive and desired behaviour. Employers and other large organisations can also advocate for more structural long-term solutions, which can dually benefit their organisation and young people.

*Local government;
Employers;
Youth Organisations*

8

Re-examine transport service provision between low-income suburban communities (with high proportions of NEET youth) and employment hubs, including the provision for shift work. There are likely to be short-term and innovative solutions that can improve access, such as the subsidised rideshare schemes.

*NZTA;
Local government*

9

Enhance opportunities for collaborative, neighbourhood-level urban projects that reflect cultural identity, and improve access, sense of place, and safety for young people and their whānau. Māori urban design principles can underpin these projects.

*Ministry of Transport/NZTA;
Local government;
Mana Whenua*

10

Examine strategies to bring opportunities (employment, education, social, cultural) closer to youth and whānau. Mixed land-use policies and prevention of urban sprawl are long-term strategies; however, incentivising local development and local recruitment are also possibilities in the short-term.

*Ministry of Transport/NZTA;
Ministry of Education;
Local government*

11

Re-examine the underpinning principles that guide urban and transport planning so that the holistic needs of marginalised youth and their whānau are at the centre. Te Tiriti o Waitangi outcomes should be central to this re-examination process.

*Ministry of Urban Development
& Ministry of Transport NZTA*

Acknowledgements

Ngā mihi nui to the peer interviewers, participants, and organisations who supported this research.

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CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

Page 9

2 METHODOLOGY

Page 14

3 RANGATAHI/YOUTH VOICES

Page 18

4 ADULT PERSPECTIVES

Page 28

5 IMPLICATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Page 36

6 LESSONS & OPPORTUNITIES

Page 45

7 REFERENCES

Page 49

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose & Context

Shaping Cities for Youth is a qualitative study that explored how place and transport impact on the wellbeing of marginalised rangatahi/youth in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland and Ōtautahi/Christchurch.

The ways in which urban planning and transport serve to further marginalise already marginalised groups, while reinforcing privilege, is a critical issue for policymakers. Transformational decisions are being made about the future of our cities, in response to issues such as climate change, new technologies, and land use. The government has also signalled a much-needed transition away from car-dependence in cities towards public and active transport. These decisions may perpetuate and worsen structural inequities for youth, unless the voices of these groups are included in decision-making.

This study is underpinned by the three intersecting goals of human wellbeing, social justice, and environmental wellbeing (Figure 1), which are also central to the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations, 2019). Future wellbeing in cities for all, is dependent on these three outcomes being jointly achieved, through a focus on the underlying structures, conditions, and environments that produce these outcomes.



Figure 1: Intersecting goals

1.2 Research Aims

We listened to the voices of young people who had experienced a time when they couldn't access education, employment or training. In parallel, we engaged with adult 'influencers', including parents, educators, employers and youth agencies. The three research aims are below.



1

Understand access and belonging in the city through the eyes of rangatahi/youth who have experienced a time not in education, employment or training, and the links to their wellbeing.



2

Understand the perspective of adults in positions of influence over these young people, how they support them to access opportunities, and their role in shaping youth preferences and behaviours.



3

Use the findings to develop policy recommendations, which can jointly foster youth health, social equity, and environmental wellbeing.

This study forms the basis of a PhD thesis (R Hodgson) and other academic papers are in progress. The purpose of this document is to summarise our findings and recommendations for stakeholders and policymakers in Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ).

1.3 Why this study and why now?

Young people are an important priority group when making decisions about the future of cities and transport systems.

Preferences and habits can develop and become entrenched when people are young (Delclòs-Alió and Miralles-Guasch, 2019)

Young people will inherit the state of the environment and the urban form designed now, will affect their health and quality of life in the future.

Young people are more vulnerable to the inequitable structures guiding the design of our cities and transport.

There are health and social inequities between different groups of young people in NZ. These inequities link with urban planning and transport in different ways.

In NZ, 6.3% of 15-19 year olds, and 13.3% of 20-24 year olds are estimated to be NEET (OECD, 2017). NZ's history of colonisation and structural privilege is reflected in inequities in NEET rates, where NZ European and Asian youth have a much lower likelihood of spending time NEET than Māori and Pacific youth (Stats NZ, 2019; Tuatagaloa and Wilson, 2018).

Māori and Pacific youth experience other health and social disparities arising from structural discrimination (Marriott and Sim, 2014; Reid and Robson, 2006). They are more likely to live in a low-income household (Marriott and Sim, 2014), have higher rates of obesity and diabetes (Ministry of Health, 2018, 2017), and lower rates of educational attainment (Marriott and Sim, 2014).

Māori of all ages experience higher rates of road traffic injuries (Hosking et al., 2013), prison incarceration (Department of Corrections, 2019), and racism (Ministry of Health, 2015).

Young people living in the most deprived areas (regardless of ethnicity) have higher rates of obesity and road traffic injuries (Hosking et al., 2013; Ministry of Health, 2018).

Unlicensed driving and driving in breach of licence conditions is prevalent in some communities, with implications for safety, financial, and criminal issues (NZ Institute of Economic Research, 2016; Waldron and Field, 2013)

Goals to reduce these inequities and foster youth wellbeing are captured in a range of policy documents.

Examples of these documents include those for local government planning (Auckland Council, 2018), and tertiary education, employment, and health strategies (Ministry of Education, 2014; NZ Government, 2019; Ministry of Health, 2019).

Reducing the proportion of youth who are NEET is also a specific target in the UN's sustainable development goals (Goal 8.6) (United Nations, 2018), which NZ has committed to achieving.

Previous NZ and international research has explored transport disadvantage and social exclusion in youth; however, there are knowledge gaps.

Poor urban planning and transport systems can negatively affect access to opportunities (employment, educational, cultural, social) and contribute to social exclusion and health inequities (Church et al., 2000; Delbosc and Currie, 2011; Lucas, 2016).

NZ youth-focused research has explored transport disadvantage in the Southern Initiative area of Auckland (Fergusson et al., 2016), challenges with driver licensing (Auckland Co-Design Lab, 2016a; NZ Institute of Economic Research, 2016; Waldron and Field, 2013), and relationships between youth and employers (Auckland Co-Design Lab, 2016b).

This current study addresses knowledge gaps by using multiple methods to draw out the experiences of marginalised youth and focusing on holistic wellbeing.

There are signals that big changes are coming for our cities, which means we need to be future-focused.

Overall, driver licensing rates are decreasing among NZ youth (Ministry of Transport, 2015) and they are using public transport more (Rive et al., 2015). However, little is known about geographic, socio-economic, or ethnic differences.

Increased investment in cycling as a transport mode, initiated by the Urban Cycleway Programme in 2015, has resulted in localised increases in cycling (Auckland Transport, 2018; Christchurch City Council, 2018).

The Government's 2018 Policy Statement on Transport sets the intention to invest more in public transport and active transport (NZ Government, 2018) and local governments are declaring climate emergencies.

There are signals that 'driving' will become harder and more expensive (for example the regional fuel tax introduced in Auckland and taxes on high emission vehicles) (NZ Transport Agency, 2019).

Technological advances also mean potential changes in the nature, location, and availability of work.

In the context of these changes, we have explored the needs of marginalised youth to identify ways to ensure their wellbeing is enhanced, rather than further impaired.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 The Process

Stakeholder engagement was an important part of the study methodology. Stakeholder workshops were conducted in 2016, to shape the research questions and data collection methods, and interim results were presented at workshops in 2019 (Figure 2). These workshops brought together policymakers, youth organisations, Mana Whenua, Māori organisations, and young people.

The study focused on four communities: Papakura and Ranui/Massey West in Auckland; and Hornby and Aranui in Christchurch. These communities were selected because they had high proportions of young people identifying as NEET in the most recent census, high numbers of rangatahi Māori, and a range of access levels to public transport. Stakeholder input also contributed to the community selection process.

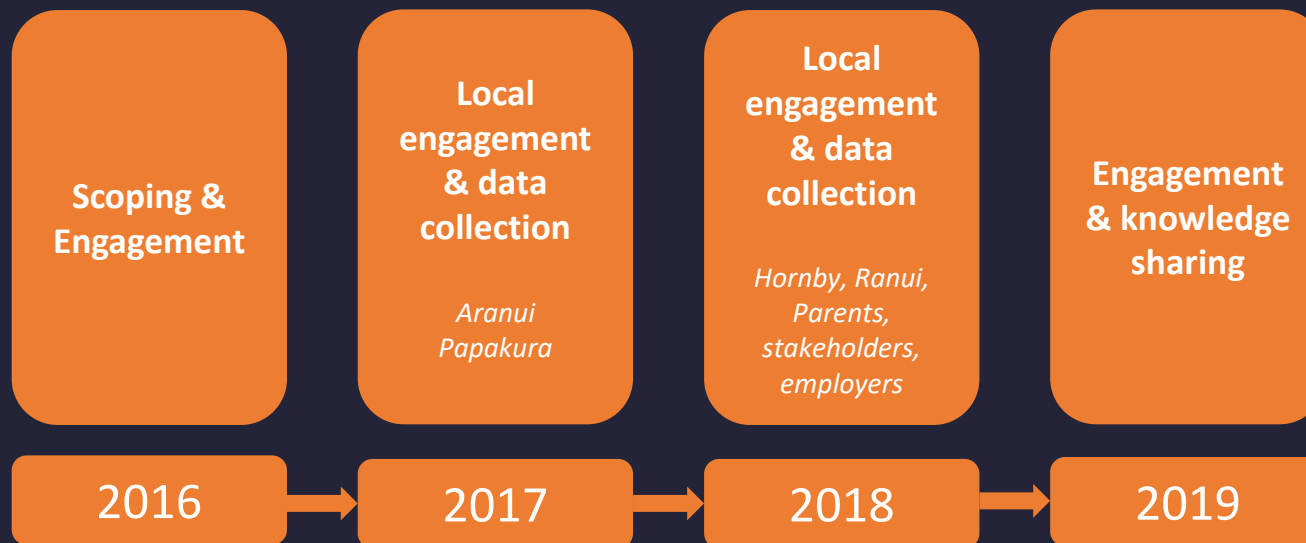


Figure 2: Study timeline

2.2 Rangatahi/youth voices

We sought to privilege the voices of rangatahi/youth – how they experience and perceive place and mobility and how this affects access to employment, education/training, and their wellbeing. Young people were also asked to reflect on what they would like to see happen in the future. The purpose was to identify how the transport system and urban form can be shaped to improve access for marginalised youth and optimise their wellbeing. A commitment to methods that uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi were central to this research, and participatory methods were used to address issues of power and justice, and to gain insights that would be inaccessible using traditional research methods.

2.2.1 Peer Interviewing

This method explored young people's experiences of moving around their city, the barriers, enablers, and interactions between place, movement, and wellbeing. Peer Interviewing is designed to ensure an equal power dynamic between the participant and the interviewer, so they are comfortable to share their experiences.

Peer Interviewers (aged 15-24 and living in one of the four study communities) conducted semi-structured interviews with rangatahi/youth who:

- were between 15 and 24 years;
- lived in one of the four communities (Figure 3);
- and had experienced difficulty accessing employment, education, or training.

85% of youth participants identified as rangatahi Māori, Pacific, or both, and 15% as NZ European.

More about the Peer Interviewing process, including lessons and opportunities, is outlined in Section 6 (p 45).

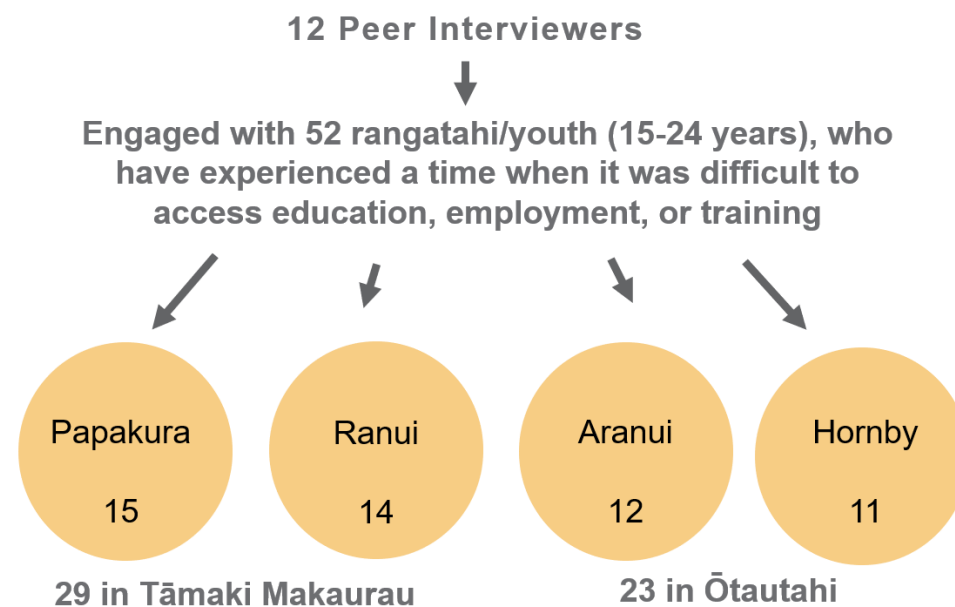


Figure 3: Peer interview sample

2.2.2 Interactive Visual Mapping

During the interview young people mapped their destinations and experiences, using stickers that indicate emotions toward places and journeys.

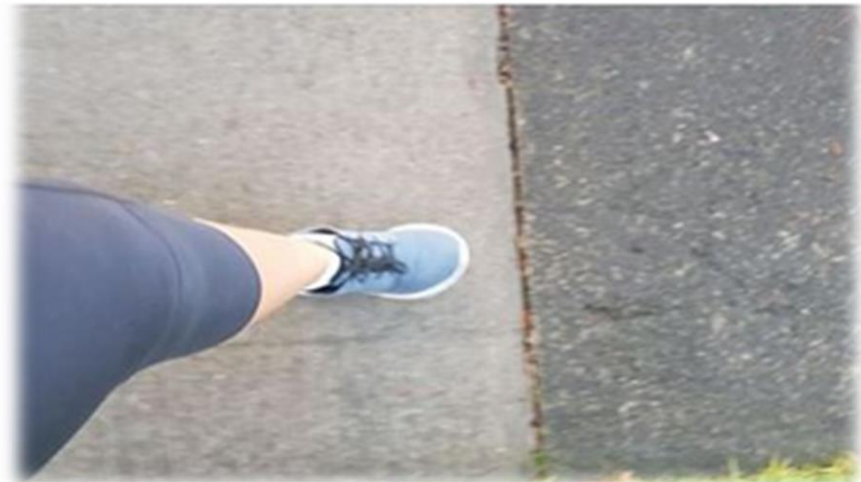


2.2.3 Photo Voice

Youth participants were provided with phones and anonymised Facebook accounts. They were encouraged to take photos and comment on their experiences as they moved about their community and city for 2-3 weeks.

21 Fone RtOne
30 May 2018

Today's weather got abit better and warmer. so I went for a walk/exercise around my neighborhood. One of the good things about ranui is that they have plenty of parks to explore for your family and kids to hang out. Best for the summer time.
#Phone21



Here we report on insights from the Peer Interviewing. Findings from the interactive mapping and photo voice will follow in Volume 2.

2.3 Adult component

Twenty-one semi-structured interviews were conducted with adults, predominantly in Auckland and Christchurch, in positions of influence over youth who experience access difficulties (Figure 4).

Interviews focussed on:

- adult perceptions of youth access barriers and enablers;
- their preferences, expectations, and practices around youth accessibility, and
- future solutions.

The purpose was to understand normative and contextual influences on youth transport preferences and in/ability to access opportunities, and to draw out implications for equitable future policies.

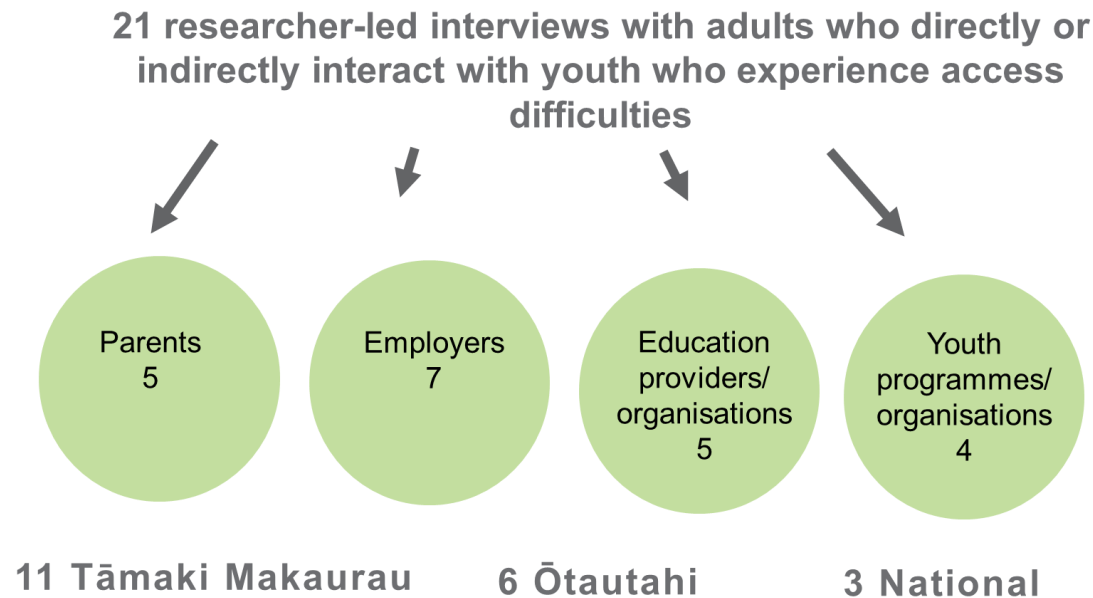


Figure 4: Adult interview sample

3. RANGATAHI/YOUTH VOICES

R Hodgson



3.0 YOUTH VOICES

First, we report on the major themes¹ identified in the interviews with rangatahi/youth. Insights from interviews with adults have also been integrated into this section, where there was commonality or contrast.

Interviews suggest that where young people live and who they are plays a significant role in how they encounter the systems and structures embedded in urban life. The politics and power relationships imbued in people, places, and getting around a city significantly shape the life experiences of rangatahi/youth.

The youth in this study were acutely aware of these underlying socio-political structures. The seven themes described below (Figure 5) contribute to understanding how they experience and respond to their urban transport environment, and the broader implications for their health and wellbeing.

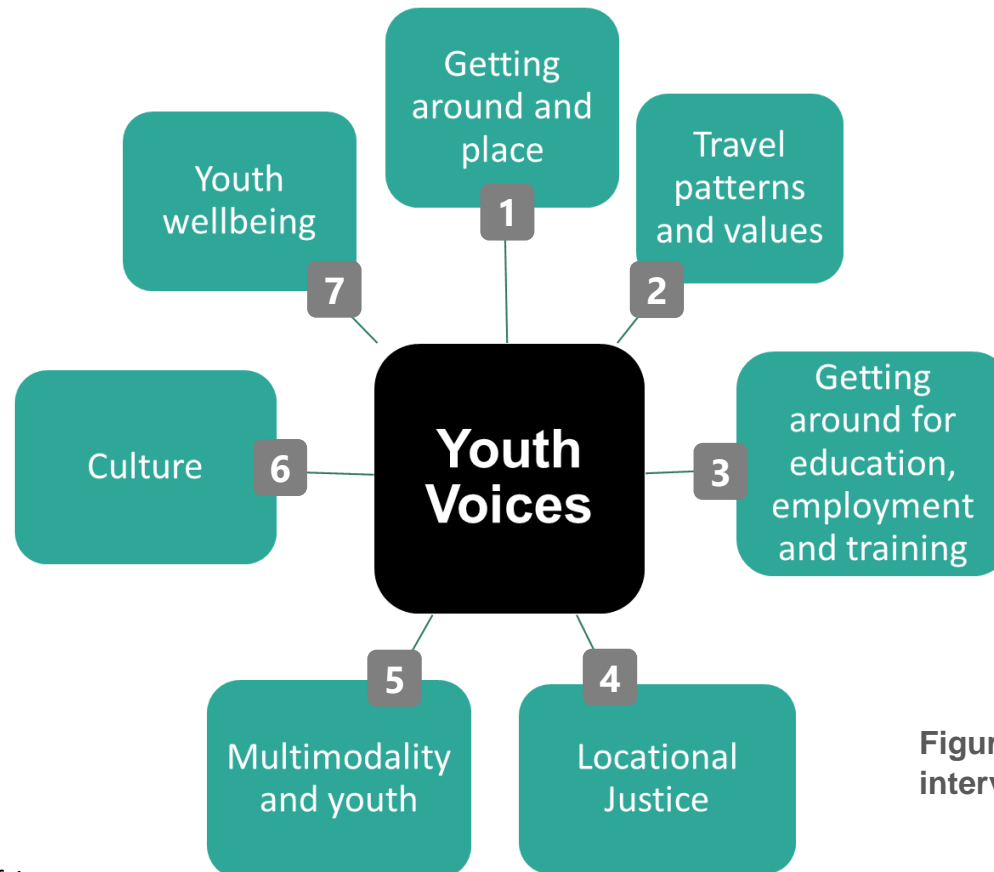


Figure 5: Themes identified in interviews with rangatahi/youth

¹Thematic analysis is the process of identifying, analysing, and interpreting patterns of meaning in qualitative data (Braun and Clarke, 2006)

YOUTH VOICES

3.1 Getting around and place

Urban and transport environments that foster a sense of place, in communities and in the wider city, are central to improving accessibility for marginalised youth.

Young people did not separate place and movement from one another; they interacted with places as they moved within and between them, and they experienced places in different ways depending on the transport modes they used. The way young people got around was influenced by the places they found themselves in, and how they traveled had an impact on their sense of place.

Youth were more likely to walk in their local areas where they had developed a strong sense of place, but their sense of place had been strengthened by their habit of walking and the resultant deep knowledge and connection with 'getting around' their home territory. The result was the development of 'comfort zones,' which simultaneously created a sense of freedom in certain places, while constraining a sense of freedom in places of 'discomfort', or unknown, inhospitable territories.

Peer Interviewer: *so, does living in H make a difference to your life?...*

Young person: *yes*

Peer interviewer: *is it important to you?*

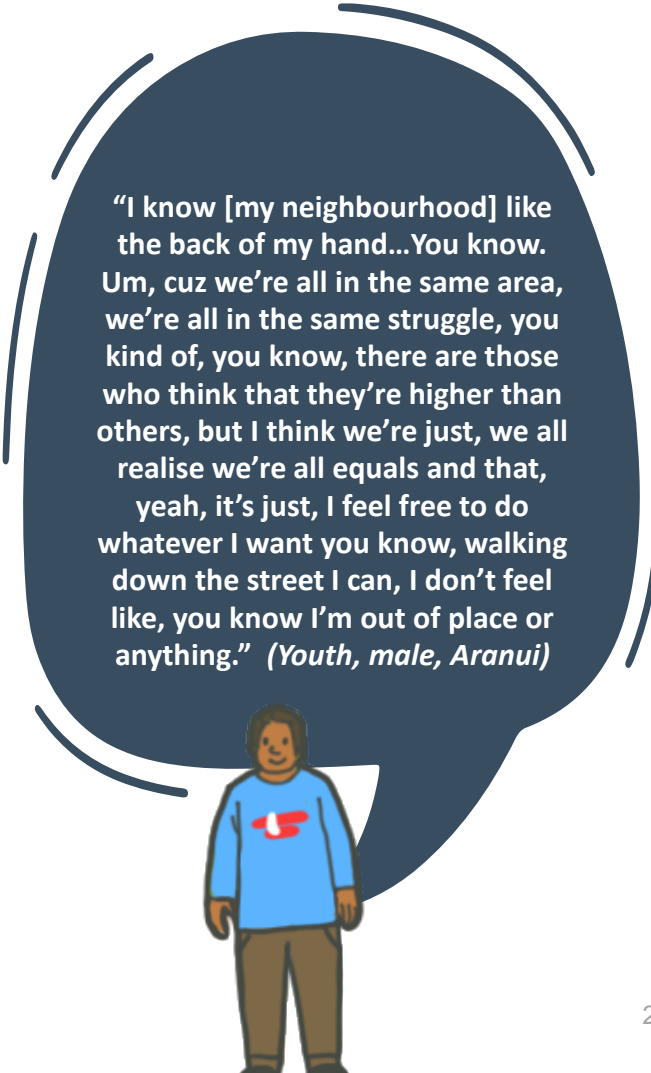
Young person: *it is important to me because this is where I grew up and its home, so it does have um make a big difference if I leave H. I feel naked. I don't know how to put it! (laughing)*

Peer Interviewer: *like's just, out of your comfort zone*

Young person: *yeah yep.*

(Youth, female, Hornby)

Youth developed a sense of place through their social experiences and the physical conditions of their surroundings. Sense of place can play a significant role as both a barrier and enabler of access to opportunity, including education, employment or training.



"I know [my neighbourhood] like the back of my hand...You know. Um, cuz we're all in the same area, we're all in the same struggle, you kind of, you know, there are those who think that they're higher than others, but I think we're just, we all realise we're all equals and that, yeah, it's just, I feel free to do whatever I want you know, walking down the street I can, I don't feel like, you know I'm out of place or anything." (Youth, male, Aranui)

YOUTH VOICES

3.2 Travel patterns and values

In addition to common transport barriers (such as distance, cost, and speed), autonomy, sense of control, and familiarity with places and systems are important for youth, particularly when trying to access opportunities outside their community.

Transport patterns were influenced by the activity they were travelling for, the location that they were travelling to/within, and what they valued about different travel modes.

3.2.1 Local active transport

The local environment was central to why and when youth chose active transport. Walking was common and associated with a sense of social and physical connection to place. Walking was highly prevalent when travelling within the local neighbourhood or area classed as a 'comfort zone', and when accessing familiar locations, such as friends' homes, or shops nearby. Most often, the young people explained that the size of their neighbourhood played the greatest role in this, that everything was close by and therefore walking was seen as a legitimate way to get there.

In contrast, by and large cycling was seen as an undesirable or unrealistic mode of transport. The exception was young men with a history of bicycle use as a child, who demonstrated confidence in their ability to navigate and feel safe in their environments.

3.2.2 Private vehicles vs public transport

Active transport in local environments contrasted with a strong preference for private vehicles when leaving their neighbourhood to engage in less comfortable activities, in less familiar areas. Distance, cost, and speed influenced mode choice in these examples. Independence and autonomy were of great importance, and things that impacted on this sense of freedom, such as waiting, timing, and traffic, were seen as problems.

Youth also weighed different values against each other, for example cost and traffic were outweighed by autonomy/control and the perceived convenience and ease of a private vehicle. The immediacy of public transport costs presented a disincentive. While a private vehicle is known to have high costs associated with it, this was less tangible to the young people. Petrol costs and an empty tank were considered a difficulty, but the cash needed to pay for a bus or train was far more 'costly' for the service received.

YOUTH VOICES

Transport barriers are having a direct and immediate impact on access to opportunities for youth, as well as constraining future choices, particularly for youth without a car.

3.3 Getting around for education, employment, and training

Transport had a direct impact on young people's ability to access education and employment, and on their choices for the future. Adult interviewees also described how transport barriers were constraining opportunities for youth.

Distance was a significant barrier. For many, distance and location influenced whether they even applied for a job or took part in a course. Specific examples were given of times when they had tried and failed to maintain involvement in a course that was further away. Early starts or late finishes could also constrain youth involvement, particularly in employment.


Youth with access to a car did not express the same challenges with start and finish times, distance, or location. However, barriers to private vehicle access and driver licensing were widespread. Many young people also reflected on how employers preferred them to have a vehicle, and the

times when they were disqualified from successfully applying for a job because they did not have access to a car.

“Just makes me wonder like, what am I supposed to do? It's like you know you can't really, you can't get any loans or anything without being able to pay it back, but you can't get a job without a car. So it's like, yeah, it's just a cycle that doesn't really work. Like it doesn't really help itself if you get what I mean?”

(Youth, male, Aranui)

Young people becoming parents themselves was also a factor that further complicated and constrained transport. This introduced the need to access multiple locations in one day, and to consider the impact of inconveniences, such as running late when a child is involved.



“I been trying to apply for jobs, uh, the location has a lot to do with whether I go for it or not...it kind of, it's really stink because sometimes it's a really good opportunity but cuz I can't get there either on time, or I can't get there because there's no um bus or something that goes around there.”

(Youth, female, Aranui)

YOUTH VOICES

3.4 Locational justice

This theme of ‘locational justice’ was evident in the way youth discussed geographical locations and experiences of places in their city. They described how their city is not equitably designed – the spaces for education, employment, recreation and expression are not spread equally. Young people were critical about these issues, acknowledging the difficulties faced in their area and the structural conditions that underpin some of the concerns they have.

“Most of the opportunities for us young youth is mostly in the city. Um, they should have like, the same options, closer, especially for young youth just coming out of school like, some youth don’t have jobs so, they can’t just quickly go straight into um, straight into [courses].”

(Youth, female, Papakura)

The desire for fairer structures was reflected in youth’s suggestions for the

future. For example, if people live in areas where fewer opportunities are provided, the cost of public transport should be lower, and more opportunities should be provided close to their homes and communities.

Adult interviewees reflected on how the combination of young people living on the urban periphery, dealing with high travel costs, long-distances, and/or poor service provision to dispersed employment locations forced youth to screen themselves out of opportunities. In addition, continued urban sprawl and a focus on transport networks (including cycling) close to city centres, were thought to perpetuate this problem.

Employers described how spatial and service design challenges meant they had to be discerning about where young people lived, showing a preference for recruiting locally, unless the young person could demonstrate they had a car.

This locational justice theme points to structural transport and urban planning conditions and decisions as root causes of inequitable access to opportunities. It also highlights interactions between urban design and experiences of discrimination.

“So that becomes a recruitment challenge. We will generally eliminate any CV that we receive from West Auckland, too far south like Papakura, too far north, even the city is quite difficult.” *(Employer, male, Auckland)*

However, young people felt their neighbourhood was vilified by employers, who judged the area not only by the distance, but also by its reputation. Many felt the effects of this discrimination added to the difficulties they faced trying to access employment.

“...if you’ve got to travel far then you’re less likely to get a job... Hard, because you’ve got your address in the CV, people generally discriminate it, against it, so does make it harder.”

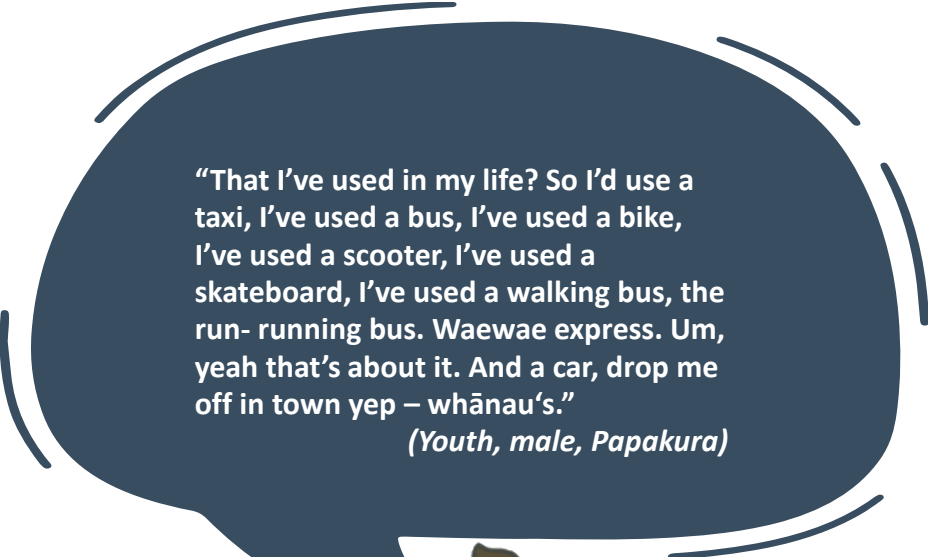
(Youth, female, Aranui)

YOUTH VOICES

3.5 Multimodality and youth – the right to choose

'Multimodal' transport behaviour is promoted as a way to improve accessibility and combat issues such as climate change. However, its manifestation in the lives of marginalised youth challenges the rhetoric around multimodal travel. Many youth are instead experiencing a forced multimodality, one born out of a difficult reality. These experiences of multimodality can lead to stress and fatigue and may require, rather than inspire, out of the ordinary resilience, persistence, and planning.

Multimodal behaviour as a necessity, rather than a choice, highlights an unfair scenario for youth. However, there are opportunities to shift this into positive outcomes for youth access and wellbeing, by capitalising on this existing behaviour through making public and active transport more feasible and attractive.



"That I've used in my life? So I'd use a taxi, I've used a bus, I've used a bike, I've used a scooter, I've used a skateboard, I've used a walking bus, the run- running bus. Waewae express. Um, yeah that's about it. And a car, drop me off in town yep – whānau's."

(Youth, male, Papakura)



YOUTH VOICES

3.6 Culture

Cultural identity underpinned where youth spent their time, and influenced their experiences using modes of transport. Engaging in cultural activities was made difficult by the transport options available. For example, long distances walking to and from public transport to marae or early training for kapa haka.

In addition, many had goals and desires to continue their cultural practices in the future, and to build a career and living from these arts and skills. However, the location of training facilities and of transport provision did not coincide, and often involved distance, time, cost and significant uncertainty to reach them. Many times this resulted in giving up attendance.

“So me and my friend were going to um, Te Wananga o Aotearoa certificate training in Point Chevalier. We were doing Māori movement through Hawaikitū. Um, I loved it I loved every single bit of it. What I didn’t like was it was costing me twenty dollars a day to get there an home.”
(Youth, female, Papakura)

This theme points to the insufficient provision for rangatahi to live out what it means for them to culturally identify, and highlights opportunities for urban environments to reflect cultural identity.

Similarly, Māori and Pacific parents connected a lack of access to cultural learning, spaces, and role-models with low self-confidence and poor achievement, and thus less resilience to overcome access challenges.

Youth, and some parents, expressed a desire for greater cultural expression and positivity in their neighbourhoods, and places that reflect their cultural identity.

Interviewer: *how would you like [your neighbourhood] to look like in the future?*

“Māori-fied. ... just showing everybody what Māori should be like.”

(Youth, female, Papakura)



Racism was also an undeniable force in the lives of the youth in this study, experienced in both place and mobility practices. They reflected on experiences of institutionalised¹ racism as well as internalised² racism. Examples of this were rampant. Many youth believed where they were from was vilified because of the ethnic make-up. Others reflected on internalised racist attitudes regarding how Māori youth use public transport.

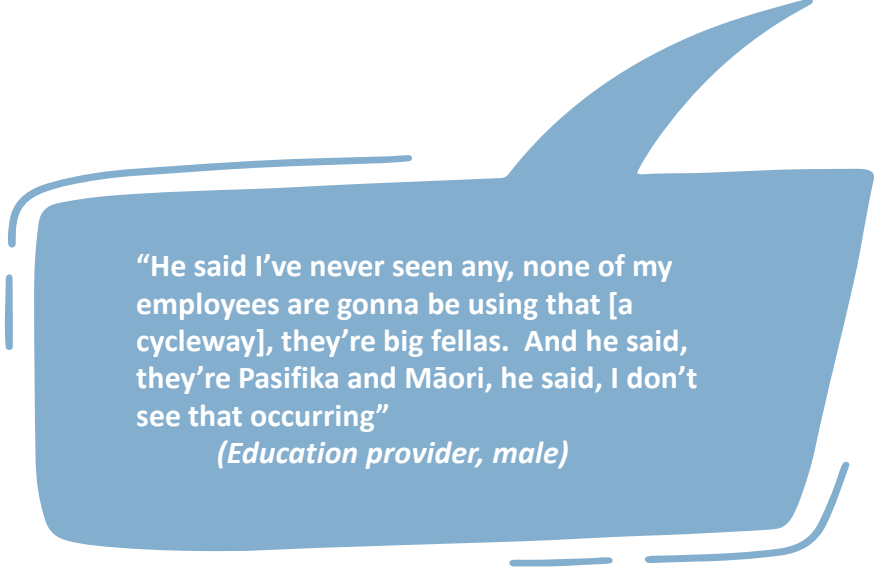
“I don’t wanna like, jump the train cuz that’s just real Māori.”
(Youth, female, Papakura)

Discomfort from experiences of racial discrimination was also place-specific, contributing to the formation of ‘comfort zones’

“It could count like the way that I dress could be a contribute to why they give me these looks and, not being racist but I do feel like you know because I am brown and it’s out of the norm to see you know, if you are brown and you are there, you know”
(Youth, male, Aranui)

Areas of the city where youth felt they would experience discrimination were consistent, they appeared in the interviews and during the mapping exercise as places that they would not happily go. This had implications for where these young people felt they could access employment opportunities.

In addition, in the adult interviews there was evidence of stereotypical assumptions that Māori and Pacific people don’t cycle and won’t be making use of new cycling infrastructure.



“He said I’ve never seen any, none of my employees are gonna be using that [a cycleway], they’re big fellas. And he said, they’re Pasifika and Māori, he said, I don’t see that occurring”
(Education provider, male)

¹*Institutional racism is systematic bias in the decision-making processes of institutions that privilege only one cultural worldview, resulting in negative conditions for ‘othered’ ethnicities (Jones, 2000)*

²*Internalised racism is an “acceptance by members of the stigmatised races of negative messages about their own abilities and intrinsic worth” (Jones, 2000 p.1213)*

YOUTH VOICES

3.7 Youth wellbeing

Over and above access to work and education, urban and transport environments can undermine or enhance holistic health for youth. Impacts on mental wellbeing are particularly relevant for youth experiencing access difficulties.

Place and mobility were intertwined with youth wellbeing. In addition to the impacts on their access to and choices around education, employment and cultural expression, youth reflected on the importance of physical health, a sense of inclusion in their society, and mental wellbeing. Many young people reported mental health concerns and several participants linked mental health with their transport behaviours, whether it was the reason they found it difficult to get around, or that their lack of freedom contributed to their mental health decline.

For many of these young people, active transport was seen as wellbeing-enhancing, providing fresh air, time to think, and physical activity. However, they were unable to reach many of their destinations easily on foot.

Although there was some awareness of the structural underpinnings of their transport difficulties, youth also made statements demonstrating they had internalised societal messages about individual responsibility. For example, if they are unable to access what they need, it is because of their own failure to get a licence and a vehicle, and participants used 'fat', 'lazy', and 'unmotivated' to describe themselves. If they did not have a licence, they believed this was their fault, which contributed to their sense of isolation.

“That’s half my fault though, because I can’t, like, get my license and shit.”
(Youth, female, Hornby - speaking about wanting to, but being unable to visit someone)

Young people also described themselves as lazy if they preferred to use a private vehicle over walking. This type of self-deprecating narrative was prevalent in the interviews, further indicating an internalisation of discriminatory societal messages.

“Because I want to do things, and I feel like staying in one place is really bad for depression. Because, like, you’re just staying in one place all the time, and, like, it’s quite bad. I wanna do things, and the doctor said I should be doing things. But I can’t do things, because I don’t have money and I don’t have a job, and all this shit.”
(Youth, female, Hornby)



4. ADULT PERSPECTIVES

G Hawley



4.0 ADULT PERSPECTIVES

Adult interviewees consistently described access as a significant problem for marginalised young people in NZ cities, which is requiring a substantial amount of support from parents and organisations to overcome.

The four themes below show how practical constraints and strongly held beliefs about the benefits of driving and licensing for youth reinforce driving as the status quo and the 'socially approved' solution to access issues (Figure 6).

The findings also suggest that adults and organisations have an important role in creating physical and social environments that support public and active transport.

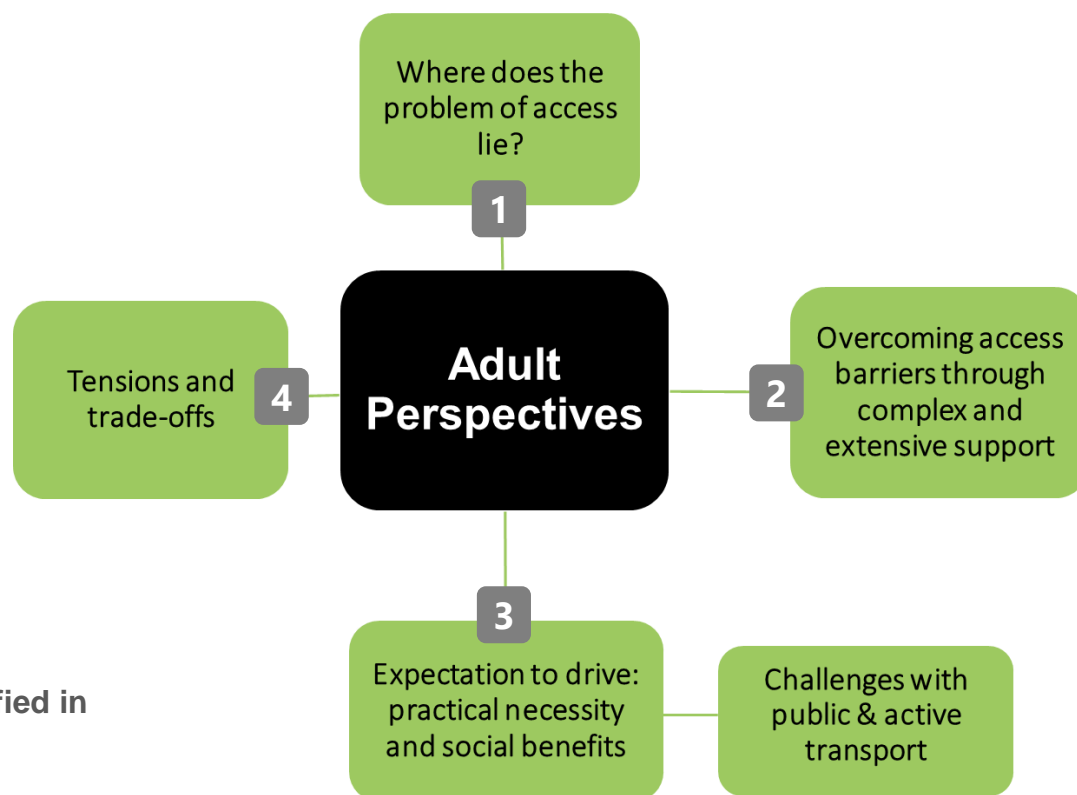


Figure 6: Themes identified in adult interviews

ADULT PERSPECTIVES

4.1 Where does the problem of access lie?

Adult participants framed the problem of youth access in different ways. For some, individual factors, such as a young person's lack of motivation, was seen to underpin access problems. Assumed norms, such as youth expectations to be driven around and youth 'these days' as the 'lazy generation' were problematised. These assumptions were also reflected in how youth described themselves.

"... if there's sufficient money, transport I think will look after itself. But it's more like the motivation of actually getting that person. They might be on a bus route, they might have a car, but are they gonna get up on Monday morning and drive or travel 10km or whatever, it's just the motivation"
(Youth organisation, male)

In contrast, more complex framings of the problem were also evident. For example, challenges with the driver licensing system (cost, high failure rates, and the need for a warranted/registered vehicle) were linked with young people having less desire to become licensed. Others acknowledged that youth who are NEET are often facing a range of challenges – shame, anxiety, low self-esteem, drug and alcohol problems, and they may have no formal qualifications and be living in poverty. Spatial factors were also acknowledged, particularly the combined effect of where young people live, the transport services available to them, and the location of opportunities.

Participants reflected that this accumulation of challenges meant transport barriers were disproportionately 'felt' and experienced by NEET youth, where it became all too hard.

Complex factors undermine access to work and education in marginalised youth, but adult views about root causes vary. Attributing the problem to individual factors reinforce the focus on solutions at the individual level, rather than structural causes.

"so I guess they kind of give up easily because it's too hard to get to places?...I think they think, well, okay, it's too hard, I give up (laughing), do you know what I mean?...It's too hard, I give up."
(Parent, female, Christchurch)



ADULT PERSPECTIVES

4.2 Overcoming access barriers through complex and extensive support

Parents, employers, education providers, and youth organisations described an extensive range of practices to help young people overcome access challenges, emphasising the network of people and organisations using any means possible and expending significant time and resources. In the case of parents, (and some organisations) the need to support youth often stretched their resources.

Examples of transport support included:

- looking up public transport routes alongside youth;
- paying public transport fares;
- organised transport to/from education and work sites; and,
- support through the driver licensing process.

*“Yeah 40-60 dollars a week just to take him to work...Oh, there’ve been many times that I couldn’t afford petrol to get to places, or to drop teenagers off, or pick them up. And, you know, I’m a taxi basically”
(Parent, female, Christchurch)*

Some examples of more strategic and collaborative solutions were evident. For example, education providers choosing their sites to be close to target students, local work placements, and reimbursement of travel costs (based on bus fares) via education funding for NEET youth.

A sense of urgency and a focus on immediate needs commonly underpinned these transport support practices. Workforce shortages, especially in construction and trades, contributed to the sense of urgency. However, deeper desires for fairness, and for youth to be successful and safe were also part of the rationale.

The social benefits of organised door-to-door shared transport (e.g. vans) were valued, as it allowed students, workers, or tutors to connect and build relationships en route. Serious safety events (such as sexual assaults, and knife attacks) in the neighbourhood were front of mind for parents, meaning that pick-up drop-off practices were viewed as proper care and protection.

Despite the extent of access support currently being offered by employers, there was limited clarity and inconsistent views regarding their role in advocating or supporting a transition to a more sustainable, equitable transport system. On the other hand, youth organisations and education providers (often the intermediaries between youth and employers) felt there were opportunities to use existing relationships to develop future solutions, such as through partnerships, joint advocacy, and supporting mechanisms for youth voice.

A substantial amount of time and funding is being invested in short-term support, which is largely coming from outside the transport system. There are opportunities to collaborate and leverage existing networks to develop long-term, structural solutions for young people’s wellbeing, alongside other fairness, sustainability, and organisational objectives.

ADULT PERSPECTIVES

4.3 Expectation to drive *Practical necessity and social benefits*

There was a strong normative expectation for youth to have their own transport (a car and a licence). This was primarily justified in terms of practical necessity. The perceived reliability of car use was highly valued, and adults felt it was difficult for young people to sustain the use of public and active transport on a daily basis. Dispersed work locations, shift-work, and jobs where driving was required for the role contributed to this perceived practical necessity.

“If I employ a salesman and don’t give them a vehicle, well I’m not giving them the tools to do the job”

(Education provider, male, Auckland)

Driving and licensing were also described as socially beneficial behaviours and as symbols of legitimacy. For example, a driver’s licence was seen as a symbol of motivation and responsibility, particularly for youth with no other qualifications.

“And you see in a lot of job descriptions ‘must have a driver’s licence’. It may or may not be pertinent for the job but ... it may be used as a proxy just to filter people in and out of consideration”

(Youth organisation, male, national)

Other perceived benefits of driving and licensure, especially for NEET youth, ranged from ‘ID’ (which is needed to apply for a job), safer driving behaviour, and being ‘legal’, to greater independence, confidence, self-esteem, and a sense of control. A full licence was linked with higher wages, greater promotional opportunities, as well as mobility and income benefits for an entire household. Participants also described more implicit organisational environments that signalled driving as the accepted norm and a symbol of status and success (e.g. free car parking and company cars for senior employees).

As described by youth participants, enquiry into transportation was a consistent part of the job recruitment process, and the preference for a driver’s licence was often explicit in job advertisements. Although young people without a licence were not automatically ruled out, there was a clear preference for those with their own transport and a licence (of any stage). Active encouragement to become licensed and various forms of licensing support were also widespread. As a result, a car and being able to drive were unequivocally linked with employability by the adults interviewed, a viewpoint that was reinforced through interactions between employers, youth organisations, parents, and young people.

“He’s learnt at [youth organisation] that most employers prefer to employ people that have a licence”

(Parent, female, Auckland)

4.3.1 Perceptions of public transport

Commonly described issues with public transport for young people were:

- unaffordable costs;
- a mismatch between work location, hours of employment, and service provision (especially for shift work);
- safety concerns (both while on services and walking to/from); and,
- processes around payment (e.g. fines for not ‘tagging off’ and minimum top-up amounts).

The time investment required and unpredictability were described as specific problems for NEET youth, contributing to uncertainty and anxiety.

“I think it’s time, it’s just a long day for a 19-year old, 18-19 year old. And it is relying on somebody else, so relying on the trains to be working...And there’s a lot of anxiety involved around going to work and wanting to make it a success. So that’s often a part we don’t see, and we underestimate, we call it the fear factor”
(Youth organisation, female, Auckland)

Public transport was encouraged by some adults and was occasionally seen as a feasible, especially when proximity, service provision, and financial support were combined. However, the multiple barriers described above served to justify its status as non-viable or as a temporary stop-gap, until a young person could get a licence and a car, a stark contrast to the active role taken in overcoming barriers to driver licensing.

4.3.2 Perceptions of active transport

Walking and cycling were rarely seen as viable or encouraged because of:

- early/late work hours;
- long distances;
- safety concerns;
- a lack of youth motivation; and,
- poor youth perceptions of these modes.

There were instances where adults raised the possibility of cycling with youth, acknowledged the health and cost benefits, and had workplace bikes; however, most had never considered it, and some felt there were bigger problems to focus on.

Even in instances where adults cycled themselves, or when there was a wider organisational focus on cycling, bikes/cycling were not seen as a tool to overcome access barriers for young people. There were also hints that walking and cycling are less socially acceptable. For example, these modes were questioned, concealed, or seen as a mode for those with no licence or no other option.

“There are some guys here that’ll cycle, but it wouldn’t be an issue for me. It’d be a little bit –just concerned as to why. That’d be the first question, have you lost your licence or whatever”
(Employer, male, Auckland)

“I honestly don’t, I’ve never talked about cycling (laughter) the whole time I’ve worked here. I mean it’s a good option...like we all, we’re all big into walking and cycling”
(Youth organisation, female, Auckland)

ADULT PERSPECTIVES

4.4 Tensions and trade-offs

Adult interviews highlighted tensions and accepted trade-offs between short and long-term goals and across outcomes. For example, parents raised concerns about young driver safety, they were wary of the large costs and responsibility of owning a vehicle, and in some cases preferred that their children didn't drive. However, these concerns were weighed against the perceived employment and social benefits of driving, and a strong youth desire to drive, with safety coming off second best.

A lack of other transport options was seen to contribute to unlicensed driving and the accumulation of fines. Young people reliably turning up to work tended to override concerns about unlicensed driving (or driving in breach of licence conditions), unless driving was required for the role. And, while driving in breach was not encouraged by employers and youth organisations, there was tacit acceptance of this behaviour and a framing of the problem as ultimately the 'choice' of youth.

"Upside is it's safer for them [public transport] they're not gonna kill anyone sitting in a bus (laughter). The downside is, you know young people wanna have their independence, they're the boss of their world"

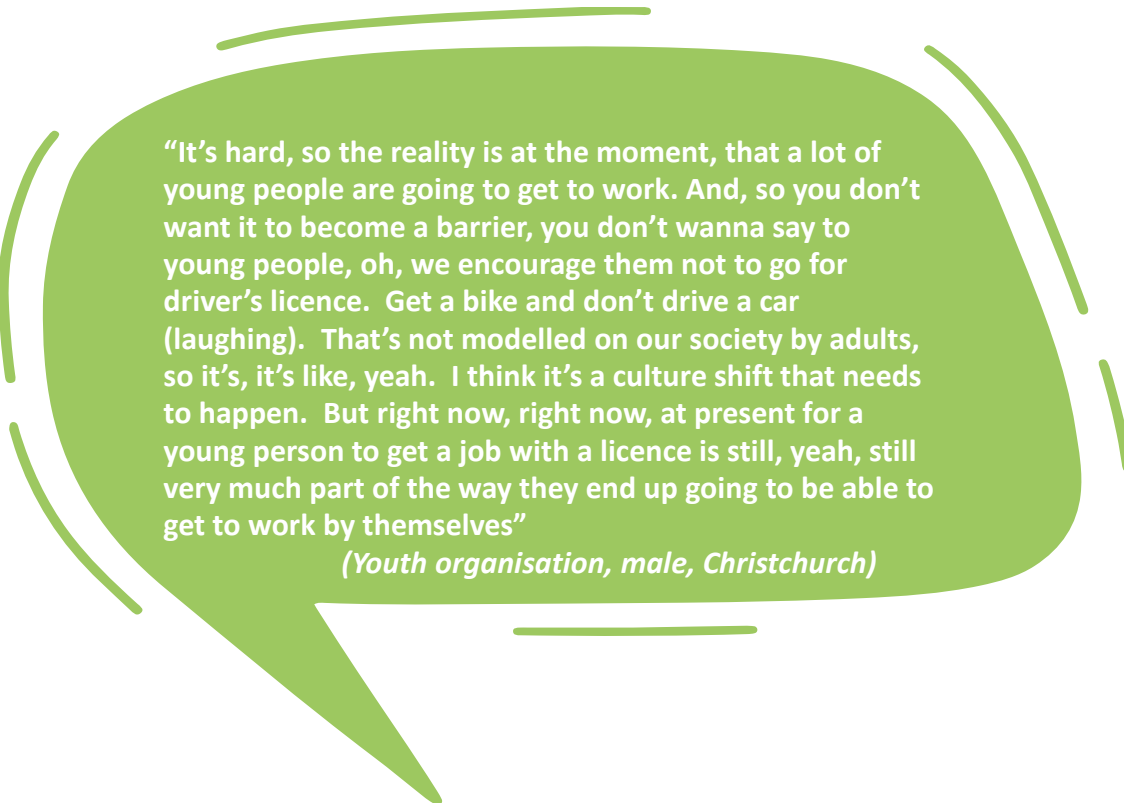
(Parent, female, Auckland)

"...some places some people live they've got no public transport options... it has more social consequences than it does anything else. Coz they end up in court, and then they've got fines, and they don't pay the fines coz they've got no money. And then they keep driving coz they still need to drive, and then they get arrested and, you know...So that's going to have a flow on effect, because I'm not going to be happy about that from a work perspective. But they'll keep doing it, guarantee they'll keep doing it"

(Employer, male, Auckland)

Although improved public transport networks were desired, many adults felt universal driver licensing in schools was still the short-term solution to youth access problems, due to the slow pace of transport network improvements. Some were hopeful about the possibility of cycling and shared transport systems, but there were also concerns that public transport, and new technologies such as E-bikes, would remain out of reach for many young people.

Finally, there was a perceived tension, as well as a risk, in directly promoting public and active transport for youth now, without broader structural changes. And, there was only limited recognition of the role that adults and organisations might play in supporting any structural or cultural shift, for example through organisational advocacy, changes to organisational rules, or role modelling.



“It’s hard, so the reality is at the moment, that a lot of young people are going to get to work. And, so you don’t want it to become a barrier, you don’t wanna say to young people, oh, we encourage them not to go for driver’s licence. Get a bike and don’t drive a car (laughing). That’s not modelled on our society by adults, so it’s, it’s like, yeah. I think it’s a culture shift that needs to happen. But right now, right now, at present for a young person to get a job with a licence is still, yeah, still very much part of the way they end up going to be able to get to work by themselves”

(Youth organisation, male, Christchurch)

There are acute and complex tensions between the immediate social and economic benefits of having a car and a licence, and the current and future trade-offs and harms for health (including road traffic injury), environmental sustainability, and equity.

5. IMPLICATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS



5.0 IMPLICATIONS

Our findings show how transport policy and urban planning undermine rangatahi/youth's access to opportunities and their holistic health.

Access to opportunities is not spread evenly across our cities, and for many young people successful access appears contingent upon having a car, a licence, or support from parents/whānau, employers, education providers or other organisations. Young people themselves are aware of these injustices and the impact on their choices, which may be exacerbating a sense of exclusion. The current situation is reinforcing car-dependence as the status-quo, contributing to tacit acceptance of trade-offs for road safety and youth entry into the justice system, and perpetuating a focus on individual solutions to access challenges rather than structural change.



While the root causes of youth health, access to opportunity, and social inequalities are multi-faceted, and not solely a function of transport and urban design, improvements in the design of our cities can play a significant, preventive, and 'strengths-based' role. For example, by making it easier for youth to access education and employment if they are NEET, but also by fostering resilience, access, and inclusion from a young age to help prevent them from becoming NEET and to reduce other health and social disparities.

In the context of imminent policy and urban design that aims to reduce car use, existing injustices are likely to be exacerbated if proactive action is not taken. However, the immediate benefits of driving and licensing for youth can't be ignored. Our findings show there are opportunities in the immediate and longer-term to navigate these tensions. Solutions that focus on social, financial, physical, and spatial barriers are needed.

A visual summary of the study implications and recommendations is provided on page 38 (Figure 7). This is followed by a brief discussion.

Recommendations are underpinned by the joint goals of youth health, social justice, and environmental wellbeing. Stakeholder and youth input have contributed to shaping these recommendations.

FEASIBILITY & USEFULNESS OF PUBLIC & ACTIVE TRANSPORT

- ❖ Deep changes for safe, **affordable**, attractive and feasible public transport, with a focus on youth equity
- ❖ **Extend** the response from driver licensing (and individual responsibility) to a broader transport system focus, in order to avoid deepening inequities
- ❖ Find ways to ensure the **cycling renaissance** and e-mobility contribute to wellbeing for Māori and Pacific youth

CULTURAL IDENTITY, MOVEMENT, & PLACE

- ❖ Culturally relevant transport and urban planning **for rangatahi Māori**
- ❖ Address **racism** in transport provision and operation (e.g. institutional racism)
- ❖ **Collaborative**, neighbourhood-level projects
- ❖ A planning framework that privileges Māori voices is central to achieving the three points above

SOCIAL ENVIRONMENTS & PARTNERSHIPS

- ❖ **Organisational** leadership and partnerships to create social environments that support the use of public and active transport (e.g. through incentives, role-modelling, and encouragement)
- ❖ **Large employers** can **advocate** for structural change

METHODS TO PRIVILEGE THE VOICES OF YOUNG PEOPLE WHO NEED BETTER ACCESS

RE-EXAMINE THE PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDE URBAN AND TRANSPORT PLANNING

A SYSTEMIC & STRUCTURAL RESPONSE
WITH IMMEDIATE, MEDIUM, AND LONG-TERM ACTIONS

Figure 7: Visual summary of the study implications and recommendations

5.1 Feasibility and usefulness of public and active transport

Our findings suggest that the way young people experience urban environments (including transport systems) is important for access and holistic health. More specifically, urban design needs to address:

- sense of control and autonomy;
- sense of familiarity, comfort, and safety;
- sense of place;
- opportunities to build and maintain relationships; and,
- reflection of cultural identity (see Section 5.2, page 41).

Ways to foster these elements through urban and transport planning need to be identified, with a focus on public and active transport and innovation. This can be conceptualised as ways to extend the ‘comfort zone’ of rangatahi/youth, beyond their immediate community to the wider city. Similarly, the importance of giving rides as a symbol of care and protection, opportunities to socialise and build relationships, and greater ‘control’, were factors that were valued about car-based transport by adults. Investigating ways to emulate these factors in the design of innovative transport systems, such as shared mobility services, is an opportunity.

In the immediate term, a focus on improving access to driver licensing for employment remains important. However, we need to broaden our response to avoid the current harms and eliminate structural injustices. This means focusing on policy and design that de-couples gaining a driver’s licence (which has employment

benefits), from *having* to drive. There is also an opportunity to examine how driver training and licensing can be placed within a wider suite of ‘transport education’ (such as public transport use and cycle skills).

Further research is needed to examine access to education and employment for young people in overseas cities with high mode shares of public and active transport. This research would allow comparison of NEET rates, and exploration of underlying influences and solutions for equitable access.

5.1.1 Walking

Our findings suggest that young people commonly walk to get around their neighbourhood. Therefore, efforts to ensure walking environments are safe from injury and crime, attractive, and foster a sense of place, would ensure this current behaviour has positive outcomes.

5.1.2 Public Transport

A diversity of barriers to public transport use, both physical and social, were described in this study. This suggests that a large-scale and multi-faceted strategy is needed to ensure public transport networks can meet the needs of all youth.

In the short-term, removing fares altogether for young people may be needed to reduce cost barriers and send a signal that public transport use is a desired behaviour. Full fare subsidies for young people would also eliminate negative cues and sanctions around public transport use (e.g. fines). Similarly, greater consideration of part-time students and young workers is needed in future public transport cost strategies. In addition, improvements to service provision for shift work and non-centrally based employment hubs is vital for young people's access to employment, education, and training.

Auckland Transport's recent removal of fares for children, aged 5 to 15, on weekends is a positive step; however, these changes do not go far enough and will make little difference to the youth in this study. While we acknowledge there are costs associated with fare subsidy schemes and improved service provision, the wide range of co-benefits, such as youth road safety, preventing entry into the justice system, and social inclusion, need to be valued in these transport policy decisions. Broader consideration of co-benefits and cross sector outcomes could also help avoid negative unintended consequences. For example, a fare subsidy that ends at the age 15 may serve to reinforce and encourage driving at the age when driving is most risky.

5.1.3 Cycling

The cycling 'renaissance' currently taking place in Auckland and Christchurch is not benefiting young people experiencing access barriers in suburban localities. Cycling to 'get around' does not appear to be part of the identity of marginalised youth and, with one or two notable exceptions, has limited visibility in their social environment. New cycle networks are often being built in places that serve to reinforce privilege rather than benefiting young people living on the urban periphery. Likewise, new technologies, such as E-bikes and e-scooter sharing, need significant subsidy and tailored solutions to be accessible for young people struggling to access employment, education or training.

Further investigation into how to meaningfully introduce cycling as an option for this group is needed, including examining the fair provision of infrastructure, but also social role models, bike access and cost subsidies. Introducing cycling from a young age in low-income suburban communities, for example through the Bikes in Schools initiative, and incorporating cycling skills into a broader approach to transport education could be helpful steps. Innovative trials involving youth, whānau, iwi, employers, and youth organisations (e.g. testing E-bikes as a solution to barriers to work and education) are also worthy of investigation.

5.2 Cultural identity, movement, and place

Transport networks and urban environments need to be and feel more culturally relevant for rangatahi Māori – in the way that service provision enables easier access to cultural knowledge and spaces (e.g., access to Marae, Wānanga, and Kaupapa Māori training/education organisations) and how the ‘look and feel’ reflects cultural identity. Addressing interpersonal and institutional racism in the provision and operation of public and active transport is also crucial. An example from this study was the perceived lack of focus on public transport and cycling networks in low income and peripheral areas, with high populations of Māori and Pacific people.

To address these issues, Māori voices need to be at the centre of urban and transport decision-making, with meaningful Māori engagement embedded in planning processes. One existing example is the weaving of Māori values and historical narratives into urban regeneration projects in Ōtautahi/Christchurch, through the involvement of mana whenua (Matapopore, 2019). Moving forward, there are also substantial opportunities for collaborative, neighbourhood-level projects to counter racism and improve safety, sense of place, and access for young people. The Safe and Healthy Streets South Auckland Project is one such opportunity.

5.3 Social environments and partnerships

Parents/whānau, employers, education providers, and youth organisations are already investing a substantial amount of time and money to help young people access opportunities. However, many of these solutions are vulnerable to family circumstances, job market changes, and organisational priorities. In addition, they are inadvertently serving to reinforce car-dependence. A promising exception in this study was education providers reimbursing young people for transport costs based on bus fares, which removes the financial barrier but also signals that public transport use is a behaviour worth rewarding.

In addition to structural changes, there are also opportunities for employers and youth organisations to create social environments that support the use of public and active transport (for example through incentives, role-modelling, and encouragement). Organisations and employers can be powerful influencers of local and central government policy. While this position is often used to advocate for policies that make doing business easier (e.g. through business associations), there is huge potential for influencing structural change on behalf of marginalised young people, while also supporting them to have their own voice in city planning. Ensuring marginalised youth are specifically included in the design of organisational travel plans (e.g. Auckland’s workplace travel planning programme) is also an opportunity in the short-term.

5.4 Address root causes of inequities

A systematic and structural response is needed to address the lack of fairness in how our cities are designed and make public and active transport both feasible and attractive. Results suggest that the current response takes a short-term view, with a heavy, ad hoc reliance on individual responsibility and organisational support.

To address the barriers in a more systematic manner, the underpinning principles that guide urban and transport planning need to be re-examined. Stakeholders have suggested that Te Tiriti o Waitangi should underpin urban planning and transport decision-making, because it can provide a framework to ensure governance partnership, equal participation in society, and the conscious inclusion of Māori voices, needs, and values. Similarly, it is important that the broad and long-term benefits of investment in public and active transport are captured in decision-making, including the benefits to safety, criminal prevention, holistic health, social inclusion as well as environmental wellbeing. Re-examining the Fare Box recovery legislation would be a helpful starting point because of its influence on public transport provision and cost.

5.5 Privilege youth voice

The specific needs, voices, and culture of marginalised youth must be incorporated into planning so tailored solutions can be developed. This study highlights the value of meaningful youth involvement in urban decision-making. Skilled youth engagement staff, flexible processes, and a commitment to capacity building were essential for the success of this study and are important considerations in the design of future youth engagement processes. See Section 6 (page 45) for further lessons and opportunities related to youth engagement.



5.6 Recommendations

Eleven recommendations are below. These progress from immediate actions to more long-term, structural solutions. The key audience for each recommendation is outlined on the right-hand side.

Recommendation is aimed at...



- 1 Develop an ongoing engagement process to privilege the voices of young people in city and transport planning, particularly rangatahi Māori, Pacific, and marginalised youth. It is recommended that such processes are tested through upcoming projects, such as Safe and Healthy Streets South Auckland. An important first step is identifying and/or training people to be able to facilitate these youth engagement processes.

*Local government;
Youth organisations*
- 2 Conduct research into the experience of NEET young people in cities overseas, with high active and public transport mode shares, to compare rates, examine underlying reasons, and identify solutions.

*Ministries of Transport, Social Development, & Education;
Researchers/Academics*
- 3 Extend the response to transport barriers for youth, from predominantly driver licensing, to a focus on making public and active transport more feasible and attractive for this priority group.

*Ministry of Transport/NZTA;
Local government*
- 4 Design and test a broader 'transport education' package for young people that includes but goes beyond driver licensing, incorporating training and support for the full range of transport options.

*Ministry of Transport/NZTA;
Ministry of Education;
Local government*
- 5 As soon as possible, remove public transport costs (e.g. through a green transport card) for young people up to the age of 24 and ensure processes are user-friendly and positive.

*Ministry of Transport/NZTA;
Local government*

Recommendations *Cont'd*

Recommendation is aimed at...



6

Investigate ways to introduce cycling and e-mobility as transport options to youth experiencing access barriers. This should include social, financial, and environmental solutions, and testing innovative solutions in local contexts.

*NZTA; Local government;
Employers; Youth Organisations;
Iwi*

7

Support organisations (e.g. employers and youth organisations) to incentivise the use of public and active transport in order to signal these modes as a positive and desired behaviour. Employers and other large organisations can also advocate for more structural long-term solutions, which can dually benefit their organisation and young people.

*Local government;
Employers;
Youth Organisations*

8

Re-examine transport service provision between low-income suburban communities (with high proportions of NEET youth) and employment hubs, including the provision for shift work. There are likely to be short-term and innovative solutions that can improve access, such as the subsidised rideshare schemes.

*NZTA;
Local government*

9

Enhance opportunities for collaborative, neighbourhood-level urban projects that reflect cultural identity, and improve access, sense of place, and safety for young people and their whānau. Māori urban design principles can underpin these projects.

*Ministry of Transport/NZTA;
Local government;
Mana Whenua*

10

Examine strategies to bring opportunities (employment, education, social, cultural) closer to youth and whānau. Mixed land-use policies and prevention of urban sprawl are long-term strategies; however, incentivising local development and local recruitment are also possibilities in the short-term.

*Ministry of Transport/NZTA;
Ministry of Education;
Local government*

11

Re-examine the underpinning principles that guide urban and transport planning so that the holistic needs of marginalised youth and their whānau are at the centre. Te Tiriti o Waitangi outcomes should be central to this re-examination process.

*Ministry of Urban Development
& Ministry of Transport NZTA*

6. LESSONS & OPPORTUNITIES

6.0 LESSONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The study methods provide insights for meaningful youth involvement in urban decision-making. Our methods centred on empowering young people, creating opportunities for them to have a voice and directly interact with policymakers. The combination of data collection methods (peer interviewing, interactive mapping, and photovoice) also meant youth could offer their perspective in different ways.

The Peer Interviewing component was underpinned by principles of positive youth development. The aim was to build the capacity of the peer interviewers in each community, so that the process benefitted them and yielded high-quality data. Peer Interviewers were employed and paid \$23.76 dollars per hour for their time (including training), and on average worked 30 hours each across the project. The process differed slightly in each community. Figure 8 below summarises the key steps. Key lessons from this process, based on the reflections of the research team, are summarised on page 47.



Figure 8: Peer interviewer engagement process

TIME & SKILL

The process required a substantial amount of time, approximately one FTE during the data collection period. It was essential that staff were skilled and experienced in community and youth engagement.

RELATIONSHIPS

Developing and sustaining relationships with youth and community leaders was essential. This involved spending time in the community that wasn't solely about the research – for example, having dinner together, doing harakeke crafts, attending youths' music performances, and interacting with their children. Consistent research team staff for the duration of the project was also important so that relationships could be maintained, promises kept, and trust developed.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Building the capacity of youth became both an aim and a necessity for the success of the project. We worked with the youth recommended to us and built their capacity as peer interviewers, rather than stipulating strict criteria about the qualities they needed.

FLEXIBILITY & RESPONSIVENESS

It was essential to build in flexibility, so that processes could be adapted to suit the needs and culture of youth and the community. For example, adapting the interview guide based on youth feedback in each area, so they could see their suggestions being taken forward. Providing opportunities for Peer Interviewers and community leaders to be involved in dissemination activities was also important

RECOGNITION

It was extremely important to pay young people well for their efforts. It not only gave them an experience of being formally employed, it also appeared to symbolise to youth and community leaders that we valued their skills and weren't taking advantage of them. This recognition also meant celebrating the completion of key steps and providing koha for use of community spaces.

MOMENTUM

Momentum was important for the Peer Interviewers. Timeframes needed to be realistic, but not too long, otherwise there was a tendency for some to lose interest.

LEVEL OF SUPPORT

The level of support and communication required was extremely high, but varied significantly between young people. Ironically, providing transport to and from interviews was part of this support, along with regular meetups, Facebook messages, and texts.

6.1 Other reflections

Anecdotal feedback from Peer Interviewers on the research process is below.

- They valued the experience of a ‘professional’ feeling job, and developed a sense of empowerment from the training and collecting the data independently.
- Feeling supported in the work was important.
- They enjoyed seeing the final product and being involved in stakeholder workshops, where being part of drawing it all together made it feel more ‘real’ and significant.
- Previous experiences with youth engagement projects seemed to make both peer interviewers and community leaders wary of being involved initially. For example, they may have contributed to projects in the past, but received very little in return (e.g. never seen the staff or investigators again or heard anything about results or outcomes, or young people being “paid” with pizza).

While the Peer Interviewing method seemed to work well for the youth component of the research, it created challenges for recruiting parents/whānau members. As the Peer Interviewers were the face of the research, trying to recruit parents/whānau members (to be interviewed by a researcher) was difficult as there was no existing relationship. If similar projects are repeated, it may prove more successful to train a parent/whānau member from the community as an adult peer interviewer.

“Just want to chime in and say what a wonderful experience of youth research by/for young people that you guys have brought to the table. ...I know the crew got lots out of it and felt really useful and as though they had something to offer the process so thanks once again”

(Manager, Youth Organisation)

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