# How planning supports density and transport equity

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| Projections show that the majority of the world’s population will inhabit urban environments by 2050. Associated with this is an increased demand for transportation and the need for higher density urban areas to accommodate everyone.  Urban planning plays a critical role in enabling best practice transport outcomes, usually by facilitating the provision of higher density development to support transportation networks, reducing the need for the private vehicle. Auto dependent cities tend to encourage urban sprawl, which can lead to more sedentary lifestyles, increased pollution, and transport inequity due to the reduced viability of transport choice. On the other hand, higher density land use is more supportive of active mode networks, better enabling travel via bicycle or on foot active modes to places such as work, recreation, or even access to public transport, reducing the reliance on private vehicles. Land use that better enables and supports transportation choice is more likely to contribute to improvements in the health and well-being of the people, through more active lifestyles and transport options.  The Government’s National Policy Statement on Urban Development (2020) sets out steps for encouraging higher density developments close to public transport and community facilities. In some locations, this practice has already been encouraged. In Auckland, the Unitary Plan was established in 2016, encouraging higher density in certain zones. Since then, how has urban density changed, and how does it relate to availability of public transport? Is Auckland already on the way to becoming a more transit-oriented city? This presentation will explore how planning practices better enable density to support these desired transport outcomes through mapping temporal density trends and how they relate to transport networks and explore how they will continue to do so in the future. It will draw linkages between planning, density and transit, and how they contribute to Te Whare Tapa Whā. |