# Why is street innovation so hard?

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Delivering innovative walking and cycling projects can be like wading through treacle. Why are they so hard when Government has made it clear we need more walking and cycling? Taking a socio-technical systems approach, the aim of this paper is to describe the barriers and enablers to innovative street projects that promote wellbeing. We explore these barriers and enablers through the lens of five proposed, current, or delivered niche street re-design projects or programmes in Aotearoa New Zealand. A thematic analysis of project and programme information, indicated leadership, funding, policies and procedures, organizational norms, community and delivery tensions, and social environment are critical to programme success or failure and for niche projects to challenge-business-as usual practices and influence the wider regime. While there was varying success across the projects and programmes in influencing the wider regime and social landscape, the analysis found that innovative ‘niche’ projects need to be supported within government planning systems as a way of managing investment risk and testing future scenarios. Following from the research, a ‘socio-technical checklist’ is proposed, which can help to identify key success factors for innovative active travel projects.