# An Accessible Journeys Strategy for Aotearoa

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| Central to manaaki tāngata is ensuring that all people are cared for, particularly those most marginalised. The transport sector has not traditionally looked into whose journeys are most difficult or least affordable. Rather, we focus a lot on measuring traffic flows and delays, and relying on infrastructure standards to meet the needs of all people.  The reality is that a lot of people in Aotearoa find it difficult and unaffordable to move around. Our research involving surveys, interviews and workshops found that people with the fewest choices have a lot to say about how difficult it is to travel. There are problems with accessibility and affordability of information, infrastructure, services, staff attitudes, and disruption management, including at works sites and during Covid lockdowns.  The isolated interventions that we routinely make for accessible transport, such as low-floor buses, public transport and taxi subsidies, and footpath maintenance, are not enough to ensure taha whānau. Social wellbeing is about extended relationships and belonging. Our current transport system does not demonstrate any inclusion of marginalised people, most obviously because we do not measure their participation in the transport system. We know a lot about traffic, and very little about who does not travel because it is too hard for them to do so.  We can start to address our failure to demonstrate inclusion by introducing a new accessible journeys strategy for Aotearoa. At its heart the strategy would have a vision of “Accessible journeys for everyone in Aotearoa”. Akin to the Safer Journeys strategy, Accessible Journeys would be supported by pillars and system interventions that can be used to demonstrate more inclusive transport. Without measurement and a coherent vision, we will forever be guessing as to whether or not transport investment is truly inclusive of all people. |