

Walking the Talk: Sustainable Transport and Urban Design in Four New Zealand Cities



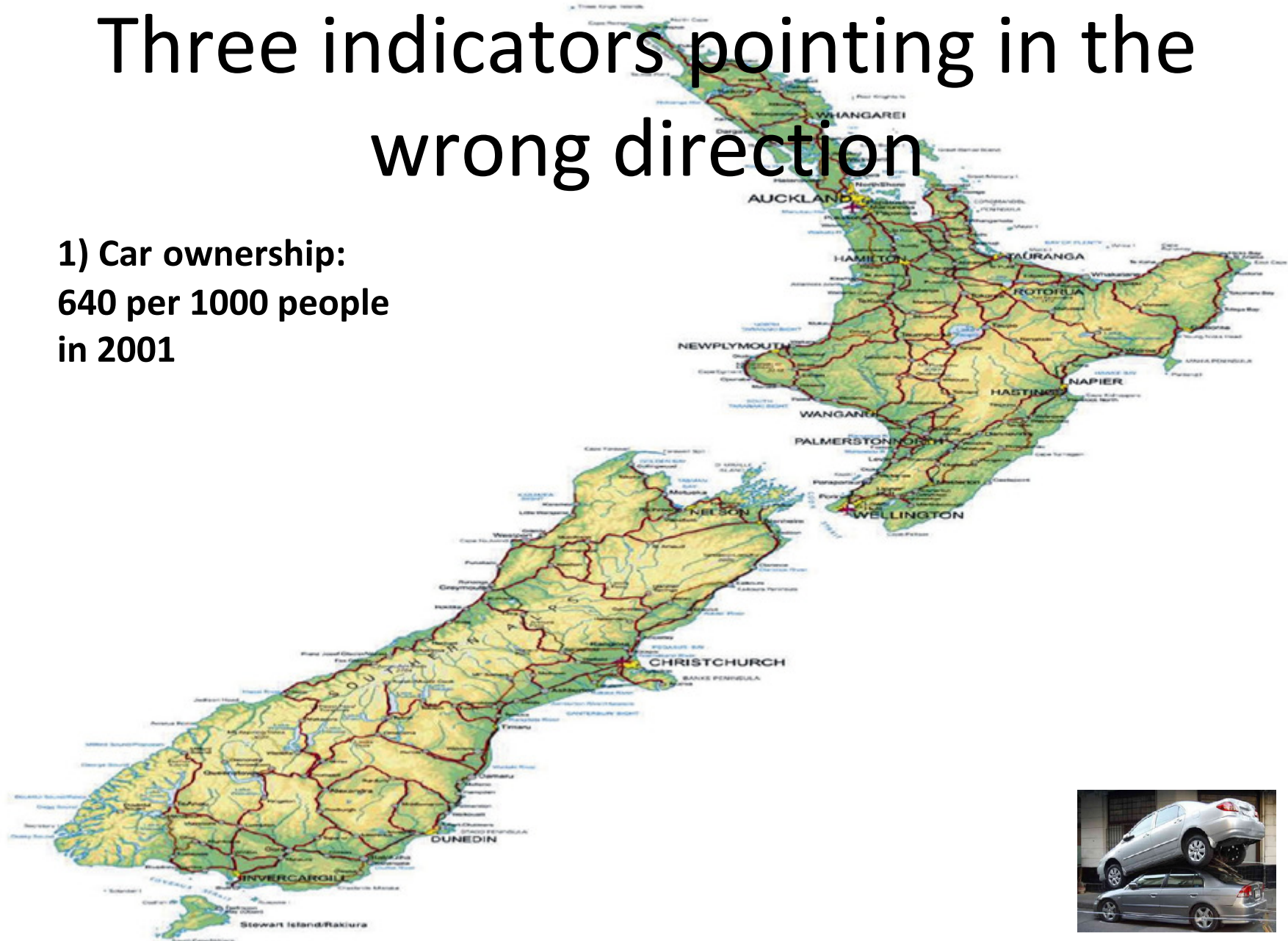
INTRODUCTION

- Pilot study on sustainable transport and urban design at local government level
- Giving focus to further research and building strong links with councils

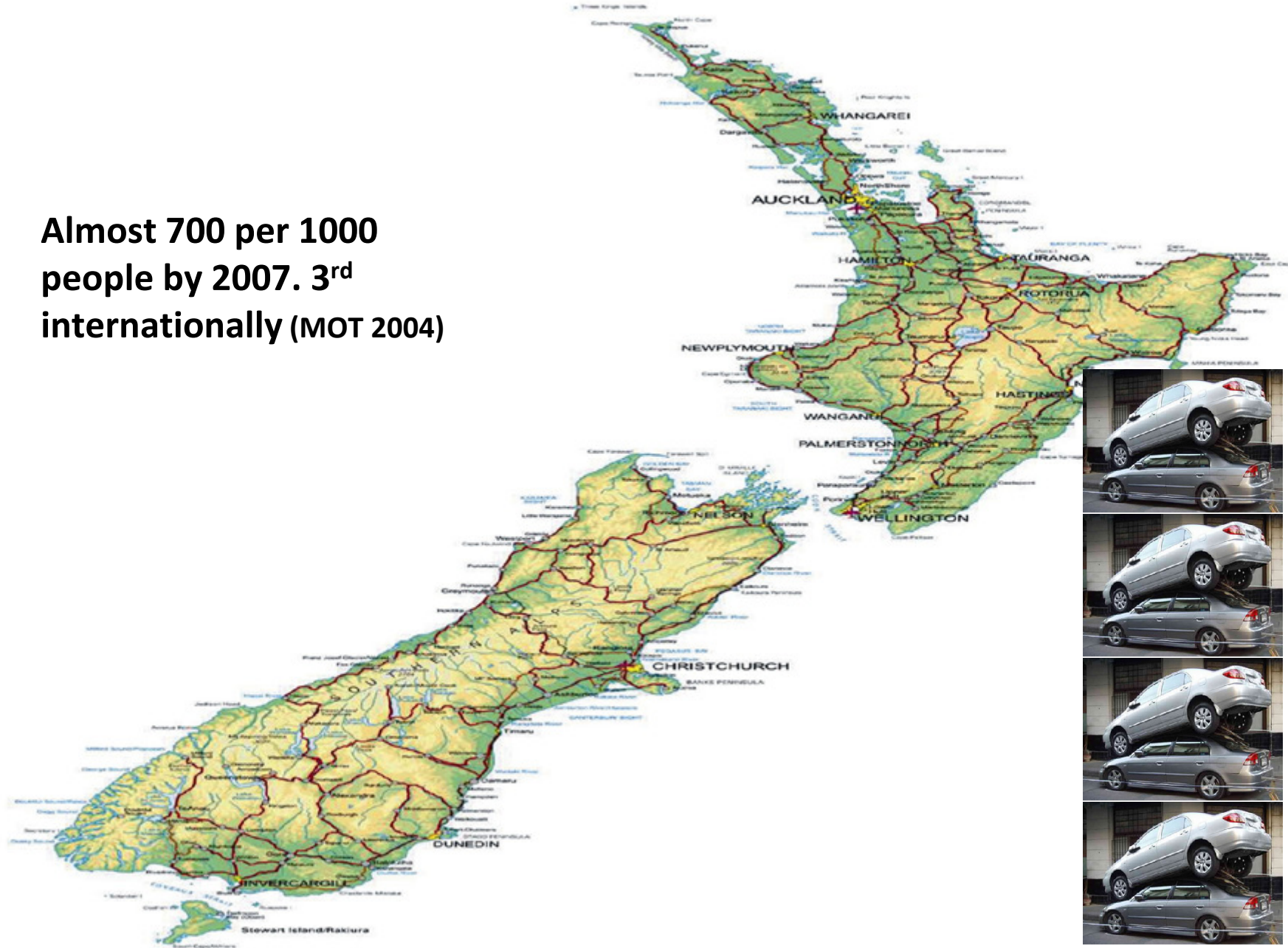


Three indicators pointing in the wrong direction

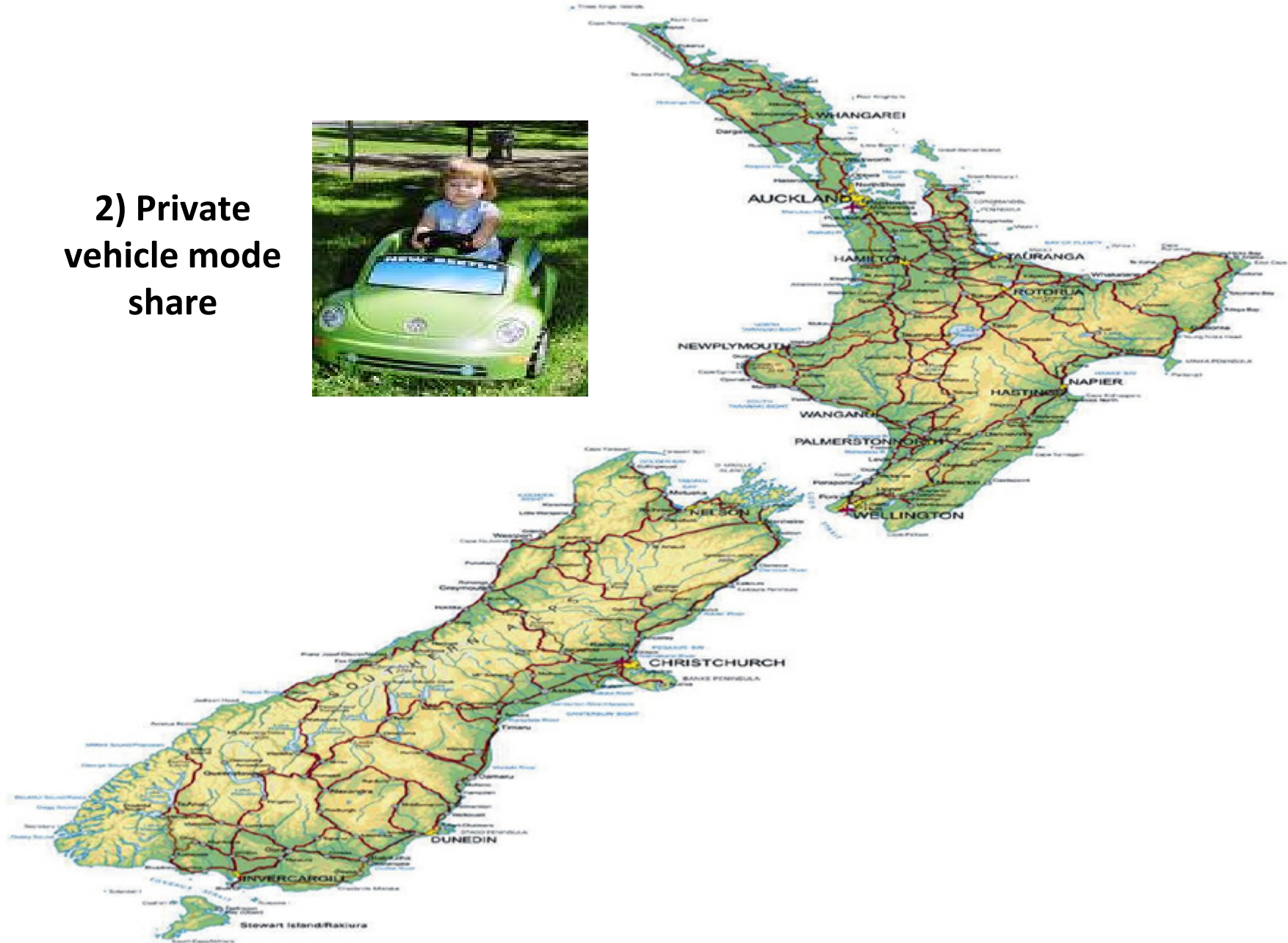
1) Car ownership:
640 per 1000 people
in 2001



Almost 700 per 1000 people by 2007. 3rd internationally (MOT 2004)



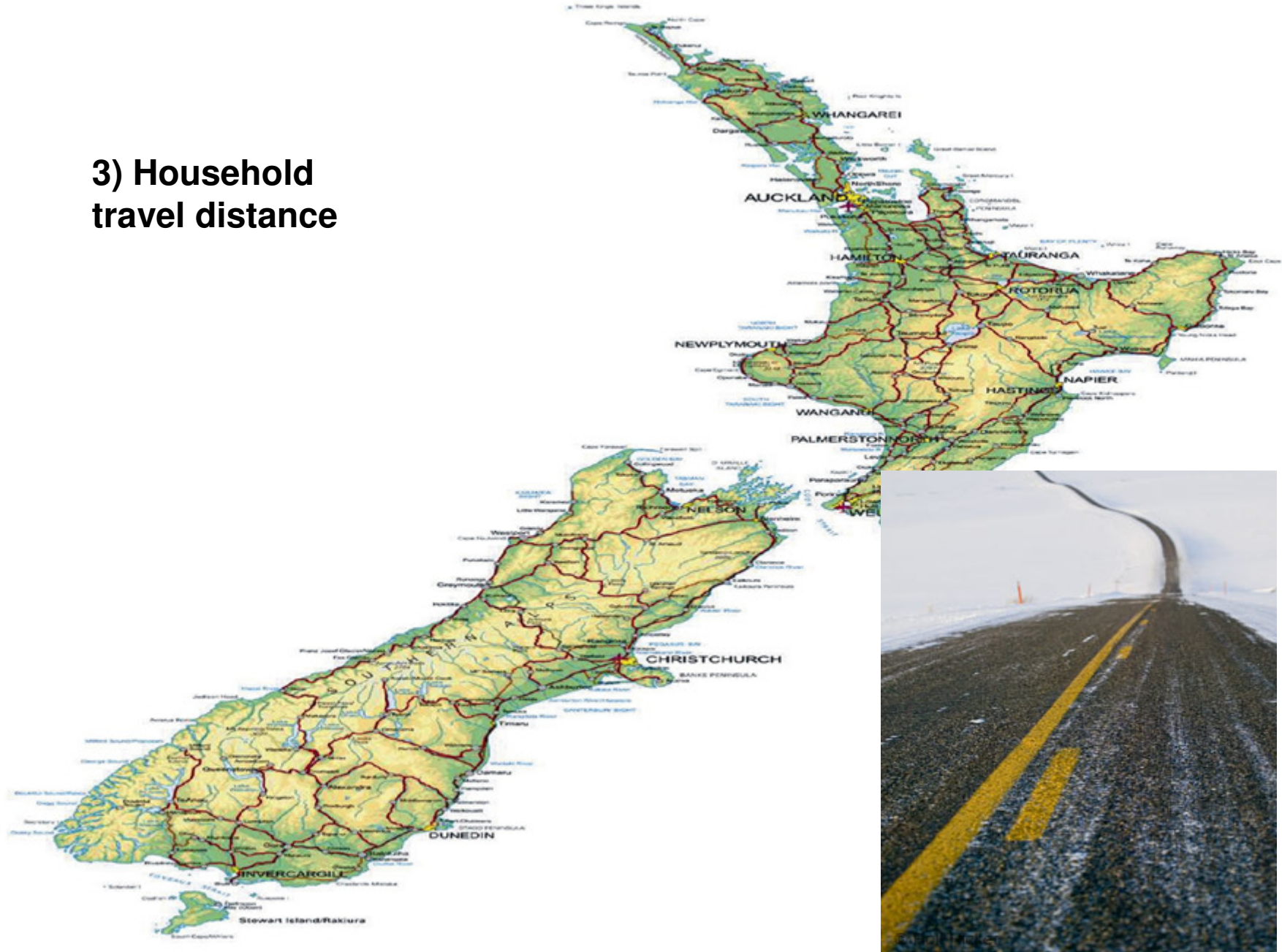
2) Private vehicle mode share



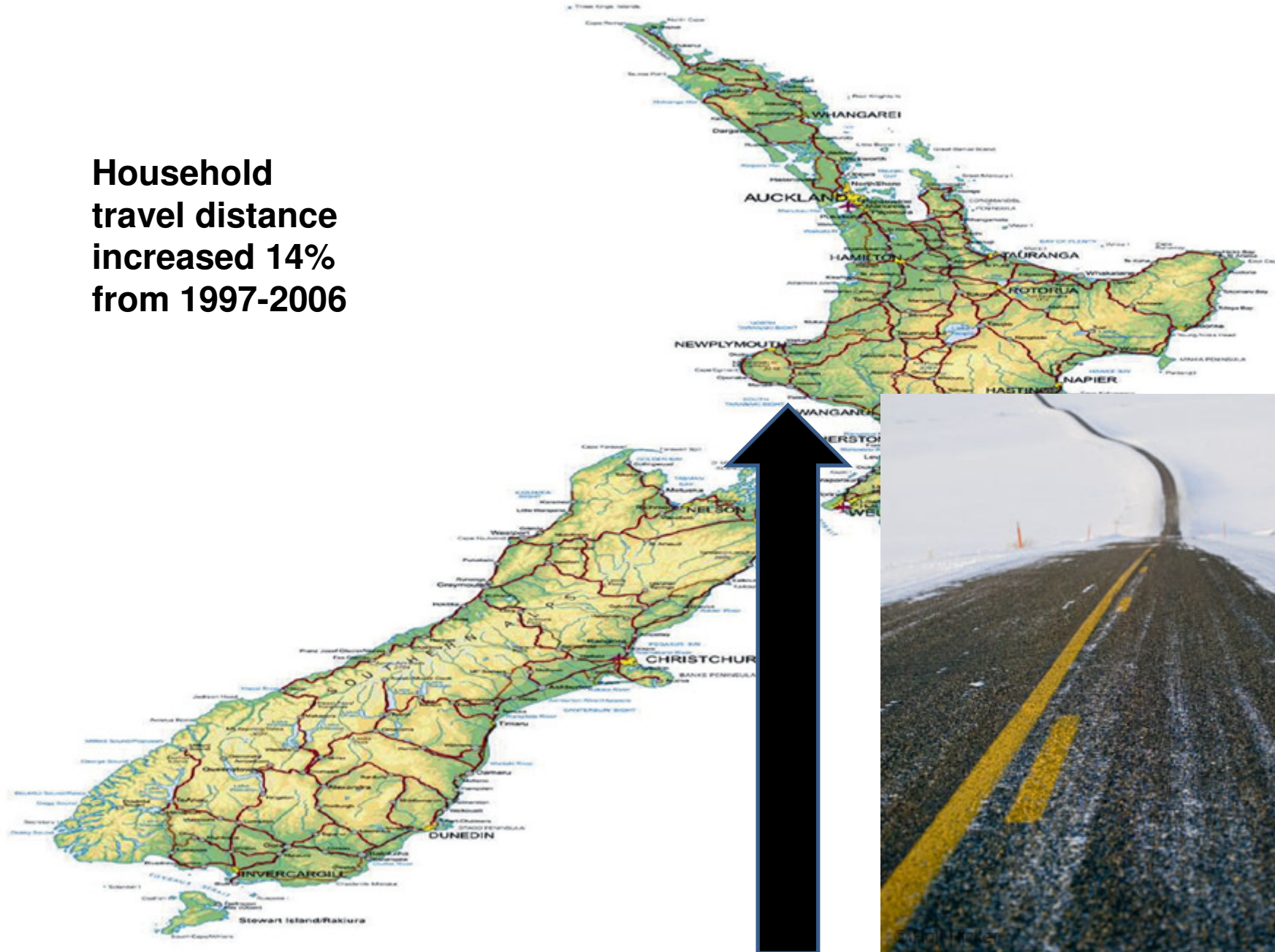
Between 1996 and 2006 private vehicle mode share increases at the expense of active modes



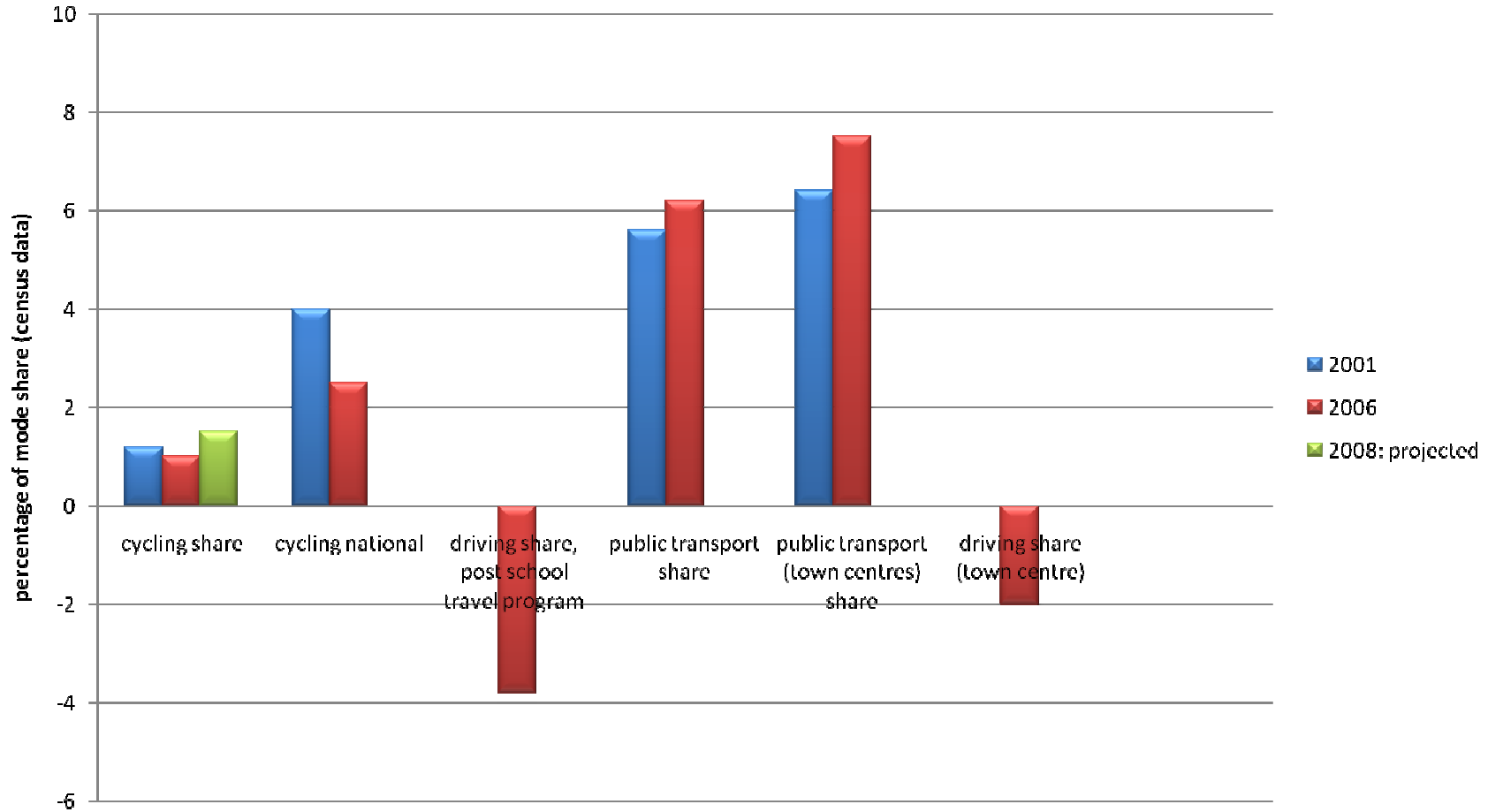
3) Household travel distance



**Household
travel distance
increased 14%
from 1997-2006**

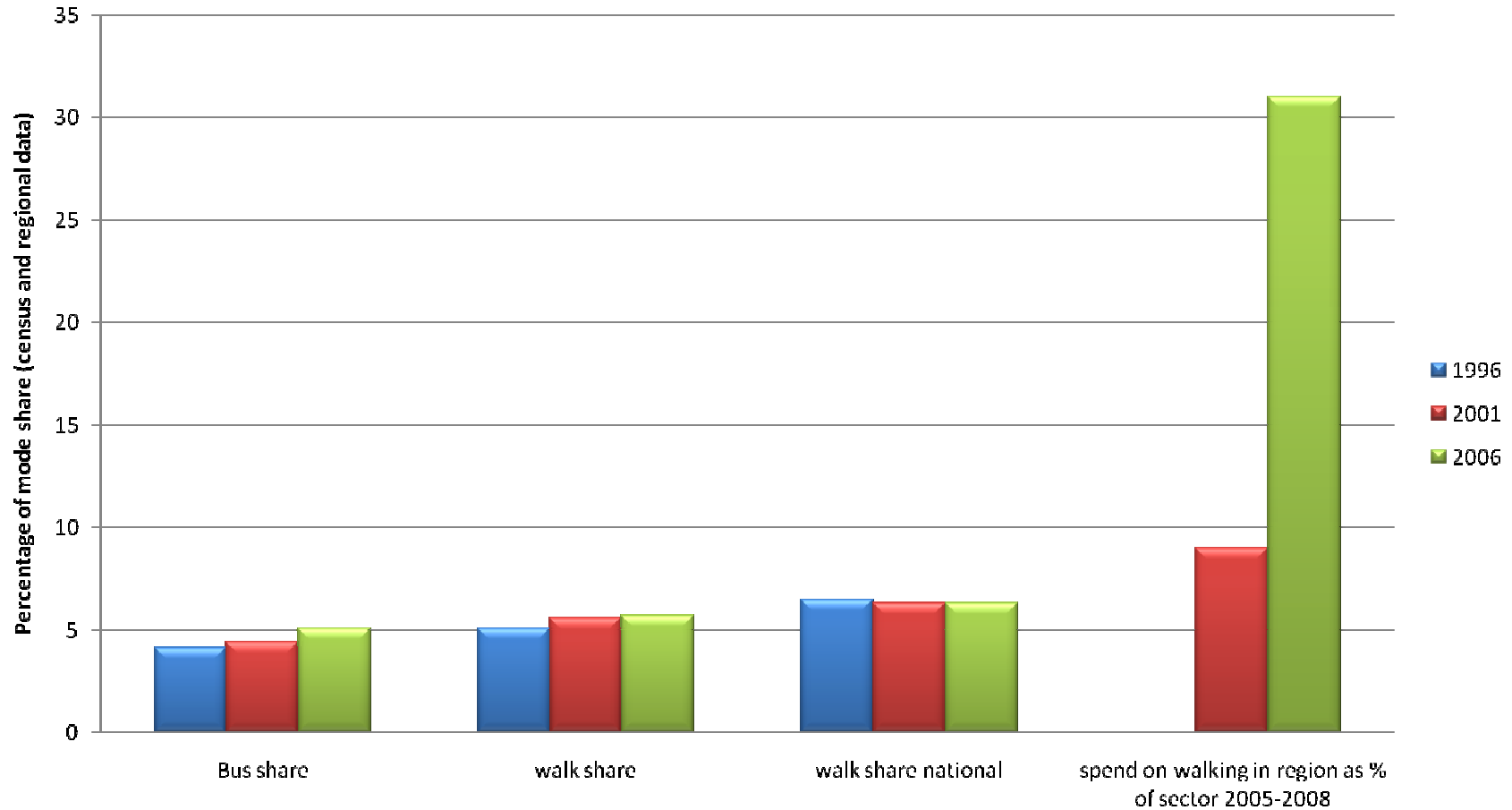


Bucking the trend: Waitakere



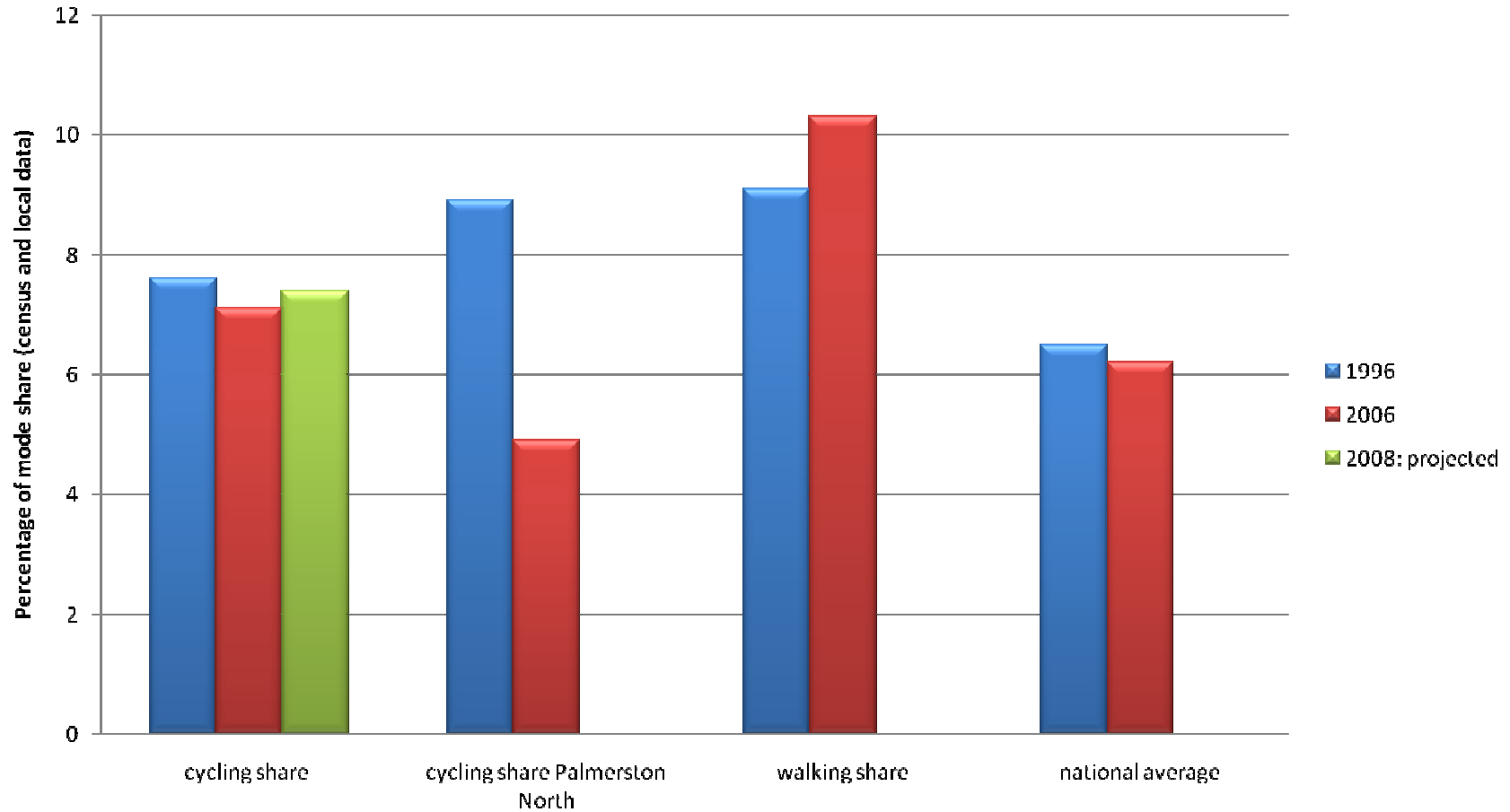
Nearly 30% of city council workers commute using passenger transport or active modes

Bucking the trend: Christchurch



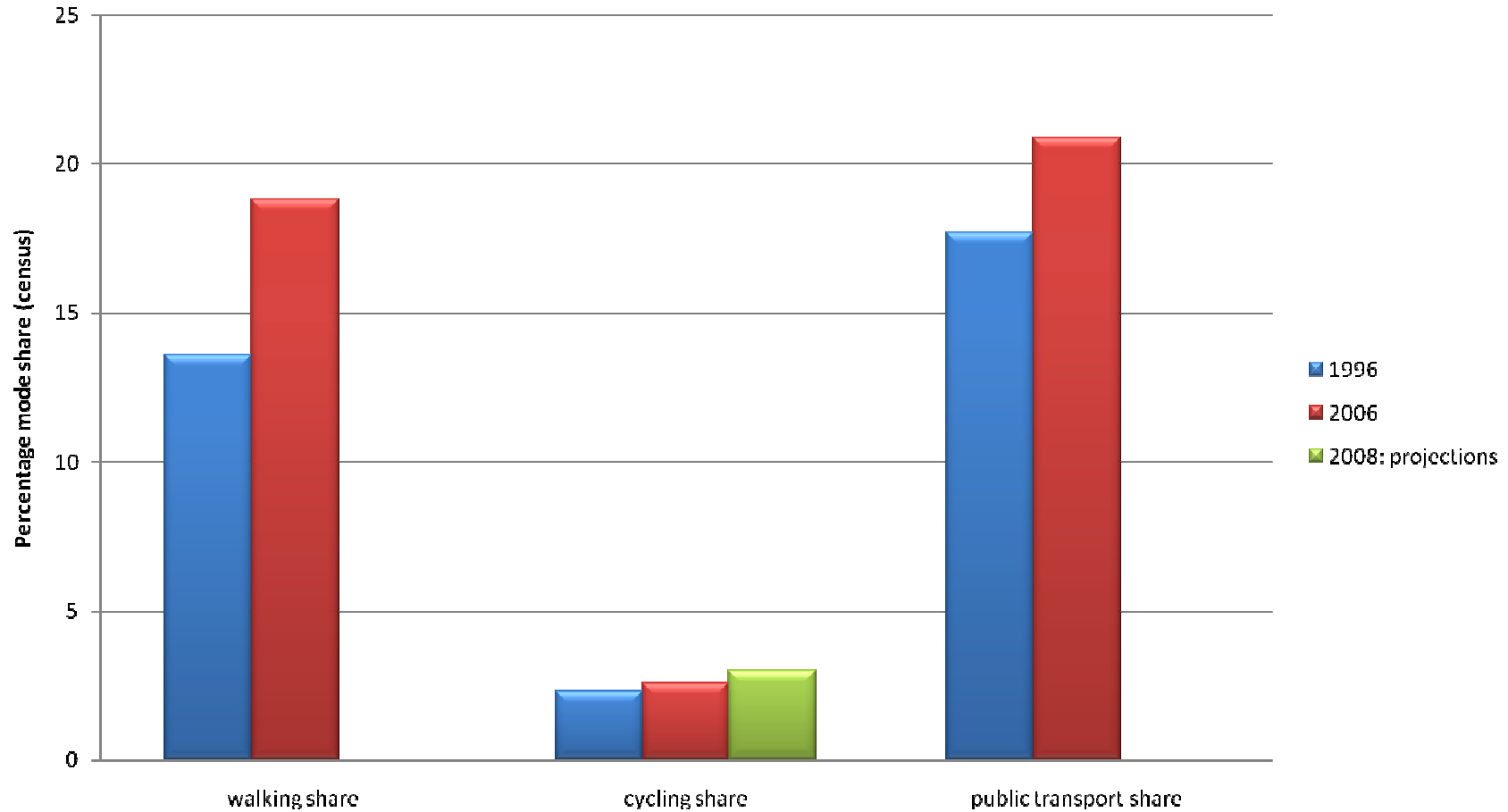
96% of population within 500 metres of public transport (2007)

Bucking the trend: Nelson



80% of residents satisfied with cycle facilities

Bucking the trend: Wellington



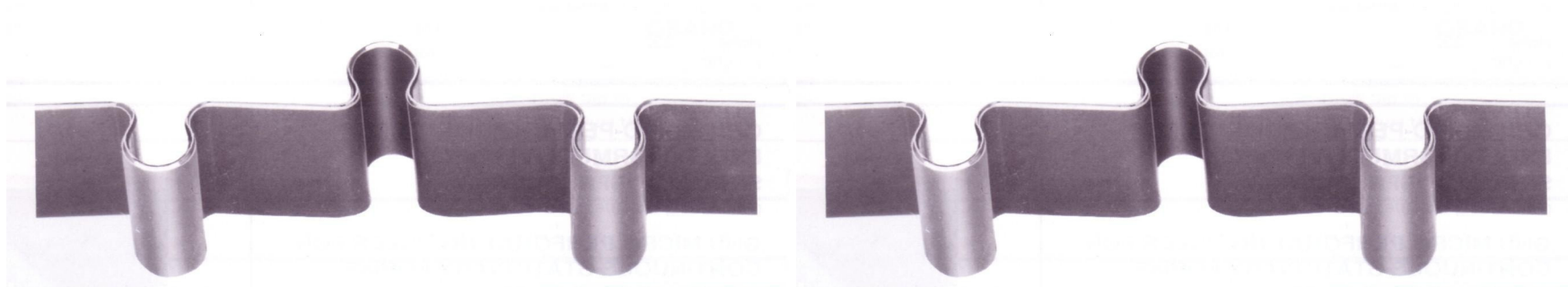
Off peak boardings of public transport increasing, particularly ferry (2008)

Strategy and policy: Direction setting and ensuring alignment

1. Sustainability frameworks/documents
2. Regional Land Transport Strategies / Transport strategies
3. Walking and cycling strategies
4. Urban development strategies

“Valuable as they set the direction for council”

“Definitions are woolly, anything fits”



Governance:

Integrated planning and changing thinking

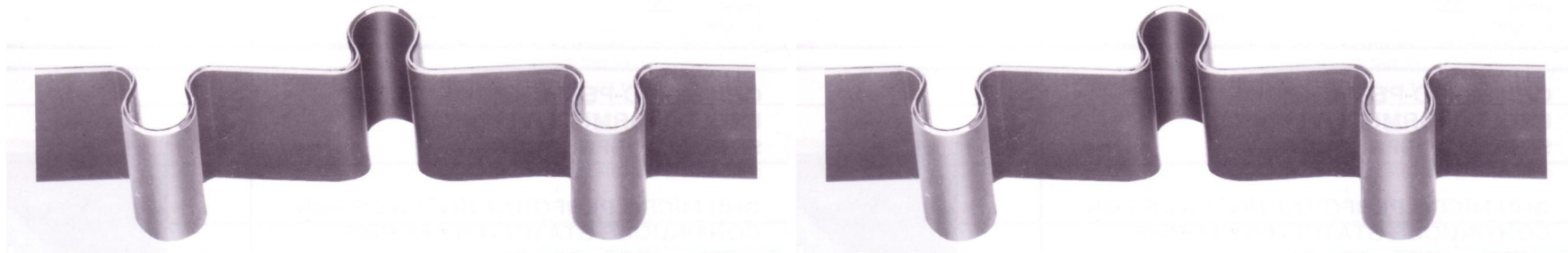
High levels of integration between transport planning and urban development teams within councils reported

1. Nelson team approach to transport upgrades

“Takes longer maybe, but better product and relationships”

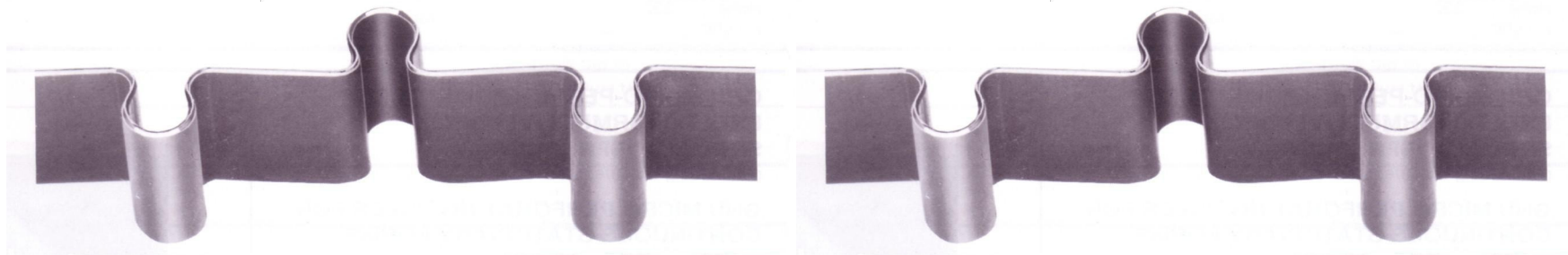
“We are on the same page”

2. Sustainable transport advocates in the operations department (Nelson, Waitakere)



Reduced need to travel:
Transit orientated development, intensification
and mixed use development

1. Growth spine (Wellington)
2. Transit orientated development and Hobsonville development (Waitakere)
3. Proposed changes to Canterbury Regional Policy Statement (implementing Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy)



Pull factors:

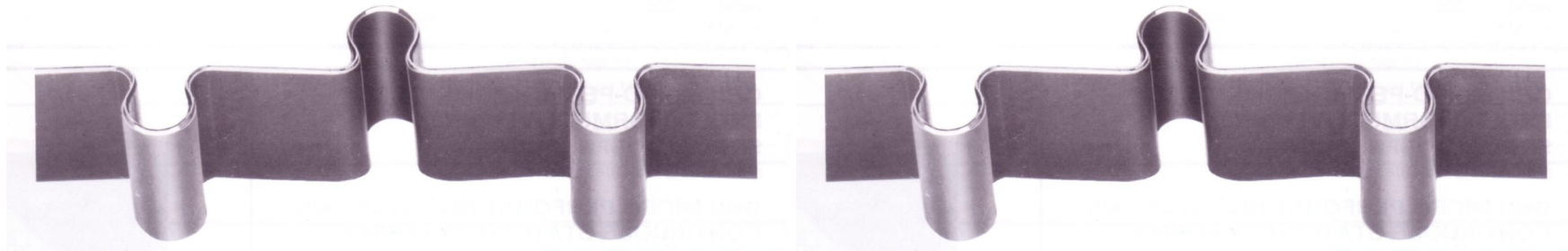
Making passenger transport and active modes attractive

Improving infrastructure:

1. Buses: Bus priority lanes/ accessibility (Wellington, Christchurch)
2. Cycling and walking: Extending on-road and off road cycleways (Christchurch, Waitakere)/ Improved monitoring (Christchurch, Waitakere) / Walkable city centres

Behaviour change:

1. School and workplace travel programmes (Waitakere/Wellington)
2. Rideshare programmes/ Bikewise/ Education programmes

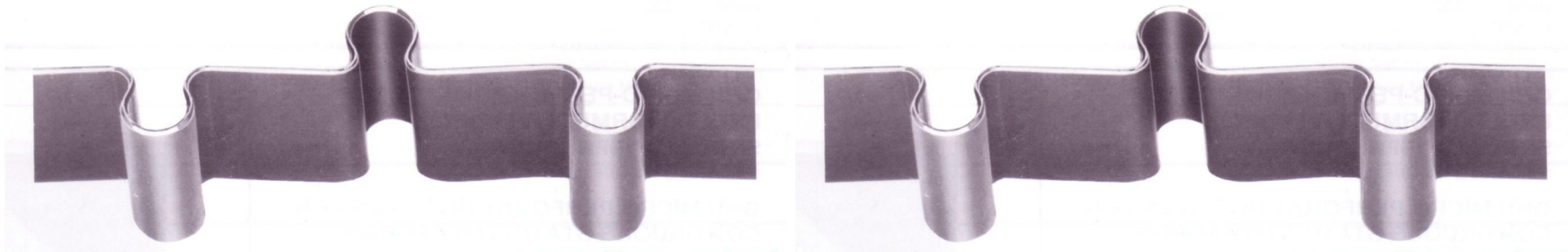


Push factors:

Moving people out of single occupancy cars

1. Addressing parking regimes: Nelson District Plan changes / Draft proposal at Waitakere
2. Not expanding roading capacity (NelsonDraft Regional Land Transport Strategy)

“Parking changes are crucial, but not many people understand this”



Barriers

- Importance of sustainability is acknowledged by local government
- Key documents address the elements of sustainable transport
- Why is there not more progress?



Knowledge/paradigm barriers

Sustainable transport concepts not always filtering up and down within councils

- Seemingly counterproductive measures such as improving motorway access to CBD while also improving public transport
- Older paradigms can limit effectiveness of some sustainable transport initiatives (Waitakere)
- The code of compliance needs to match the intentions of the strategy
- *“We need good examples of medium density housing”*



Political barriers

Some interviewees noted a lack of political will and senior management buy-in:

“A budget is a reflection of prioritization”

- Selective ratepayer opposition to initiatives such as cycle or bus priority lanes is often effective:

“When it gets to the crunch the elected members go with the squeaky wheel”



Political barriers II

- The political cycle may discourage visionary approaches
- The public may not care about the issues – and some issues such as pedestrian issues are not *“sexy”*
- The need to serve ratepayers may outweigh goals which contribute to the general good (e.g. CO₂ reductions)



Capacity barriers

- Limited staff or time reduced ability to engage with research or strategic issues
- High staff turn-over means loss of expertise
- Limited funding reduced ability to implement full range of initiatives (e.g. Footpaths)



Historical/cultural barriers

Christchurch is a good example:

- Availability of land has encouraged sprawl and extensive roading
- Availability of cars from the 1980s onwards has contributed to a strong car culture
- Lack of current congestion issues: *“People relate their future expectations to their current experience”*



Systemic barriers

- RMA processes could deal with new developments more effectively

“I don't think that the RMA has robust enough controls”

- The actions of neighbouring councils have an impact
- Central government focus
- *“Voluntarism”*: making progress towards sustainable transport is not mandatory in many cases



Where to from here?

- Economic downturn, new government priorities
- Need champions (central and local)
- Need exemplars (case studies that work)
- Need public support
- Research to clarify benefits?
- Better education within councils and for general public?
- Better consultation processes to engage with silent constituencies?
- What do you think?

