

26 May 2014

Representation by Rod Oram to the Environmental Protection Agency Board of Inquiry in its Consideration of the New Zealand Transport Agency's Resource Consent Applications for the Basin Bridge Proposal

Kia ora tatou, good morning. I am Rod Oram; and thank you very much for the opportunity to give evidence to you today on the matter of the Basin Bridge Proposal.

I'm appearing on behalf of the Mount Victoria Residents Association.

I oppose the Basin Bridge Proposal in full. I ask that the Board of Inquiry refuse to approve the application of the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) for a new designation and all resource consents. I will make the case that the proposal will be redundant even before it is built.

On five grounds, I will make the case that the best option by far is to enhance the Basin Reserve Roundabout, and thus for the Board to reject the flyover proposal.

First, on economic grounds, I will draw on my 39 years' experience to date as a business journalist. Of my first 23 years as a business journalist, I worked for 18 years at the *Financial Times of London* in the UK and US, and travelled extensively on assignment for the paper in North America, Europe and Asia.

In 1997, I left the FT in order that my family and I could emigrate to New Zealand. Here, I took up the role of business editor at the *New Zealand Herald*.

Since 2000, I have been a freelance journalist. Each week I write a column in the business section of the *Sunday Star-Times*; each Tuesday I do an economics and business piece on Radio New Zealand's *Nine to Noon*; and each Wednesday I do likewise on Newstalk ZB's Larry Williams' programme.

My past academic engagements have included an adjunct professorship in the business school at Unitec in Auckland; and for the past 12 years I've had a small but regular role at the ICEHOUSE, the entrepreneurship centre at the University of Auckland's Business School. I am also a frequent speaker at conferences and public meetings on economic and business issues.

My role as a business journalist is to take constant stock of the world – to analyse current conditions and to identify future trends. What are the opportunities for New Zealand? What are the threats? How should we respond – as a nation, as communities and individuals? And as an economy, as sectors and as individual companies?

I range far and wide across the economy, by sectors and geography. I feel just as much at home on a dairy farm, as I do in a high tech firm or a workshop with city

and regional councillors. For example, I worked with Waikato Regional Council last November, with Auckland Council this February (and will again in July and September), and Dunedin City Council in April. I last worked with Wellington City Council in September 2011.

Second, as a resident of seven major cities, in four countries, in three regions of the world over the past six decades, I have lived, breathed and revelled in urban life.

Of all those places I have called home, I am the most excited about our cities in our country. I believe Wellington, Christchurch and Auckland have the potential to create a very attractive, rich and uniquely New Zealand expression of urban life. With this conviction, I will argue against the flyover.

Third, as an employer of people in Wellington, I will also argue against the flyover. I am an employer by virtue of being a founding trustee, donor to and currently chairman of Akina Foundation (formerly the Hikurangi Foundation).

We are based in Wellington, as are many of our staff. We employ seven full-time equivalent staff and are hiring more. We help social enterprises develop their capabilities and business models. We believe such enterprises will play an ever more important role in our economy and society, particularly as agents of change.

One example of such social enterprises is the SkyPath Trust, a community led initiative for the provision of essential transport infrastructure in Auckland.

Fourth, as a sometime futurist, I will draw on a research paper The Royal Commission on Auckland Governance hired me to write in 2008. The first part of the paper was a study of long-term trends likely to shape Auckland's future. The second part gave expression to them by way of a "day-in-the life" scenario of Auckland in 2060.

Public engagement is the main theme I will draw out of that work. One expression of it is public participation and leadership in the creation of infrastructure; and I will use SkyPath's soon-to-be-built walk and cycle way across the Auckland Harbour Bridge as one of several examples of this growing trend.

Fifth, and by way of conclusion, I will offer a benchmark by which I believe the Basin Reserve flyover should be judged. It is the Basin Reserve Roundabout Enhancement Option, an integrated traffic and urban design solution that would deliver considerable economic, social, environmental and other sustainability benefits.

Richard Reid is the creator and developer of BRREO, as the Commissioners know from his extensive evidence to the Inquiry. I have been a pro-bono adviser to Mr Reid since 2007. Over that time I have taken a keen interest in his ability to see spatial solutions to transport and urban design challenges that other people have

missed. In Auckland, one project resulted in NZTA not building a flyover and in another project Mr Reid foresaw and prepared the city for the planned eventual demolition of an existing flyover.

So Mr Reid's work on the Basin Reserve is the third time he has offered an alternative – and I would argue superior - traffic and urban design solution to a NZTA flyover project.

I will now explore those five themes in detail:

1. Urban economics:

The rapid urbanisation of people is one of the greatest dynamics shaping our lives and the planet.

In humankind's short history of urban life to-date, 2008 was a momentous year. Such was the acceleration of migration to cities, it was the year that 50% of humans lived in cities, out-numbering their country cousins for the first time, the United Nations declared.

By the end of 2008 6.8bn people lived on the planet, thus 3.4bn lived in urban areas. By 2030, the UN forecasts, 5bn people will live in cities. In other words, urban populations will have risen by 50% in just 22 years.

We too are living this trend in New Zealand. The population of Auckland was 1m in 1995, is 1.5m today and will be 2m by 2031, according to Statistics NZ projections.

Economics is the main driver of urbanisation. The denser a population is, the greater its network effect and thus the value of its economic output. The UN's research shows that the world's largest 40 mega-regions cover only a tiny fraction of the habitable surface of our planet and are home to fewer than 18% of the world's population. But the mega-cities account for 66% of all economic activity and about 85% of technological and scientific innovation.

The UN's analysis also shows that the 25 largest cities in the world account for more than half of the world's wealth. In India and China, 50% of national wealth is generated by just the top five cities in each country.

New Zealand's response to urbanisation:

Here in New Zealand, one city, Auckland, accounts for 40% of the country's economic activity, its economic wealth. We are a more urbanized population than, say, the French or Germans. Yet we tend to define ourselves and our economy by the rural and wild parts of our country. We struggle to build high quality urban environments and strong urban economies, or to give a vibrant expression to a distinctively Kiwi form of urban life.

We have two serious urban economic handicaps in New Zealand: our urban population is tiny; and we are very far away from the mega-cities with which we need to develop deep relationships to secure our economic future.

On the first point, the size of our urban population is seriously sub-optimal in a global context. Even Sydney and Melbourne, with each having a population greater than all of New Zealand, are only second-order cities. They lack the knowledge-generating economic heft of much bigger cities.

One solution for us would be to network our cities to create a virtual urban New Zealand of more productive scale. Each city would need to build on its own strengths to create its own distinctive role in that bigger community.

On the second point about distance, instant communications enable us to create virtual companies and communities of interest that are truly global. Two examples are Xero, the online accounting company headquartered here in Wellington; and academics who have a more intimate relationship with colleagues in their field around the world than they do with fellow academics down the corridor.

But the sort of people who want to work this way need a delightful, highly creative, stimulating and rewarding environment in which to live and work. Only cities that offer that, will attract such people from around the country and from around the world.

So, how Wellington develops in economic, social and environmental terms is utterly critical to its well-being, and to its contribution to the well-being of the nation.

But Wellington is doing very badly on this, as are Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin and our smaller urban centres.

Wellington's recent and current economic performance:

Wellington was once the thriving economic centre of the country, home to the headquarters of most of our major companies and institutions. But since economic reforms in the 1980s greatly lessened government control over the economy, most of those important economic assets have drifted away from Wellington, with Auckland as the main beneficiary.

But Auckland is a loser too, with some economic power and decision-making being sucked out to Sydney and Melbourne...which in turn have lost out to Hong Kong, Singapore and other bigger, more powerful cities.

Over the past three decades, Wellington has lost much of its economic rationale. In the past 15 years or so, it had hoped to find new vigour by growing the government, tourism, convention and events sectors. But after growth of the government sector in the 2000s, public sector employment is static at best, and its remuneration tightly controlled.

The tourism, convention and events sector is more problematic. While many of their activities for their main customers are also enjoyed by local residents, employment in the sector is almost largely low paid, low skill, seasonal or part-time. Thus, this sector generates only mediocre economic value and growth prospects for the city and region.

This leaves the Wellington economy heavily dependent on servicing local life. A walk down Cuba Street reveals the depth of the problem. While the ground floor of buildings house lively bars, restaurants and a narrow selection of retail outlets, the upper storeys of many buildings are in poor condition and empty, devoid of economic or human life.

Christchurch shares the same problem. It too has lost a lot of its economic rationale. Many of the 3,500 businesses within its four avenues pre-earthquakes were small, marginal businesses hanging on in low rent, poor quality buildings. Auckland is very similar. Only 9% of Auckland's economy comes from engagement with the global economy. Most of Auckland's economic growth comes from local population growth.

All our cities have also suffered from the effects of dispersed populations, sprawl, suburban malls, road building, and until recently, inner city residential depopulation.

Wellington's economic future:

What of the future? Wellington, in common with our other cities, urgently needs to find new economic life. This needs to be generated by highly creative, knowledge intensive, value creating, internationally connected people and businesses.

Wellington has some sectors such as film and IT that show some of those characteristics. But they have only a few exemplar companies, they are still small relative to the size of the regional economy, tiny by comparison with their competitors overseas and fragile given the vicissitudes of their sectors.

Grow Wellington, the regional council's economic development agency, and elements of the Government's Business Growth Agenda, identify these sectors as ones to develop. But regional and central government strategies aimed at helping them are unambitious, highly conventional rather than future-thinking, and very thinly resourced.

It will take bold, radical and long-term efforts by private and public sectors to help Wellington create a rich and resilient economic future for itself. To succeed, Wellington must become extremely good at attracting people and capital. To do that, it needs to have a highly distinctive, creative and livable urban environment.

Given the scale of these challenges, a highly marginal - and debatable - reduction in rush hour travel time to and from the airport is massively irrelevant. Thus the Basin Reserve flyover would play no useful role at all in helping people in

Wellington create vibrant life and high value economic activity such as in film, IT and professional services.

Demographic change:

Moreover, it is crucial to consider the changing demographics of Wellington to help understand what sort of city, urban environment and transport system that changing population might want.

Here, I am drawing on the work of Professor Natalie Jackson, director of the National Institute of Demographic and Economic Analysis at the University of Waikato, and her colleague Jackson Mason-Mackay, in their research report on the Greater Wellington Region’s demographics: *New Zealand Regional Demographic Profiles 1986-2031. No. 6, August 2012.*

Their projection for the region’s population in 2031 was 541,000 (+10.7% above 2011). Shortly after they made that projection for the above profile, Prof Jackson notes, an update lowered the projection to 539,650 (+10.6% over 2011). While the rest of the data in the Wellington profile will be updated in due course, she believes the changes will be very minimal.

While Wellington’s population will grow, it is the change in demographics by 2031 that is more significant:

- The fastest growing age group will be 65+ years (+77%).
- For the Wellington Region, the ratio of elderly (65+ years) to children (0-14 years) is projected to increase rapidly from its present 0.64 (six elderly for every ten children), to 1.16 by 2031 (twelve for every ten).
- Conversely, there are projected declines at 15-24 (-3.3%) and 40-54 years (-2.3%), while the 25-39 years group is projected to grow by 4.3%.
- In aggregate, this means there will be an 8.5% increase in the working age population (15-64 years).
- But changing demographic and work patterns e.g. flexible work hours and telecommuting mean they won’t all be travelling in rush hours. Yet this is the demographic the flyover is aimed at.

Table 5.1.2: Projected Change (%) in Numbers by Broad Age Group, Wellington Region, its TAs and Total New Zealand, 2011-2031, Medium Series

	Wellington City	Lower Hutt City	Kapiti Coast Porirua City District	Upper Hutt City	Masterton District	South Wairarapa District	Carterton District	WELLINGTON REGION	Total New Zealand	
0-14	8.0	-11.1	-5.7	9.7	-14.4	-15.6	-20.5	-14.0	-2.3	3.2
15-24	4.4	-9.9	-8.3	2.3	-12.5	-30.4	-18.4	-10.5	-3.3	2.2
25-39	6.6	-1.6	1.6	26.1	-0.3	-9.6	-20.3	-5.4	4.3	12.7
40-54	18.8	-16.9	-11.1	-6.4	-27.2	-21.5	-40.8	-15.7	-2.3	0.0
55-64	30.7	6.5	10.0	19.9	6.0	-16.4	-8.8	-8.7	15.0	16.9
65-74	86.6	62.4	64.1	48.5	69.1	41.1	33.0	51.4	65.2	70.7
75-84	115.1	89.1	147.4	53.0	78.4	76.7	110.9	109.8	90.9	97.9
85+	86.0	80.1	184.2	89.8	107.3	78.3	182.4	107.1	94.8	98.1
Total	19.1	1.5	5.4	20.4	0.8	-4.0	-5.1	3.3	10.7	16.3
65+	95.1	72.9	96.0	56.3	77.7	58.3	70.1	76.4	77.2	82.8

Source: Statistics New Zealand, *Subnational Population Projections by Age and Sex, 2006(base)-2031 Update*

Instead, it would be far wiser and more effective for the government and councils to invest in meeting the transport needs of the older population, that is people 65 years and older, a group which will expand by 77% by 2031. Yet, most of this large age group use transport at different times of the day and travel to different places than the main working age population for whom the flyover is intended.

Behaviour change:

Moreover, these demographic patterns are being reinforced by some changes in behaviour patterns. For example, young people are driving less for a host of reasons - higher petrol prices, new licensing laws, improvements in technology that support alternative transportation, and changes in Generation Y's values and preferences – are all factors that are likely to have an impact for years to come.

Notably, for example, the number of 16-19 year olds holding driving licences has fallen sharply over the past five years, with the decline in Wellington much steeper than in Auckland, Christchurch and for the nation as a whole.

It is likely that Wellington's deep reduction in young licence holders is strongly influenced by the city's compact urban form, already high uptake in public transport use, close residential proximity to the inner city and the city's ease of walkability. These young people walk and cycle more and want more public transport.

Declining number of young drivers

	16 year olds	17 year olds	18 year olds	19 year olds
	2008	2013	2008	2013
Auckland	10,594	5,504	14,105	10,514
Wellington	1,959	527 -73%	2,562	1,025 -60%
Christchurch	2,751	1,373	3,484	2,597
National	36,637	18,713	45,730	34,041

Source: NZTA; *Sunday Star-Times*, March 2, 2014

2. Urban life and design:

Far more profoundly, though, the flyover would seriously damage the character and quality of public open space and amenity in the Basin Reserve and widely around it. This is my second ground for opposing the flyover and supporting an enhanced Basin Reserve Roundabout.

The Board has received extensive evidence from urban design experts such as Jan McCredie on the irreparable harm the flyover would do to the city's urban environment. For example, Ms McCredie said in her evidence to the Board on April 23:

"...the Basin Bridge Proposal including mitigation measures is totalling contrary to the high quality urban design and stimulating intense urban experience. The proposal severely compromises what Wellington is and what Wellington aspires to be in the future."

As Ms McCredie, a former manager of Urban Design at the City Council, noted these aspirations are incorporated in Wellington's key planning and strategy documents. She described the vision, drawing on the council's own words, as:

"The vision in all these documents supports retaining and strengthening the attributes of the city 'we have' - by enhancing - urban amenity and sense of place; a compact, walkable city; a city of innovation and creativity; of beauty and resilience; a safer and more liveable city; more sustainable, better connected and more prosperous; a city that is memorable and distinctive. (Witness concise summary, p2-3)

This evidence, and that of some of the other expert witnesses, aligns with my position that the quality of life is the very attribute on which the city depends for attracting people and investment. Thus it is the key to Wellington's future. As Lewis Mumford, the US social philosopher, wrote in his 1938 book *The Culture of Cities*:

"The city is a fact of nature, like a cave, a run of mackerel or an ant-heap. But it is also a conscious work of art, and it holds within its communal framework many simpler and more personal forms of art. Mind takes form in the city; and in turn, urban form conditions mind."

And as Charles Landry, a world-leading writer on creative cities, wrote in his 2006 book *The Art of City Making*:

"At its best, good city-making leads to the highest achievements of human culture. A cursory look at the globe reveals the names of cities old and new. Their names resonate as we think simultaneously of their physical presence, their activities, their cultures and their people and ideas: Cairo, Isfahan, Delhi, Rome, Constantinople, Canton/Guangzhou, Kyoto, New York, San Francisco, Shanghai, Vancouver or, on a smaller scale, Berne, Florence, Varanasi, Shibam.

"Our best cities are the most elaborate and sophisticated artifacts humans have

conceived, shaped and made. The worst are forgettable, damaging, destructive, even hellish.”

It pains me to report that Mr Landry didn't think much of Auckland when he visited three years ago. I had been involved in bringing him to Auckland to do a workshop on city making with Auckland Council and its 21 local boards. A city council staff member and I took him on an extensive tour of the city two days running.

Auckland and Wellington fare well in global rankings such as the Mercer Quality of Living Survey. But both cities, along with Christchurch and Dunedin, face deeply uncertain futures. Unless they can reinvent their urban economies they will be unable to earn enough to invest in the quality of their built environment on which their economies depend. But it's a vicious circle. They need the quality environment to attract people and investment to grow their economies.

Yet in the case of Wellington's urban landscape, the Basin Reserve flyover would cut across the northern boundary of the Basin Reserve, devaluing that amenity, blighting the surrounding neighbourhood and dividing the city at the very centre and pivot point of its street system.

Jan Gehl, the world-renowned urban design specialist, visited Wellington in 2004 and commented at that time on the Transit proposal for a Basin Reserve flyover: “Freeways and flyovers have had their period and 21st century traffic solutions are more sensitive to their environment.”

3. Employment:

Wellington has a very special and effective work environment, thanks to the close proximity of people in business, civic and government services, politics, professional services, academia, research, the arts and the diplomatic community, not to mention the city's population at large.

This easy nexus of so many strands of economic, social and cultural life builds relationships and generates innovation and synergies. By contrast, Auckland suffers from being larger and its people more compartmentalized and more widely spread; and Christchurch and Dunedin lack some of the fields, notably national politics and the diplomatic community, which greatly benefit Wellington.

It is this creative and energising environment in Wellington that has helped foster, for example the flourishing social enterprise sector in which we at the Akina Foundation work. For us, Wellington is home to many of the best people and leading organisations in social enterprise in the country.

We have close relationships with others in the social enterprise sector such as the Enspirial Network, PledgeMe, Inspiring Stories and Loomio; with our corporate supporters such as NZ Post, Kiwibank and Contact Energy; with members of our pro bono network of professional service firms such as Russell

McVeagh and KPMG; with our philanthropic supporters such as the Todd Foundation; and with the city council and national government.

Our staff thrives in Wellington. With an average age of mid-30s, they lead very focused but fluid work and social lives. While we have a pleasant office on Wakefield Street, they are often meeting people as and when they need around the city. They are shaped and informed by the city.

As the Harvard economist Edward Glaeser wrote in his 2011 book *The Triumph of Cities*:

“Cities are the absence of physical space between people and companies. They are proximity, density and closeness.” (p6)

“Human capital, far more than physical infrastructure, explains why cities succeed.” (p27)

Wellington has to be an ever-better, ever-more creative environment. Wellington needs to attract ever-more people and capital, so they can help the city and country progress.

However, I believe the flyover would do serious damage to the Basin Reserve, its neighbourhood and to the wider structure and quality of the city’s built environment, as well as to its image and identity locally, nationally and internationally as Australasia’s only walkable, compact city. The flyover would stunt the city’s development.

4. Public creation:

What will the Wellington region be like in coming decades?

It is a crucial question to ask. We need some idea of the future so we can prepare and build for it. Great global and local forces are influencing our lives. But we can shape the outcome through our ambitions and resources, through our strategies and governance.

Governance in its widest sense is critical to the outcome. The processes of central and local government, the running of companies and institutions, and civil society’s formal and informal workings all help develop our nation. We can all play a part, whether we are individuals or families, businesses or bureaucracies.

Good governance will largely determine how well we turn our ambitions into reality, how well we capitalise on positive global trends, and how well we cope with adverse ones. Conversely, we can expect suboptimal results from bad governance.

Yet predicting the future is always fraught with difficulties. Even if we factor in variations only in ambitions and governance, we will end up with quite different outcomes.

And the exercise has become far harder across the world in recent decades. The pressures of population growth and use of natural resources are intensifying, progress in science and technology is accelerating, and the scale and complexity of problems are multiplying. Above all, the global interconnection between people and their issues is deepening.

Forecasts, projections and models can help us grapple with these issues but we still need a framework to help us integrate that knowledge into a dynamic and insightful view of the future.

One particularly useful framework is a “Standing in the future” exercise. In this, participants research long-term trends deeply, make good judgements about their potential impact and then create scenarios to explore about how the trends might interact with each other to shape the future.

Here in New Zealand Landcare Research has been one of the most proficient exponents of such exercises. Beginning in 2004 they worked with more than 2,000 people around the country to produce *Four Future Scenarios for New Zealand*.

Their work delivered significant insights into our opportunities, challenges, and attitudes to change as a nation. It was a very useful resource for my research for the Royal Commission on Auckland Governance on what Auckland might be like in 2060.

One of the themes to come out of Landcare’s work and mine was people’s desire to be more involved in shaping their future. They want to truly participate in creating solutions to the challenges they and their communities face. They are increasingly dissatisfied with leaving it to government to find the answers.

In the past, for example, our cities have been strongly shaped by traffic engineers who have worked largely isolated from the social, economic and geographic contexts of their cities.

In Auckland, for example, this has resulted in the massive motorway interchange at Spaghetti Junction that isolates the centre of the city on three sides from the wider city. Likewise the centre of Manukau is even more tightly constrained by two motorways, one state highway and the flight path to Auckland airport which results in severe restrictions on what can be built beneath it.

Thankfully in recent years, we’ve seen a greater measure of public participation and leadership in Auckland, even though this has taken fierce battles in council, through the media and sometimes in court to achieve that. The fruits of this have included:

- Realignment of the most significant sections of the SH1 motorway south of Puhoi to provide a safer, less environmentally harmful and cheaper route than NZTA had originally proposed

- Realignment of SH20 around Mount Roskill Volcano with some reshaping of the volcano (by Richard Reid on behalf of Auckland Volcanic Cones Society and NZTA)

- Hearing commissioners' recommendations for NZTA to adopt a radically different alignment and configuration for the upgrade of the Gloucester Park Interchange, SH20 Manukau Harbour Motorway, at Onehunga, which did not require a motorway overbridge or the same degree of motorway widening (proposed by Richard Reid on behalf of Auckland Volcanic Cones Society); a rail designation across the Manukau Harbour (proposed by Campaign for Better Transport); and rehabilitation of the adjacent beach and foreshore (proposed by Onehunga Enhancement Society)

- Return of the historic Birdcage Hotel to its original site once the SH1 Victoria Park Tunnel was completed, which creates opportunities for an excellent urban landscape once the Victoria Park Flyover is demolished in the future, likely as part of a tunnel harbour crossing. The return of the hotel was proposed and championed by Mr Reid. Likewise here at the Basin Reserve, the historic Home of Compassion crèche could return back to its original site if the Basin Bridge application is declined.

The biggest New Zealand expression to date of this public creation of solutions is the SkyPath across the Auckland Harbour Bridge. Bevan Woodward, a traffic engineer, had long lobbied council and NZTA to build a walk / cycle way across the bridge. He argued it was an absolutely key piece of infrastructure if the city was to develop a coherent, connected, practical and safe network of such routes for pedestrians and cyclists.

But NZTA was adamant its absolute priority was to maximise the capacity and life of the bridge for vehicles only so there was no scope at all for pedestrians and cyclists. Likewise the city council refused to engage on the issue.

However, Mr Woodward is persuasive and persistent. Over the past five years he has steadily built up a coalition of partners to help develop the project and to persuade NZTA the walk and cycle way could be built without compromising the bridge.

We, at Akina Foundation, have contributed by bringing into the project engineers, lawyers and accountants from our Compass Network of pro-bono professional advisers; we have contributed some funds ourselves, plus run a modest fund raising campaign, to help keep the SkyPath team in business.

Last week, a very important milestone was achieved. SkyPath signed a heads-of-agreement with Auckland Council and the Public Infrastructure Partnership Fund created and managed by HRL Morrison, the Wellington investment bank. A Resource Consent application will be lodged in a few weeks' time for the building of the SkyPath as a \$35m public-private partnership.

Quite simply, it took an intense degree of public participation and leadership,

and in new ways, to change the minds of council and NZTA. Without that effort, the SkyPath, most likely, would never have been built. Auckland would have been much the poorer.

5. The international benchmark:

The government has tasked this Board of Inquiry with deciding on the merits of NZTA's proposed Basin Reserve flyover. To that end, the Board has heard a great deal of expert evidence for and against the flyover.

In my opinion, the very best that can be said about the flyover is that it might offer de minimis savings in travel time.

But those trivial savings would come at a considerable cost: \$100m for the structure itself plus the much greater cost that the structure would inflict on the city's quality of life and the city's prospects for developing itself into a thriving, internationally renowned place to live and work.

In the opinion of this submitter, the deeply damaging impact of the flyover is best understood by considering a counter-factual involving the very best international urban design principles.

That international benchmark is the Basin Reserve Roundabout Enhancement Option. It offers an integrated traffic and urban design solution that keeps the city at grade – the place it must remain to be fully connected and engaged socially, environmentally, culturally and economically, that is to harness and secure the four well-beings.

BRREO very effectively, yet subtly:

- Maximises the traffic efficiency and capacity of the roundabout by re-arranging the roundabout configuration at grade
- Captures the capacity increase and travel time savings from the Buckle St Underpass without needing further substantial additional capital works or consents
- Hastens the building of a second Mount Victoria tunnel and four-laneing of Ruahine St to improve traffic performance on the Haitaitai side
- Envisages the realignment and improvement of Paterson Street as part of a future second Mt Victoria Tunnel Project which will give a more striking view down to the Basin Reserve, to the National War Memorial beyond and the Town Belt in the distance
- Protects the Basin Reserve Cricket Ground, its international test status and standing, and enhances its character and amenity

- Offers urban development opportunities around the Basin Reserve and on major streets leading to and from it
- Turns Kent Terrace into a broad and attractive boulevard with plenty of walking and cycling space down its middle
- Creates vistas and streetscapes worthy of our nation's capital city

All these enhancements would help maximise the modern urban potential of the inspired 1840 Mein Smith City Plan, which remains today the 'bones' and future of Wellington.

As Rob Adams, Director of City Design at the City of Melbourne, and a formative influence on Melbourne's transformation as a world-class city over the past twenty five years, states:

"We need to better understand the capacity and the capability of our existing infrastructure and see if by maximising that existing infrastructure we can accommodate that growth. If you have already invested in it, you may as well take advantage of it. It's not about rebuilding cities, it's about transforming them."

Thus, on the five grounds of urban economics, urban life and design, employment, public creation of infrastructure and international benchmarks I urge the Board of Inquiry to reject NZTA's application for consent to build the Basin Reserve flyover.

Rod Oram

On behalf of the Mount Victoria Residents Association

26 March, 2014

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