

Better Urban Planning?

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Four key comments

- 1 Valuable NZPC report; good ideas, intelligent arguments. Agree with much, incl. need for environmental limits
- 2 BUT fundamentally a laissez faire view of planning and would lead to more urban sprawl
- 3 Disagree on approach to housing price drivers: NZPC recs would drive infrastructure with high costs, while possibly not tackling current intensification barriers
- 4 Disagree on climate change contribution: cities can and must make a signif. effort to cut CO₂ emissions

Positives

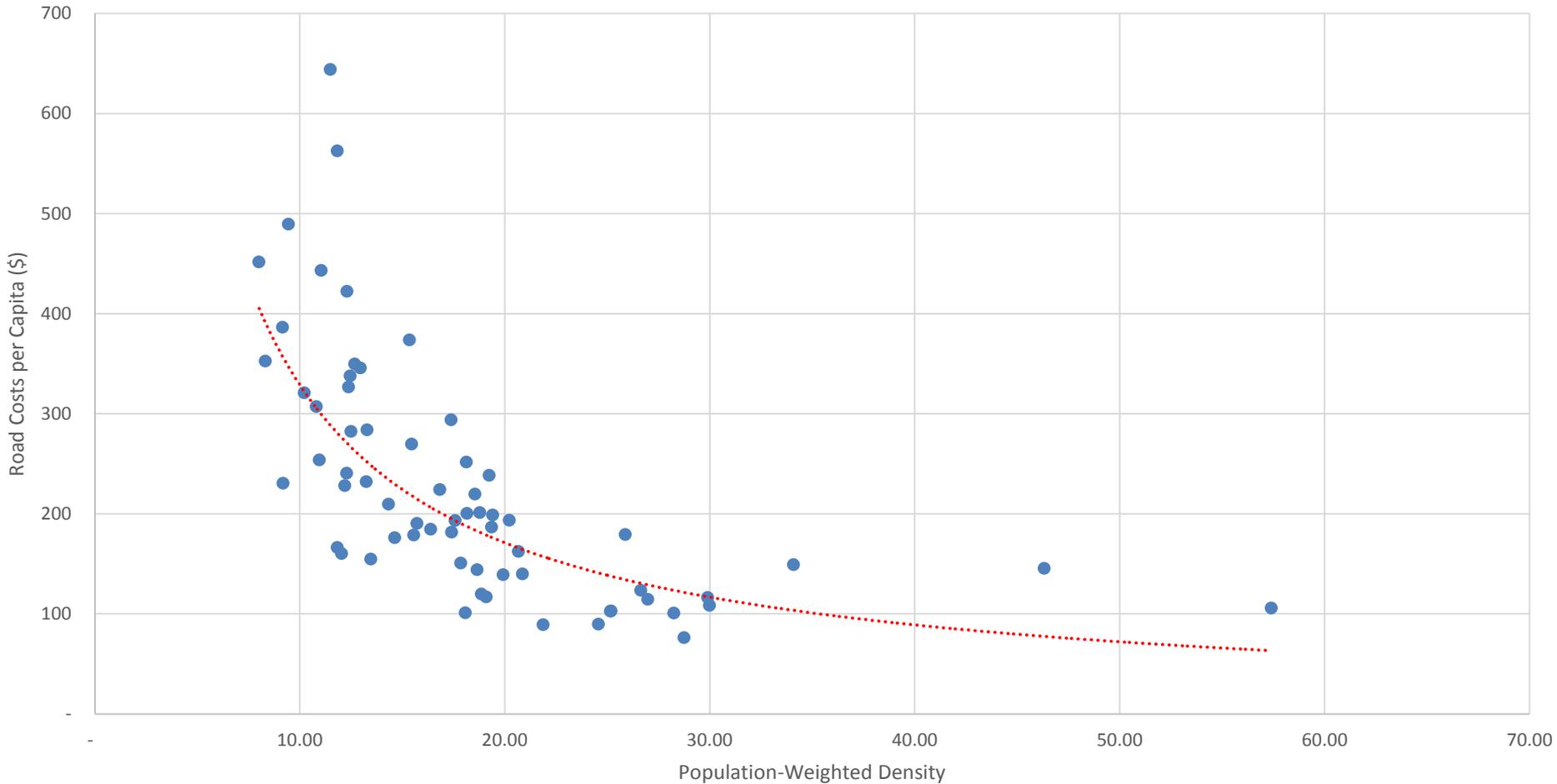
- Valid observations such as RMA focuses too much on negatives rather than urban positives (F5.3)
- Some good points about providing and funding infrastructure, especially value capture (15.1, last bullets)
- Like idea of Regional Spatial Plans
- Agree with need for better outcome monitoring

But a laissez faire view of planning

- Report is opposed to pushing for more compact cities
- But why should cities not lean in favour of being compact?
- Many reasons why compact has sust'y benefits
- Historically, compactness undermined by expensive but 'free' highways, planning controls within cities, min. parking requirements,....
- Pushing cities into a permissive regime in which they have to provide greenfield development capacity is costly and will drive sprawl

Roading infra costs fall as pop weighted density increases (to right) [Adams and Chapman, 2016]

Rd Costs Per Capita to Population-Weighted Density



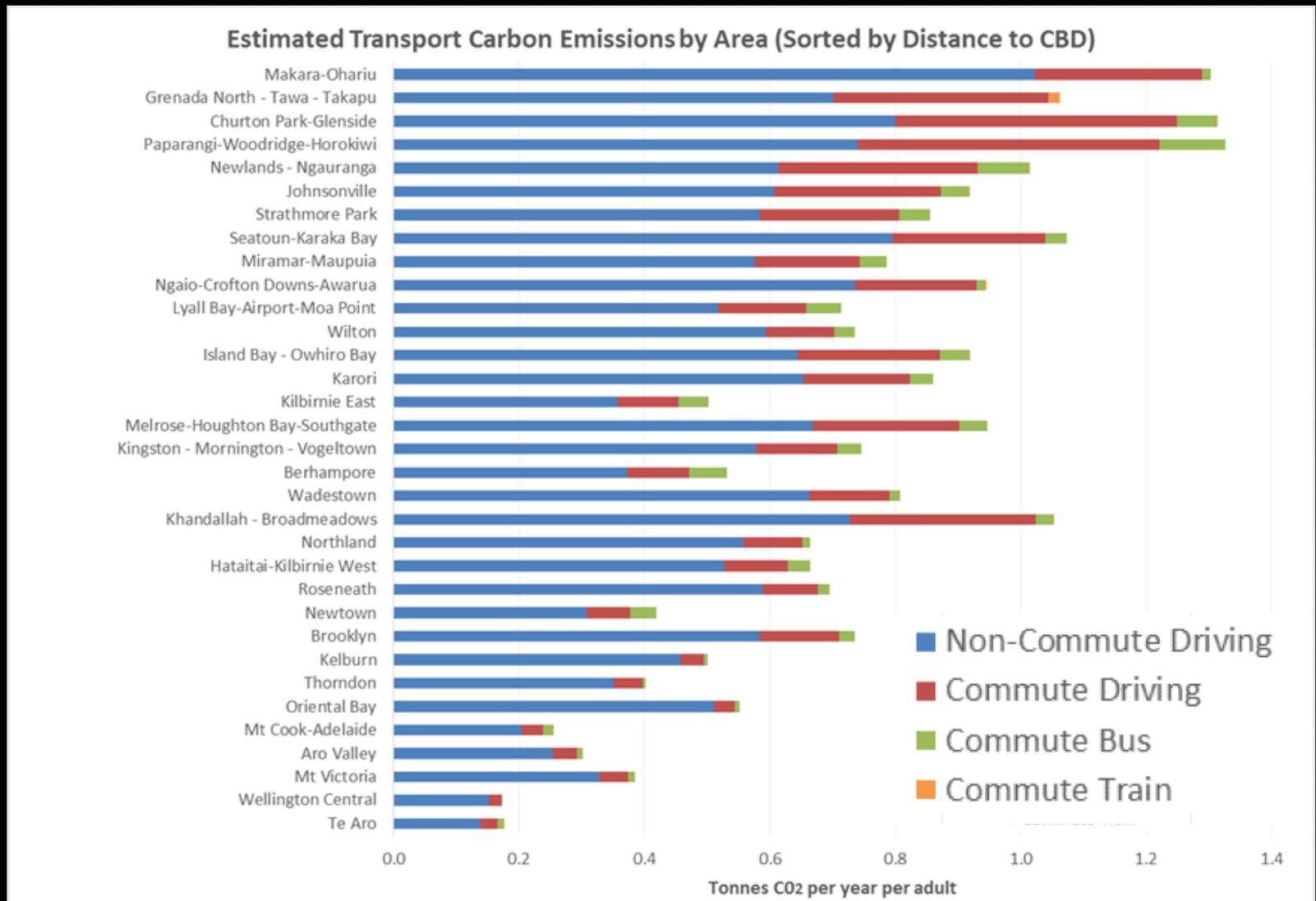
What drives rising house prices?

- NZPC: driver is constraints on serviced land – their remedy: force infra development of greenfields (R8.3)
- I see prices driven by speculative demand (underpinned by tax advantages of home ownership) PLUS tight constraints on infill development and intensification
- Cities need to relax constraints on height, setback, minimum parking requirements etc.

Cities' climate change contribution

- NZPC doubts urban planning can help cut carbon emissions at reasonable cost
- But reductions in CO₂ are vital, and may be low cost considering cobenefits. Best: use CO₂ price plus regulate, invest, inform...
- Urban form interacts with transport investment & choices. Clear result that compact cities emit less
- Agree central govt could articulate a view in an NPS on this (F9.6)

Why more central housing helps: carbon emissions & distance to CBD (Wgtn)

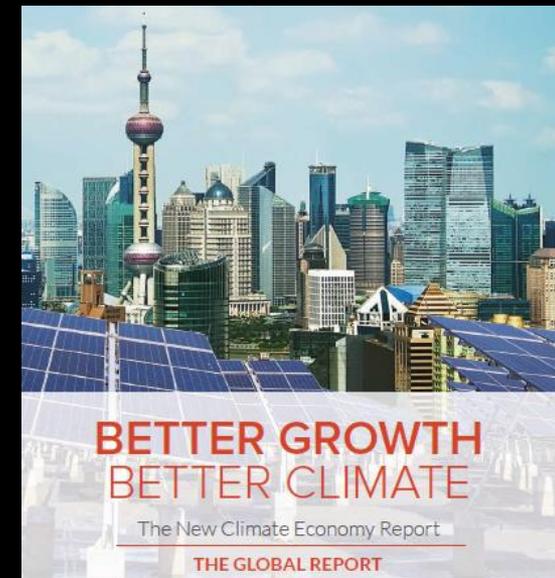


Conclusions

- Advantages of compact development increasingly recognised by both planners & market, especially internationally
- NZPC 'permissive' approach would undermine this trend; could foster sprawl and higher infrastructure costs
- Would also miss a useful and urgent opportunity to reduce carbon emissions

Last word

The Global Commission on the Economy and Climate, 2014



‘How urban planners shape urban form and long-lived infrastructure in these coming few years will largely determine whether the world gets locked into a traditional model... or moves onto a better path, with more compact, connected and liveable cities, greater productivity and reduced climate risk.’

Thank you

