

**Government Response to
Petition of Connor Sharp
on
Delivering Surface Light Rail in Auckland**

Presented to the House of Representatives

In accordance with Standing Order 380

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Introduction

1. I welcome the Committee's referral of the Petition of Connor Sharp: Deliver surface light rail in Auckland.
2. I respond to the report in accordance with Standing Order 380.

Government Response

3. The Government acknowledges the concerns of the petitioner and those who signed the petition. The Government campaigned on cancelling Auckland Light Rail and did so in its 100-day plan, however, it is committed to delivering infrastructure that will reduce congestion, boost productivity, and create a more reliable and resilient transport network that drives economic growth.
4. The Government agrees that Aucklanders deserve cost-effective and sustainable public transport considering significant urban growth; however, the previous Government's Auckland Light Rail project had not delivered – despite the project having been in existence for six years – and posed an unaffordable cost to taxpayers. The Government is therefore focussed on investing in alternative, more reliable public transport options, and on building a rapid transit network in Auckland (including the completion of the City Rail Link).
5. The Government Policy Statement (GPS) on Land Transport 2024 (which included targeted investments in public transport in Auckland) outlined four strategic priorities:
 - Economic Growth and Productivity
 - Increased Maintenance and Resilience
 - Safety
 - Value for Money.
6. Economic growth and productivity is the overarching strategic priority. The other three priorities are equally weighted to support the delivery of a transport system that ultimately drives this overarching priority.
7. The GPS 2024 invested up to \$2.3 billion for public transport services, and up to \$3.1 billion for public transport infrastructure. The Government is committed to ensuring that these public transport investments align with the four strategic priorities. In addition to this, the Government considers that the delivery of major public transport projects will require the use of a broad range of funding and financing models, including Public Private Partnerships (PPPs).
8. The GPS specifically included investment in four major public transport projects in Auckland, to support urban development and housing growth. The four major projects are:
 - Completion of the City Rail Link
 - Completion of the Eastern Busway

- Northwest Rapid Transit Corridor
- Airport to Botany Busway

9. The Government is committed to ensuring that all New Zealanders have access to resilient, cost-effective, and sustainable public transport, and considers that this targeted approach to investment in public transport achieves the priorities as laid out in GPS 2024. The Government is therefore not proposing to deliver surface light rail in Auckland.

Hon Chris Bishop

Minister of Transport