

Press Release: Michael Tritt

Auckland transport documentary makes a splash

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Two episodes of the documentary "Auckland, City of Cars", which exposes common myths about transport in Auckland, were released online this week, and have already been watched by hundreds of people.

Auckland sustainable transport campaigner, Michael Tritt, who made the videos, is delighted with the response.

"The positive feedback I've had about these videos has been huge," said Mr Tritt.

"I've been fortunate enough to interview some of the world's most eminent voices on transport and urban sustainability," said Mr Tritt, "and they all say the same thing - Auckland is a car-dependent city that can, and must, change."

Mr Tritt, who made the videos in his spare time, using a \$950 video camera bought from Trademe, has no previous experience or training in video production or editing.

He is part of a new generation of activists who are using the internet to spread their message.

"The internet has democratised public debate," says Mr Tritt, "while pro-roading groups can spend millions on lobbyists, consultants and propaganda, those of us who want better public transport and a more sustainable approach can now make ourselves heard with a few hundred dollars and the will to make a difference."

Tritt is particularly critical of Finance Minister Michael Cullen, who is revealed in the documentary as being in the grip of Auckland roading lobbyists.

"Cullen needs to wake up and see that cities around the world are investing heavily in public transport," he says "Auckland doesn't need even more motorways - it needs alternatives to the car - including an electric rail system, and it needs them now".

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City of Cars: synopsis

This documentary series looks at Auckland's transport problems, and exposes a number of "urban myths" about why it cannot be changed.

Episode 1 includes interviews with Professor Peter Newman, Dr. Paul Mees and Jan Gehl. It reveals that Auckland is one of the most car dependent cities in the world - the result of 50 years of prioritising motorway construction over sustainable alternatives.

Episode 2 looks at the claim that Auckland

is "too spread out" for sustainable transportation to work.

The myth that Auckland is more dispersed than comparable cities is debunked; world-renowned transport and sustainable city guru, Professor Peter Newman, explains how Perth - a less dense city than Auckland - has built a successful and popular rail system; and the extent to which Finance Minister Michael Cullen has been captured by anti-rail roading lobbyists is revealed.