

People power:  
The path to low carbon transport  
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**2WALK**and**CYCLE**



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NEW ZEALAND

# Accidental Superblock? Results of closing a street to through traffic

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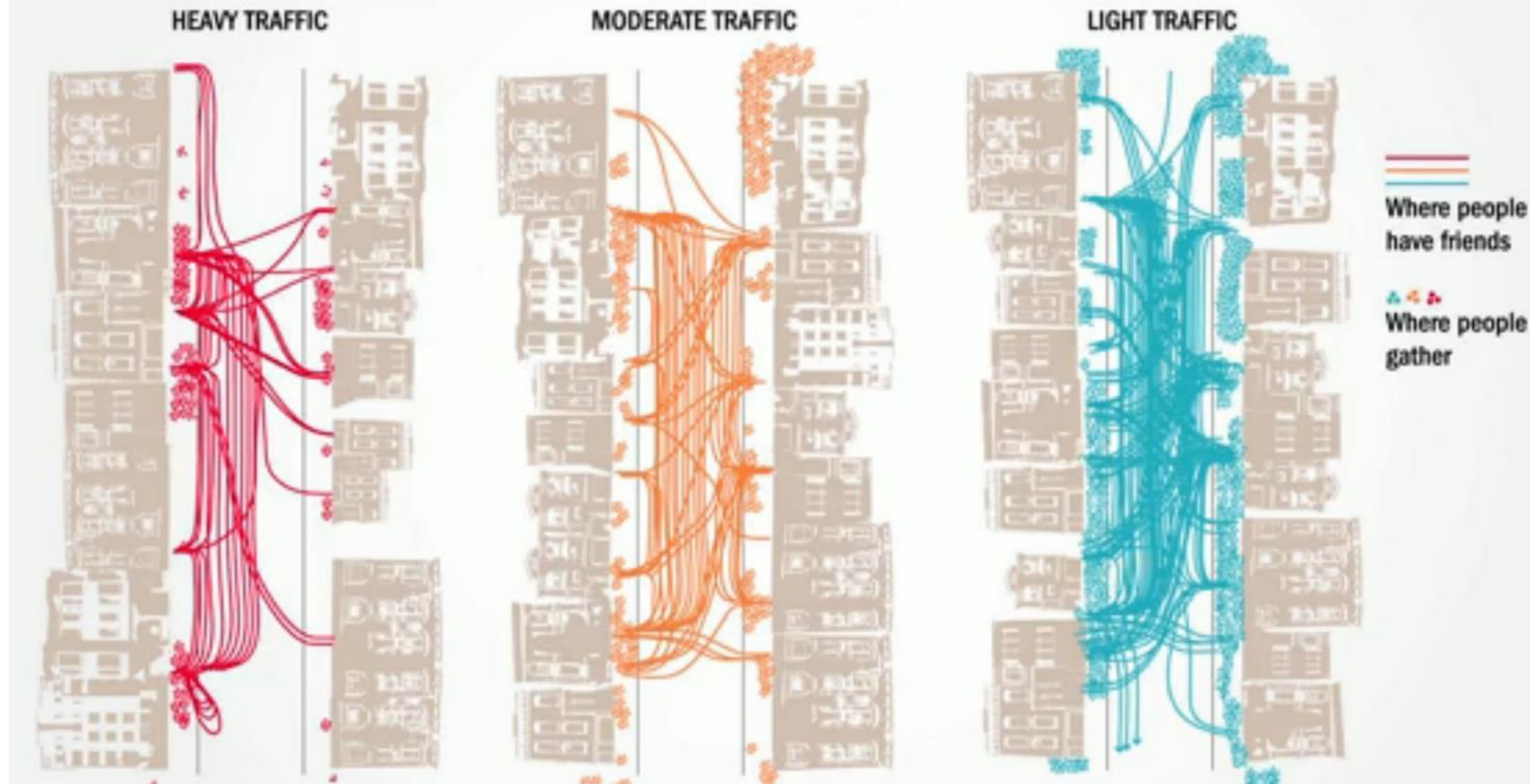
<sup>3</sup> Te Whare Wānanga o Ōtago Ōtautahi | University of Otago Christchurch

# Traffic and community

- Donald Appleyard



# Social Interactions on Three Streets - Neighboring and Visiting



Traffic levels: 16,000, 8,000 and 2,000 vehs per day

Figure 1: This image shows how community ties can actually be knit together by a street that is livable and inviting — or torn apart when auto traffic noise, pollution, and threats dominate the street environment.

Source: Figure 3, page 21, *Livable Streets*, Donald Appleyard, University of California Press, 1981.

# Christchurch research

## LIGHT (< 150 vpd)



5.1 average connections

"We have great neighbours and live  
in a safe street"  
"I enjoy talking with my neighbours"

## HEAVY (8,400-14,000 vpd)



2.1 average connections

"My street is a car thoroughfare"  
"Lived here over 35 years, a decline in people  
talking to neighbours and children playing"

## MODERATE (500-2,500 vpd)



5.9 average connections

"Most people get out and about  
and talk on the street"  
"Family-orientated and friendly"

# A street .....



Was closed to through traffic .....



... and became a people street



... and a games streets



... and a play street



... and surprisingly ....



... and a social street



# Aim

- To explore how the street space was used when the street was closed
- Assess whether this changed how residents viewed, felt or thought about the street

# Methods

- Eighteen semi-structured face-to -face interviews
- Mixture of open-ended and closed response questions
- Carried out soon after the street re-opened to through traffic

# Creating a people street

Journal of Transport & Health 18 (2020) 100872



Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](#)

Journal of Transport & Health

journal homepage: <http://www.elsevier.com/locate/jth>

Streets for transport and health: The opportunity of a temporary road closure for neighbourhood connection, activity and wellbeing

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jth.2020.100872>

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# What we found

- *When closed to through traffic, the street was used as a **place of recreation**.*
- *Residents got to know their neighbours **better & reported increased active travel***
- *Residents supported a permanent **closure of the street to through traffic***
- *Wellbeing **benefits of restricting vehicle access outweigh inconvenience disbenefits***

# Prioritising people



# More life etc



<https://inhabitat.com/superblock-of-sant-antoni-reclaims-barcelona-streets-for-pedestrians/superblock-of-sant-antoni-leku-studio-4/>

# Barcelona Superblocks



<https://cities-today.com/barcelona-to-expand-superblocks-to-city-centre-district/>



<https://www.metropolis.org/news/superblocks-putting-people-centre-barcelonas-public-space-model>

# Christchurch



# Auckland

<https://content.aucklanddesignmanual.co.nz/resources/case-studies/street-fort-street-precinct/Documents/ADM%20Case%20Study%20Fort%20Street%20Precinct%20Auckland.pdf>



<https://www.stuff.co.nz/life-style/home-property/72930841/shared-space-lifts-fort-street>

Not new



# Streets for people



# Streets for people



# Places for Bumping and Gathering

- *Bumping & gathering places* are valuable for the *social interactions of people* within a neighbourhood
- Walkable neighbourhoods increase the chance of *seeing people* who live near & contribute to weak ties that can *promote wellbeing & a sense of belonging*.
- Urban design can *promote health & wellbeing* through *bumping & gathering places* to enhance simple social interaction.

Wellbeing, Space and Society 4 (2023) 100124



Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Wellbeing, Space and Society

journal homepage: [www.sciencedirect.com/journal/wellbeing-space-and-society](http://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/wellbeing-space-and-society)

Living well in your local neighbourhood: The value of bumping and gathering places

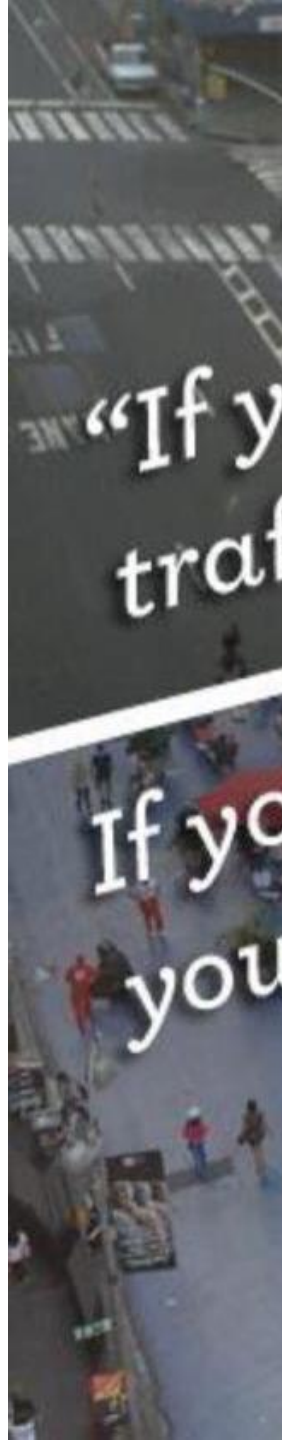
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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wss.2022.100124>

# Social streets





# Thanks

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