*PORIRUA EXAMPLE*

# Medium density residential zones

1. **I support larger walking catchments for intensification around centres and mass transit hubs.**
	1. Where a 10-minute catchment has been used or a conservative 15-minute walking catchment used (e.g. because there is a hill), this should be extended to a bold 15-minute or even a 20-minute walk because this is a very quick e-scooter or e-bike trip.
	2. During the transition phases, as the sector and systems gear up, we need to get as much intensification as we can that enables people to drive less. We need to enable those for whom the planets are aligning to go ahead with their development. This can be revisited in a few years’ time if necessary, but now is the time to err on the side of more intensification.
2. **Where building height limits and recession planes and setbacks are mentioned, I want to see these made universally consistent with the Coalition for More Homes’ Alternative MDRS.**
3. **Please add a permeability standard, such as that 30-40% of sites should be permeable.**
	1. in combination with getting rid of setbacks at the front of sites, this will encourage people to put more dwellings on a smaller or the same footprint, and dissuades people doing extensively earthworked drive-on access with internal garages on a hill-slope property.
	2. Permeability enables us to have:
		1. less uncontrolled earthworking putting sediment into the waterways and sea (because council enforcement teams are perpetually underfunded versus the tasks of enforcing things like small-scale sediment controls on small construction sites)
		2. less runoff (as required by the Whaitua chapter of the Natural Resources Plan and PCC’s own Harbour Strategy and updated Bylaw), and
		3. less destruction of vegetation especially on hill slopes (e.g. behind Paremata hills).
	3. And it lets neighbourhoods get more residents without lots more cars – more homes with walk-up access like those in the bush-clad Wellington suburbs.
4. **I support the Coalition for More Homes’ proposals for outdoor living space and green space and suggest these are added.**
5. **Small-scale commercial activity should be controlled or permitted or restricted discretionary,** rather than the proposed discretionary**.**
	1. For example public-facing businesses under 35 m2 with operating hours between 7am and 9pm, without car carparking on the frontage, and especially where the business is activating a street frontage, providing and maintaining enhanced public realm (such as public seating, planters, a water-fountain, pātaka kai).
6. **The scale of commercial activities that are permitted in these zones should be increased where it’s activities that involve people spending time together, such as daycares.** There are very low limits on children involved in daycare as a permitted activity, and this should be increased especially if the provider is prioritising sustainable travel of those children to the daycare.
7. We need to enable larger, more comprehensive developments in our centres, so **I wish to see height limits increased in the 15-minute walking catchments to rail of Kenepuru, Paremata, Mana, Plimmerton, and Pukerua Bay.** The Eastern Porirua precinct is the only one where there are higher medium-density developments envisaged. This is precluding a lot of valuable missing middle housing from being provided in our city's existing centres.
8. **Shading as a qualifying matter should be reduced from what’s proposed, with a policy for providing popup nearby public realm for development-shaded homes.**
	1. Good quality public realm within one minute’s universally accessible walk from a development-shaded home should be considered an adequate substitute for sun on one's individual property. One minute’s walking or wheelchairing time (the “Ugg-boots-and-cuppa” radius) is the actual time, including waiting to cross any road.
	2. As part of our cities’ transition, people's homes will gradually improve and there will be less need for people to use sun to air out a damp and mouldy home.
	3. But in that transitional period if a home becomes shaded people will need access to universally-accessible, nearby, sunlit public realm for their wellbeing. So a parklets program and a pop up parks program should be instituted in the interim so they’re stood up promptly.

# High density zone

1. **I wish to see a standard added, requiring that developments adequately accommodate active travel for the building's users as the first-best choice for accessing it.**
	1. This could include things like street-frontage space that's pleasant for bike and scooter parking, or a secure and readily accessible room.
2. **I want to see the zone more enabling of small-scale public-facing commercial activities.**
	1. Public-facing commercial activities beneath 50m2 footprint, and meeting design guide requirements for sticky and active street frontage, should be restricted discretionary with discretion matters limited to their enablement of low carbon transport.
3. **I support larger walking catchments for intensification around centres and mass transit hubs.**
	1. Where a 10-minute catchment has been used or a conservative 15-minute walking catchment used (e.g. because there is a hill), this should be extended to a bold 15-minute or even a 20-minute walk because this is a very quick e-scooter or e-bike trip.

# Flawed analysis and a self-fulfilling prophecy of failure

1. The section 32 analysis relies heavily on the Housing and Business Capacity Assessments, which have fundamentally flawed logic. They fail to envisage the “missing middle” housing typologies and their role in Porirua, asserting without any evidence base that Porirua people will, overwhelmingly, only ever want to live in detached homes so this is what must be enabled by greenfield expansion.
2. The HCBA and the Retail Assessment also assume a failure by Porirua city and all the councils of the region to meet emissions reduction targets by reducing VKT. Such an approach to growth creates a neat self-fulfilling prophecy by ensuring that greenfield expansions will simply create more dormitory-plus suburbs where people are forced to drive to do the most basic activities of daily life.
3. A vast number of the constraints on the good activities that give density done well, and the 15-minute city experience, are predicated on the same thing: the fact that they are assumed to generate traffic effects and parking effects. This District Plan speaks to a profound belief that Porirua citizens can never drive substantially less than we currently do, and speaks to a deep fear of the consequences of “traffic and parking effects”. This belief and this fear is pervasively baked into the PDP.
4. Yet we know, from all the relentless evidence of more mature cities, that more and better density, more amenities in existing [places](https://www.pps.org/article/grplacefeat), and more people living within walking / scooting / biking distance of those places, will simply obviate those traffic related issues. It will also give Porirua people a fighting chance of reducing our emissions, having safer and more child-friendly streets for active travel and for our children and older people to enjoy a full life in Porirua.
5. That “compact and liveable city” and “connected and active city” stuff in our Growth Strategy.

## Traffic effects in the transition: helpful

1. The increased density of cars parked in streets, and traffic congestion, is not wholly a negative effect despite what the RMA would say. It can be a helpful contributor to traffic calming and safer streets as we progress on the journey to properly-configured streets that support our neighbourhoods. I wish to see traffic congestion and parking effects considered and used as such.
2. We should remember that Porirua has a large number of extremely unsafe streets at present due to their design: the street environment encourages people to drive far too fast.
3. More people living close to things that people want to do, and not yet confident to get rid of their own cars, meaning street parking becomes more highly used, is actually a very cheap and effective way of traffic calming when offset either side of a street. (The slight extra hassle is also a helpful additional nudge to those marginal decisions of whether to take the car a short trip).
4. Lots of cars parked offset in a street, plus using measures like modal filters and formal traffic calming, will dissuade people from trying to drive fast down the streets in the first place.
5. And because it's the neighbours and customers of businesses on those streets who are the ones navigating their cars through there, they have an incentive to take care and drive judiciously whereas people just rat-running or transiting through at speed will be dissuaded from using those streets at all, making them safer and more pleasant.

## Resource the teams

1. Councils’ planning teams and consent enforcement teams are already vastly under-resourced. These need proper resourcing otherwise all this good change won’t be worth the paper it’s written on. I support more rates being used for this vs for maintaining large sections of road seal to a high standard for driving and parking private vehicles.
2. I also support combined / pooled consenting, design review, and other permitting resources that mean multiple small councils can enjoy high-calibre people and economies of scale.