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**Media Release**

**EDS supports Consensus Building Group Report on Auckland's transport funding**

The Chairman of the Environmental Defence Society, Gary Taylor, is a member of the Consensus Building Group (CBG) on Auckland's transport funding. The Group's report was released yesterday (Monday 15 July).

"We support the principal finding and recommendations of the CBG," said Gary Taylor.

"After many months of deliberations, research, community feedback and narrowing of options, the CBG has charted a very clear way forward for Auckland Council and the Government to consider.

"We have identified a funding gap of some \$12 Billion over the next 30 years and have come down strongly in favour of a form of road pricing to supplement existing funding sources after 2021. Preparatory work on road pricing needs to start soon.

"It is clear that Auckland is in a rapid growth phase that will continue for at least 30 years and having a transport system that works will be essential for our economic and social well-being.

"It will be vital to synchronise the proposed Unitary Plan with the phased implementation of the transport network. The provision of transport infrastructure is as important as water and sewage infrastructure for a growing city. Failure will lead to worsening congestion, frustration and avoidable costs.

"A liveable city is framed around its transport system. Shaping our future urban form will require extremely careful planning and timely investment in Auckland's transport future.

"Our history has been one of a persistent transport deficit. We need to compensate for that underspend and move on to create a world-class road, cycling, pedestrian and public transport network.

"Our sincere wish is that this consensus, supported as it is by a diverse range of interest groups, is taken very seriously by Council and Government. We would not be at all pleased to see the care and effort that has gone into the exercise dismissed without thought," Mr Taylor concluded.