Shifting Gears: Exploring the Mobility Stories of Latin American Women in Auckland

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By Anamaria Rodriguez Mora

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Abstract

Increasing immigration presents Aotearoa New Zealand with both challenges and opportunities for its transport system. While Aotearoa's cities aspire to encourage the use of low-carbon transport modes (walking, cycling and public transport), a key challenge to this transition is the ongoing 'reverse mode shifts' (RMS); where immigrant women shift from using low-carbon transport in their respective countries to private cars after migrating. Given the sharp growth of immigrants in Auckland, understanding this phenomenon is key to plan for the future of its transport system. This thesis explores the factors that encourage or discourage Latin American women in Auckland to RMS after migration, and proposes ways to discourage immigrant women from embracing driving after migration.

This research uses the 'new mobilities paradigm' (NMP) as a theoretical framework, to understand the mobility challenges immigrant women face daily, and identify key ways of progressing sustainability and equity planning outcomes. Specifically, the research applies Tim Cresswell's (2010) framework, which is informed by the NMP, to explore how social and power dynamics play a part in the emergence of new patterns of (*im*)mobility, leading Latin American to RMS after migration.

The thesis takes a qualitative research approach, combining two sources of data. First, the thesis involves a critical review of the planning framework by reviewing documents relevant to transport planning in Auckland. Second, over twenty Latin American women residing in Auckland were interviewed to capture their (*im*)mobility experiences through stories.

The findings revealed that Latin American women are encouraged to embrace driving as a way to address inequalities linked to Auckland's transport system. Driving is a means for them to offset economic, socio-cultural and physical obstacles in the city. The research shows driving is not necessarily a choice in a car-dependent city like Auckland, as many would not choose to drive If they had alternative and sustainable options. Key factors influencing their RMS included motherhood (i.e. having a baby), needing to work in a sprawled city and desires to feel free, independent and equal. However, perceptions of fear, anxiety and stress when driving discouraged several participants from driving as main commuting mode. Although some of them found ways to either manage or accept these barriers, the perceptions of fear, anxiety and stress remain present

for most, suggesting Latin American women end up sacrificing their mobilities experiences to fulfil other needs.

The research concludes that the RMS of immigrant women in Auckland are strongly influenced by to transport planning approaches adopted in the city. These approaches prioritise economic growth and individual market choice over sustainability and equity-needs-approaches which ultimately promoted forced car ownership and usage. The research recommends prioritising transport planning approaches that understands human as experiential and emotional beings, moving away from approaches centred on rational philosophies. This research sits between social science and applied planning and have advance theoretical and practical knowledge that emphasis the needs of alternative approaches in transport planning to address the mobility challenges of immigrant women.

Keywords: Mobilities, transport, immigration, equality, sustainability.

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Key Terms and List of Abbreviations

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Key Terms and List of Abbreviations

Term or Abbreviation	Description
AC	Auckland Council.
Active Mode	A transport activity that involves physical activity such as walking, cycling, running, scootering, etc.
Agency	The capacity of individuals to act independently and make choices (Giddens, 1984).
AT	Auckland Transport.
Capabilities	The freedom and opportunity to pursue valued well-being (Robeyns, 2017).
CBD	Central Business District.
ERP	Emissions reduction plan.
ETS	Emissions Trading Scheme.
EV	Electric Vehicle.
GPS	Government Policy Statement on land transport.
Immigrant	The "would-be member or citizen" (Nail, 2015, p. 3)
LGA	Local Government Act 2002.
Low-carbon Transport Mode	Transport that generates low greenhouse gas emissions
LTMA	Land Transport Management Act 2003.
Mobility	"Encompasses both the large-scale movements of people, objects, capital and information across the world, as well as the more local processes of daily transportation, movement through public space and the travel of material things within everyday life" (Hannam et al., 2006, p. 1)
Mode Shift	Transition from private vehicles to PT and other active modes.
MOT	Ministry of Transport.

Neoliberalism	A political ideology based on market solutions and limited government intervention.
NLTF	The National Land Transport Fund.
NMP	New Mobilities Paradigm
NZ	New Zealand.
NZTA	New Zealand Transport Agency.
Positivism	"A position in the philosophy of science that emphasises the importance of observation for the growth of knowledge, and thus considers the measurement of phenomena as central to the development of understanding. In its more sophisticated characterisations"(Fox, 2008, p. 3).11/03/2025 11:54:00
Post-positivism	"Approaches to knowledge growth rejected by positivism as unscientific, such as psychoanalysis, Marxism and astrology"(Fox, 2008, p. 4)
Private transport	Transport provided by privately owned vehicles or services not supplied by public authorities.
PT	Public Transport.
RLTP	Regional Land Transport Plan.
RMA	Resource Management Act 1991.
RMS	The shift from primarily commuting via PT, walking, biking, or other active mode to driving a private vehicle
Story	"An account to self and others of people, places, and events and the relationships that hold between these elements" (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009, p. 7)
Sustainable transport modes	Transportation that minimizes negative environmental, social, and economic impacts (Greene & Wegener, 1997).
TERP	Auckland's Transport Emissions Reduction Pathway.
Urban Sprawl	Spread of urban development into rural areas, taking various forms such as low-density residential areas, edge cities with business activity, planned communities with their own amenities, or scattered individual houses across formerly rural landscapes (Nechyba & Walsh, 2004).

Chapter 1 - Introduction

National and international planning organizations have long acknowledged mode shift from private vehicles to walking, cycling and public transport (PT) as a powerful strategy due to its environmental, social and economic benefits (Batty et al., 2015; Curl et al., 2020; Nelldal & Andersson, 2012). While academics have conducted considerable research on mode shift, little attention has been directed towards the ongoing occurrence of 'reverse mode shift' (RMS) where people transition from low-carbon transport to private vehicles. This oversight is particularly notable in the context of immigrant women (Blumenberg & Smart, 2011; Snelling, 2024; Waitt et al., 2016).

Focusing on immigrant women in Aotearoa New Zealand, this research explores the factors that affect their transition from low-carbon transport (walking, cycling and PT) in their respective countries to private cars after their migration. Understanding these factors is important not only for gaining insights into how immigrant women can be encouraged to adopt low-carbon forms of transportation in a more equitable way, but can also provide a resource for government in how to consider immigrants experiences more effectively in transport planning.

1.1 Research Problem

Aotearoa's cities rapidly growing immigrant population present challenges and opportunities to planning goals. According to the latest 2023 census, about 30% of Aotearoa's resident population was born overseas and this proportion is expected to continue growing (Statistics New Zealand, 2024). As immigrants bring their culture and association with a particular mode of transport and have different patterns of transport use in the city, a large increase of immigrants in a city increases the complexity of transport planning (Imran et al., 2015; Spoonley et al., 2016; Syam, 2014). As the major cities aspire to deliver equitable and sustainable transport systems (Auckland Council, 2018), there is a need to understand how changes in transport behaviour of immigrant populations can be harmonized with planning goals. A significant challenge is the ongoing 'reverse mode shift' (RMS), where immigrants, especially women, transition from low-carbon transport to private vehicles (Blumenberg & Smart, 2011; Snelling, 2024; Waitt et al., 2016), contrary to the desired mode shift outlined in several planning documents.

Aotearoa's transportation framework has long acknowledged mode shift as a powerful strategy for reducing carbon emissions and improving equity goals. For instance, the Climate Change Commission (2023), in its latest advisory report on the Emissions Reduction Plan (ERP), emphasized the importance of reducing Vehicle Kilometres Travelled (VKT) in the light vehicle fleet by increasing walking, cycling, and the use of PT. The commission highlighted that this approach not only reduces emissions but does so in a more equitable way, with the potential to deliver economic benefits in the long term (Climate Change Commission, 2023). Recent local and central planning documents have also recognized these benefits and consequently placed significant emphasis on achieving mode shift. For example, the Auckland Transport Alignment Project 2021-2031 (ATAP) aims to align transport objectives and investment priorities for Auckland by bringing together central government and Auckland Council. The plan encourages the transition from private cars to more active transport modes as a means to support emissions reduction efforts (Auckland Council, 2021). While planning has placed increasing interest in mode shift, RMS is an obstacle to its implementation which is yet to receive adequate attention.

RMS presents a challenge for car-dependent multicultural cities striving to transition towards low-carbon and equitable transport modes. Recent planning reports are beginning to pick up on the issue in Aotearoa and abroad. A report commissioned by Greater Wellington Regional Council highlighted how delays in improving rail fleet to service the growth in the region can result in people's RMS (Deutsch, 2021). A recent study showed that the use of Active Modes and PT have declined significantly since Covid, raising concerns about the increasing use of motor vehicles (Waka Kotahi, 2023). International reports worldwide have expressed concerns about how improving people's experiences with Electric Vehicles (EVs) may encourage a shift to driving from more sustainable transport modes (City of Vancouver, 2016; City of Westminister, 2019). While these reports point to RMS as an unwanted outcome within the general population, there are wider calls to understand how the needs of a rapidly expanding immigrant population should be addressed in the context of sustainable and equitable transport planning.

1.2 Research Basis and Context

Lack of private vehicle access is a significant challenge in Aotearoa's car-dependent cities. Recent media coverage highlights the struggles immigrant and refugee women face navigating Aotearoa's

roads, and the increasing demand for driving lesson support (Redstall, 2022; Shao, 2022). Immigrant women, dealing with language barriers, resource limitations, and other challenges, often experience isolation when they do not have access to a private vehicle (Uteng, 2009, 2016). There are worrying signs that a solution to immigrant isolation exacerbated by transport system design is being framed as a matter of access to personal cars rather than an issue of PT, active modes or urban form. Initiatives like the "Turning the Curve" program and the "Migrant Women Wellbeing Program" provide driving training and lessons to address this concern (Kale & Kindon, 2021; Asian Network, n.d.). As the immigrant population makes up a significant share of Aotearoa's cities and is set to grow, it is important to explore how to include women and empower them through low-carbon transport modes.

There is little academic research on RMS in Aotearoa and only some internationally. The international research includes the following relevant findings: First, it reveals that RMS exists and does not occur instantaneously. While RMS can be observed among different groups of the population and due to various circumstances (i.e. the decrease in Active Mode trips during and after the COVID-19 pandemic), international research suggests that it often occurs among immigrant women after they move to a new country. In particular, research on immigrant travel behaviour tells us that while immigrants drive less than the native-born population, their travel patterns tend to align more closely with the prevailing norms over time (Blumenberg & Smart, 2011; Delbosc & Shafi, 2023; Lovejoy & Handy, 2008). Furthermore, a study conducted with South Asian immigrants in Melbourne found that most of the interviewed women learnt to drive and obtained a license after moving to Australia (Shafi et al., 2023). Research also suggests that immigrant women's RMS often happens out of necessity rather than a desire to drive (Rashid et al., 2013; Waitt et al., 2016). Overall, international research highlights the complexity of RMS, underscoring the importance of exploring it within the context of Aotearoa's cities.

Given that research on RMS is emergent and there is a lack in Aotearoa, this thesis turns to extensive mobility literature for interpretive insights on the topic. Mobilities literature focuses on achieving equity and sustainability in transport by considering a broader context of transport uses and practices. Three key lessons are drawn from this literature. Firstly, mobility should not be solely defined by individual transport habits; non-individual factors such as social and material arrangements significantly influence mobility behaviour. Secondly, mobility research should not only encompass access to transport system infrastructure but also broader aspects including access

to housing, opportunities, health, education, and recreation. Lastly, to effectively address transport systems' inequalities, it is crucial to understand (*im*)mobilities through a racial and gender lens, considering the historical and contemporary intersections of mobility, gender, and race (Verlinghieri & Schwanen, 2020; Sheller, 2018). In view of this, the theoretical base of this thesis is mobilities literature.

This research sits between social science and applied planning, advancing both theoretical and practical knowledge. It highlights the need for alternative approaches in transport planning to address the mobility challenges faced by Immigrant women.

1.3 Research Motivation and Aim

There are important personal motivations for my research. Throughout my career and academic journey, I have been dedicated to understanding and enhancing transportation systems and urban environments. My educational path began in my hometown of Bogotá, Colombia, where I earned a bachelor's degree in economics with the support of an academic scholarship. During my studies, I completed a thesis examining the impact of urbanization in rural land prices, inspired by the many challenges I faced while living in Bogotá. A city with a population exceeding 7 million, vast urban sprawl and numerous transport and housing related problems. My undergraduate research experience paved the way for my role as a senior analyst at a leading spatial and urban economics consultancy in Auckland, where I worked for seven years conducting economic analyses for government entities to guide the planning of community facilities, transportation infrastructure, social housing, and more.

Through undertaking this work, which involved developing numerous qualitative economic models, and having lived in Auckland for over eight years, I have come to recognize the critical importance of planning and policymaking from both gendered and racial perspectives. Through this period, I have witnessed the manifold challenges faced by immigrant women regarding mobility. Particularly, I have seen how a significant portion of my friends and acquaintances have embraced (or tried to embrace) driving after moving to Aotearoa as a way to stay connected to their communities and to access economic opportunities.

While undertaking economic analysis and studying for my master's degree in planning, I began to question whether assessments based solely on numbers could truly enhance equitable and inclusive outcomes. This inspired me to explore other ways of assessing planning decisions. In view of this, as a Latin American immigrant woman in Auckland, a planning student and urban economist, I hope that this study contributes to the planning profession by presenting alternative approaches to address the mobility challenges immigrant women face daily.

1.4 Research Questions

This research asks what we can learn from the mobility experiences of immigrant women. The project focuses on understanding the factors behind the RMS of immigrant women after moving to Aotearoa. Given that the number of Latin American immigrants who reside in Auckland almost doubled between 2018 and 2023 (Stats NZ, 2023), and considering my background and place of residence, I will explore RMS in Auckland's Latino-American women. In short, the overarching research question is:

What factors encourage or discourage Latin American women in Auckland to transition from using PT, walking, or cycling in their home countries to using private cars as their main commuting mode after moving to Aotearoa?

To answer this question, the following specific questions will be approached:

1. *Based on transport and mobility literature, what factors influence the daily mobility and transport choices of immigrant women?*
2. *How do those factors influence RMS in Latin American women in Auckland?*
3. *What can we learn from the mobility experiences of Latin American women in Auckland to discourage Immigrant women to transition from using low-carbon transport modes to using cars as their main mode of transport?*

1.5 Methodology

This research employs a qualitative approach to gain a nuanced understanding of the transportation experiences of Latin American women in Auckland. As mobility researchers argue, qualitative methods provide a richer perspective by accounting for individual experiences and the contexts in which they occur (Jain & Lyons, 2008; Sandercock, 2004; Sandercock & Attili, 2010; Sheller, 2018). This approach allows for a deeper exploration of the mobility dynamics faced by immigrant women, moving beyond numbers and statistics to understand the personal and societal factors influencing their transportation choices.

A narrative method was chosen for this study to collect and analyse stories, for two primary reasons. First, individual stories serve as a powerful tool to understand the complex relationships between people, places, and events, and for sharing it with others (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009, p.7). Second, using a narrative approach acknowledges alternative ways of knowing, which are often overlooked in traditional planning practices (Ortiz, 2023). Through stories, this research captures the lived experiences of Latin American women, providing insights into how navigating mobility in a new urban environment influence them to adopt driving.

Two main data sources were used to answer the research questions: stories collected through semi-structured interviews with twenty-one Latin American women in Auckland, and stories portrayed in relevant local and national transport planning documents. The interview stories were analysed to identify commonalities and differences in the factors influencing the participants' RMS after moving to Auckland. In parallel, the planning documents were reviewed to provide essential context on the broader policy landscape shaping transport decisions. Cresswell's (2010) mobilities framework was then applied to explore in more depth the structural forces influencing Latin American immigrant women's RMS. Finally, the findings from the framework and policy documents review were integrated to develop planning recommendations aimed at preventing immigrant women from adopting driving. A more detailed justification of the methodology and research design is provided in Chapter 3.

1.6 Thesis Outline

This thesis is structured as follows:

- Chapter 1 provides an introduction which encompasses the research aim, context and scope.
- Chapter 2 outlines the research's theoretical underpinnings. This will be developed through a traditional literature review, focusing on exploring factors identified in prior transport and mobility research as pivotal influencers of immigrant women's daily mobility and transport choices.
- Chapter 3 presents the research methodology. This is particularly important given the qualitative nature of this thesis. It also outlines the design process of the research.
- Chapter 4 outlines the current transport policy framework and reviews key national and local planning documents. Understanding relevant transport planning documents is key to putting interview findings into context as well as answering the secondary questions.
- Chapter 5 summarizes the interviews' findings and analyses, and looks at patterns and communalities in the Latin American women's stories structured around the literature review findings.
- Chapter 6 discusses the research questions' findings through a mobilities lens, employing the findings from chapters 4 and 5, as well as a mobilities framework approach proposed by Tim Cresswell (2010).
- Chapter 7 outlines the conclusion and recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

This chapter uses “mobilities” as a conceptual and theoretical approach to shed light on barriers and motivators to immigrants’ women choice of transport modes. Transport literature largely covers the physical movement of people and vehicles from an origin to destination. However, it overlooks other factors contributing to the overall experience of movement, considered by mobilities researchers (Kaufmann, 2021; Sheller & Urry, 2016). This chapter, therefore, primarily focuses on mobility literature, complemented by transportation literature, to identify the factors that influence the daily mobility and transport choices of immigrant women.

This chapter begins by describing the emergence of mobilities research, outlining its key concerns and approaches, while identifying several key critiques within the transportation field. It then presents a literature review exploring the factors that influence the daily mobility and travel choices of immigrant women. The chapter concludes with a description of the theoretical framework employed to understand, through a mobilities lens, the factors encouraging or discouraging immigrant Latin American women to RMS after moving to Auckland.

2.2 An Overview of the ‘Mobilities’ Concept - Theoretical Lens

The field of mobilities research is diverse and complex. Since early studies in the 1920s, mobility was defined as the “movement between an origin and a destination” (Kaufmann, 2021, p. 9). Under this conception, transport researchers often regarded elements like the "demand" for transport as given, treating it as a black box that did not require much additional exploration, or considering it mainly as a by-product of a society's income level (Law, 1999; Sheller & Urry, 2006). This definition ignores the social and political dimensions of mobility.

The *mobility turn*, which emerged in the early 2000s, sought to develop an integrated concept of mobilities that could capture mobilities “in their fluid interdependence and not in their separate spheres” (Sheller & Urry, 2006, p. 212).

The '*new mobilities paradigm'* (NMP), in one conception of mobility brought about under the turn, has advanced an understanding of mobility that goes beyond moving from point A to B. It "encompasses both the large-scale movements of people, objects, capital and information across the world, as well as the more local processes of daily transportation, movement through public space and the travel of material things within everyday life" (Hannam et al., 2006, p. 1). It tells us that a wider set of forces shape mobility and that mobility can tell us about wider landscapes of power.

The NMP, which views mobility as a socio-spatial phenomenon encompassing both human and non-human movement, challenges traditional transport studies and planning approaches (Kaufmann, 2021; Sheller & Urry, 2016). For example, Larsen and Urry (2016) and Law (1999) point out that these traditional studies, with their emphasis on single-day travel data, often focus on regular, everyday mobility patterns and, therefore, on shorter work-related trips. In contrast, mobility studies take a broader view, exploring how movement intersects with the structure of social institutions and practices (Sheller, 2017). Mobility approaches consider not only daily commutes to work but also less frequent long-distance travel including visiting friends, leisure activities, and other events, acknowledging the emotional and social significance of these journeys (Larsen & Urry, 2016).

Mobilities research also provides an alternative outlook to traditional transport studies by demonstrating that movement is not always driven by strictly 'rational' considerations. Spinney (2009) critiques transport research's primary focus on rational motivations, often dominated by quantitative approaches from economists and engineers who prioritize time and cost efficiency. This conventional view can overlook the subjective and experiential elements of travel. For instance, Juliet Jain and Glenn Lyons (2008), in one of the foundational mobilities studies, suggest that travel time is not always a burden or merely a necessary expense. Instead, they emphasize that mobility involves a range of experiences, including sensory and embodied aspects, which are not captured by traditional models. By shifting the focus from purely efficiency-based metrics, mobilities research encourages a more nuanced understanding of travel, encompassing the intangible elements that contribute to the overall experience of movement.

Mobilities research, therefore, not only re-evaluates established practices but demands a broader analysis of the intricate relational systems within infrastructure and social interactions at various

levels (Sheller & Urry, 2016). Importantly, mobilities research goes beyond merely studying movement; it also focuses on the role of movement in “organizing the power around systems of governing mobility, immobility, timing, speed, channels and barriers of various scales” (Sheller, 2018, p. 11). This approach invites us to view the interconnectedness of our world in a new light, proposing questions, theories, and methodologies that resist simplistic or reductive explanations of contemporary life (Sheller, 2018; Sheller & Urry, 2016).

Building on this paradigm, the following section explores why mobility needs to be studied through the lenses of gender and race. This exploration seeks to emphasize the importance of assessing mobility as a gendered and racialized resource.

2.2.1 Mobilities and Social Relations

Mobility is a resource with varying levels of access, closely linked to the social and power dynamics that shape and are shaped by everyday life (Massey, 1994; Cresswell, 2010). Urry (2010) and Sheller (2018) research has shown that cities take shape through the varied movements of bodies that are differently abled, gendered, sexualized, and racialized, all intersecting with geographical and social factors such as class and ethnicity. When it comes to transportation for daily commuting in cities, Sheller (2018) points out that the distribution of community transport access, transport-related poverty, and exposure to harmful transport effects are often influenced by social factors like race, class, and gender. These factors affect not only who can move but also who has the right of freedom to choose to remain in place (Sheller, 2018). In this regard, if we understand politics as “social relations that involve the production and distribution of power”, then achieving transport equality may require recognizing that mobility is deeply political, shaped by social factors like gender, race, and class, which in turn influence identities and societal norms (Cresswell, 2010; Sheller, 2018).

Several concepts examine uneven mobilities and immobilities, offering new insights and frameworks to study these dynamics. Nail (2015), for example, introduced the idea of "kinopolitics," derived from the Greek word kino, meaning movement. Kinopolitics is the politics of movement, and Nail presents it as an ontological lens to examine contemporary realities that fluctuate "between freedom and unfreedom" (Sheller, 2017, p. 17). Kaufmann (2016) proposed the concept of “Motility”, which he describes as "the way an individual appropriates what is

possible in the domain of mobility and uses this potential for their activities" (p.37). This notion is connected to the network capital concept developed by Elliot and Urry (2010), which refers to the individual's "capacity to generate and maintain social relationships with people who are not necessarily nearby, providing emotional, financial, and practical benefits" (p. 59). Network capital emphasizes the real and potential social connections that mobilities enable, leading Elliot and Urry to argue that a socially inclusive society should aim to expand these capabilities for all its members (p. 64). Mobilities researchers, therefore, have advanced in conceptualizing mobilities dynamics so we can approach uneven mobilities from various angles.

This study employs Tim Cresswell's (2010) framework of the politics of mobility to explore the mobility's dynamics behind Latin American women's RMS. Cresswell's framework has been used in a range of studies to understand how complex forces play a role in the configuration of mobility and immobility, and is explained in more detail in the theoretical framework subsection below. Firstly, however, the following section will examine in more depth how mobility is accessed unevenly by minority ethnic/racial immigrant women. This exploration aims to highlight the specific barriers and challenges faced by these women, which is essential to understanding the broader dynamics of mobility and social equity.

2.2.1.1 Uneven Mobilities –Gender, Race and (im)migration

Transport, mobility and gender research highlights how social groups have experienced uneven levels of mobility, with women specifically encountering substantial obstacles to their mobilities both historically and today (Loukaitou-Sideris, 2016, p. 547). For example, women's access to mobility has been restricted by traditional gendered roles such as grocery shopping and child drop-off/pickup, which are often viewed as women's responsibilities (Christensen et al., 2023; Law, 1999; Loukaitou-Sideris, 2016). Such restrictions not only limit their physical movement but also their access to urban resources and opportunities. In addition to their restricted access to mobility, Sheller (2018) argues women's mobility capabilities have also historically been restricted and controlled. Moving beyond simply asking *who travels*?, to asking *when*, *how and under what circumstances?, also* allows us to see how, for example, the female body's mobility can be limited by the use of high heels in the modern global city to corsets in the Victorian era (Sheller, 2018). In

this regard, the ways people move around cities and use transportation are shaped by gender, and are constrained or enabled by historical and cultural contexts.

Additionally, mobilities researchers argue, the fact that mobilities are shaped by historical and cultural contexts suggest that gendered mobilities are also inherently racialized (Sheller, 2018; Subramanian, 2008). For instance, Sheller (2018) has shown that the day-to-day mobility of a women's body is entangled in histories of colonial, patriarchal and slavery control over black, brown, or female bodies and rebellious resistance. Sheller argues that with colonialism, for example, the liberation of white women to enjoy 'freedom of movement' was predicated on a range of work carried out by black and brown women, including maids and nannies working for white families. Thus, power imbalances inherently infuse mobility with racial and gender biases.

Considering this, exploring the mobility experiences of Latin American immigrant women in Auckland requires examination of racial and gender imbalances, as well as other temporary social categories such as (*im*)migration. If the word "immigrant" is the "would-be member or citizen" (Nail, 2015, p. 3), immigrants should not be seen as a distinct "type of person" with a fixed identity. Instead, immigrants should be considered individuals occupying a mobile social position or spectrum, one that can change based on varying conditions of mobility (Nail, 2015). People become and remain migrants either voluntarily or involuntarily. Latin Americans, for example, migrate to Aotearoa for various reasons. Some leave their countries seeking better economic opportunities, while others flee from oppressive regimes or civil unrest (Lopez, 2022). Regardless of the circumstances that prompt migration, Nail (2015) emphasizes that the process typically involves some degree of insecurity. This insecurity can manifest in multiple ways: the loss of territorial ownership, the loss of political rights such as voting or access to social welfare, the loss of legal status to work or drive, or the financial strain associated with travel and relocation (p.2). Thus, "migration is a socially embedded process, such that it is influenced by and can reinforce existing social categories or divisions" (Silvey, 2005, p. 138), such as gender and race. Studying the mobilities of Latin American women requires considering their social context, including the social inequalities they face due to their race, gender and migratory status.

2.3 Factors Affecting the Mobility of Immigrant Women

This section presents the factors that influence the mobilities of immigrant women based on transport and mobility research. This literature review focuses on the personal travel patterns of people going about their daily activities, like commuting to work, running errands, enjoying free time, meeting with friends, and shopping.

2.3.1 Socio-cultural Factors

Daily mobility practices, and in particular mobility choices such as mode of transport, are shaped by socio-cultural relations structured by gender and race. Mobilities literature underlines how women encounter socio-cultural travel barriers that can be both, explicit or implicit (Loukaitou-Sideris, 2016). Explicit cultural barriers include religious norms and rules restricting women's movement. This is particularly of note in regions, for example, where it is forbidden for women to drive vehicles or use PT due to religious beliefs. In the Latin American region, the situation is somewhat different. Most countries recognize the right to religious freedom, and the majority of the population has been Christian for over 500 years, a result of European colonization and the introduction of Catholicism (Dove, 2016). While Christian religions do not enforce strict rules on women's transportation, they often uphold traditional beliefs that view women as natural caregivers for children, while men are seen as more suited to work outside the home" (Mikołajczak & Pietrzak, 2014). Religions, therefore, can place implicit and explicit barriers to women's mobilities.

In general, implicit cultural barriers to women's mobilities relate to social relations under which the division of labour and activities is gendered (Law, 1999). Loukaitou-Sideris (2016) states, "women have been, and remain, the primary caregivers for children and elderly parents and are mostly responsible for domestic chores" (p. 551). In the case of Latin American families, the 2020 OECD report on gender development highlights the disparity between unpaid caregiving responsibilities, and the paid work of men, which is disproportionately shouldered by women compared to men. The study reveals that Latin American women, on average, dedicate three times more time to unpaid care and domestic work than men (OECD, 2020, p. 93). This finding underscores the persistent influence of traditional gender roles in Latin American households, in

which women predominantly shoulder the responsibility for parental care, elderly care and domestic work. As such, gendered labour and activities influence how women move.

These implicit socio-cultural factors touch women's transportation in varied ways and can negatively impact their mobilities. For example, the fact that women tend to make more trips per day to pick up and drop off children or to shop at the supermarket largely explains why "women make trips to particular places at certain times", (Law, 1999, p. 577), differently to men. Importantly, Hanson (2010) Murray (2008) argue, [m]otherhood practices today are potentially hypermobile, as they are coupled with expectations of what it means to be a good mother in the contemporary world, which makes mobility unsustainable (Murray, 2008, p. 56). Gendered labour activities, therefore, do not only affect how women transport, but also put their mobilities experiences at risk.

Placing a greater emphasis on immigrant women, research indicates that although migration might lead to a reduction in gender-based division of labour, it does not always translate to greater freedom or independence. Numerous studies worldwide underscore how *im*migration can empower women by allowing them to challenge traditional roles and dependencies and assert newfound freedom (Avenarius, 2008; DeSena & Hutchison, 2008; Pedraza, 1991). In Aotearoa, Sanchez (2016) study found that upon reaching the new country, various situations compel Latin American refugee women to enter the workforce, thus granting them a newfound autonomy and socio-economic independence previously unavailable to them in Latin America. However, other studies on migration and gender point out that this economic independence does not necessarily translate to empowerment. Parrado & Flippen (2005) and Mahler & Pessar (2001) studies found that, in the US, immigrant women are frequently pushed into low-wage jobs because of their structural position which is tied to racial, ethnic, and citizenship hierarchies. In this regard, while some women might be able to break through traditional gender roles when they migrate, their social position often leads them to take on jobs that citizens are unwilling to do, meaning that one cannot assume that migration inherently leads to better mobility.

In addition to this, research on migration and gender highlights the issues of locating gender oppression in the homeland and independence in the host society due to *im*migrant women entering the workforce post-migration. A number of studies have shown that in many cases, migrant women entering the work force must manage family responsibilities alongside their career and work

demand (González Ramos & Vergés Bosch, 2013; León-Pérez et al., 2021). In this regard, Uteng (2009) explains, the home/host dichotomy, often framed in binary terms, ultimately oversimplifies immigrant women's experiences and cultural diversity by echoing earlier feminist notions of oppression within the family and independence in the marketplace (Uteng, 2009). Addressing these complexities requires a more nuanced approach to mobility that honours the diverse experiences of immigrant women.

2.3.2 Economic Factors

Significant economic disparities affect women's daily transportation and mobility. On a global scale, a higher proportion of women live below the poverty line compared to men, leading to uneven access to resources (Loukaitou-Sideris, 2016). Constraints in access to economic resources, research points out, has wide-ranging implications for women's transportation, including restricting women's capacity to access or purchase private vehicles, which in turn forces reliance on PT systems (Scheiner & Holz-Rau, 2012). Importantly, Law (1999) emphasizes, these gender-based disparities in economic resources, largely connected to other limitations such as time, skills, and technology, contribute to a reduced ability for women to move freely in their daily lives.

Immigrant women's low access to private vehicle transportation show that these economic disadvantages disproportionally affect them over the rest of the population. Loukaitou-Sideris's (2016) study reviewed literature from the Global North and South on issues that obstruct women's physical mobility and found that economic barriers to mobility are particularly acute for women in the Global South or for migrant women in the Global North, as they often face lower incomes than the rest of the population. Similarly, Hess et al. (2014) point out, "in automotive dependent environments, the burden of *not* owning or having regular access to a vehicle is heavily borne by the none native population, and particularly by women" (Hess et al., 2014, p. 179). These economic disadvantages are also true for highly skilled migrant women, who are frequently forced into low-paying jobs because they cannot secure employment in their professional field (Riaño, 2021). As such, ethnic minorities and migrants of the Global North typically have lower rates of car ownership and usage compared to majority ethnic groups and native-born populations (Loukaitou-Sideris, 2016). This pattern is also seen in Aotearoa, where Syam et al.'s (2012) study revealed that New Zealand Europeans have the highest percentage of people who use a car as a driver, travel

more frequently, and cover longer distances compared to other groups. Their higher income, Syam et al. (2012) argues, allows them to afford cars and allocate more resources for travel, resulting in more frequent and longer trips. Immigrant women's transportation, therefore, is impacted by lower car accessibility.

The financial constraints disproportionably faced by immigrant women do not only impact their access to private vehicles but also affect their access to other forms of transportation and resources. Loukaitou-Sideris's (2016) study found that economic limitations often force migrant women to live in peripheral regions with inadequate transportation infrastructure, where the lack of a private vehicle severely restricts their ability to access reliable transportation. Moreover, transport research in the U.S. revealed that while white women typically have shorter commuting distances compared to men, African American and Latina women experience longer commutes due to racially segmented labour and housing markets (McLafferty & Preston, 1991). In this sense, economic disadvantages are key variables to account for when looking at ethnic and gender transportation and mobilities.

Importantly, mobilities researchers point out that economic disparities do not only shape but are also reinforced by the varying degrees of mobility experienced by women, particularly immigrant women and women of colour. Urry (2007) argues women's "exclusion from automobility has become a crucial issue, both because it limits their capability to work outside the home and because it makes movement through public spaces difficult" (p.32). This constraint can be particularly problematic in low-density areas where, as discussed, many immigrant women reside, often necessitating access to private transportation for employment opportunities (Uteng, 2008; Waitt et al., 2016). When car ownership is not feasible, and access to PT is limited, job seekers may be forced to limit their search to a narrower area, reducing employment prospects (Matsuo, 2016). Consequently, enduring economic disadvantages experienced by immigrant women in car-dependent environments perpetuate a vicious cycle of exclusion—not only from transportation networks but from broader societal participation—resulting in a sense of powerlessness and marginalization (Uteng, 2009).

2.3.3 Physical Factors

Transport and mobilities literature asserts that daily physical mobility take place in gendered built environments (Law, 1999; Loukaitou-Sideris, 2016; Sheller, 2017; Urry, 2007). Loukaitou-Sideris (2016) argues that automobile oriented urban environments disproportionally restrict women's mobility given that they, as presented earlier, are less likely to have the resources to access a car. Additionally, women's mobilities are restricted by urban environments and designs with limited transit networks and inadequate sidewalks which contribute to women's feelings of discomfort and unsafety (Law, 1999). The literature indicates that women's mobility is, therefore, shaped by the physical characteristics of the urban environment.

There are large differences between the built urban environments in cities in the Global South and Global North, which create differences in how women move and how they experience their mobilities. Loukaitou-Sideris (2016) research points out, in some cities of the Global South, the frequent failure to respond effectively to women's safety concerns on PT leads to uncomfortable environments and, in severe cases, harassment and even rape (Loukaitou-Sideris, 2016, p.554). In Latin America, the discomfort of women towards PT environments is clearly reflected in their mobility choices (Soto et al., 2022). For instance, Delclòs-Alió et al.'s (2022) transport study carried out in five main Latin American cities found that, despite the challenges posed by increasing motorized transportation, walking remains a significant mode of travel for women. According to the author, women across all five cities consistently walk more than men not only because men typically control household car's access in Latin America, but also because women often opt out of PT due to cost and safety concerns (Delclòs-Alió et al., 2022). Transportation choices for women in the Global South, therefore, are not only impacted by restricted access to cars, but also by how they experience PT environments.

In the Global North, urban sprawl and the lack of pedestrian infrastructure contributes to women's over-reliance on private cars and extended travel times (Loukaitou-Sideris, 2016). Clearly, movement within these environments is easier when having access to a car (DeSena & Hutchison, 2008, p. 155). The effects of such urban forms on mobility are especially significant for immigrant women and ethnic minorities. Immigrant women are much less likely to drive than immigrant men and significantly more likely to be driven to work or other destinations (Delbosc & Shafi, 2023; Matsuo, 2016). They often rely in their partners and other males within their household for

mobility because they do not have the resources to buy a car, do not have access to the household car or do not hold a driving license. This often allows men to dictate who women can meet, when and where (Matsuo, 2016; Nahar & Cronley, 2021). Importantly, this is not just a matter of independence, but also safety. The Nahar & Cronley (2021) study reveals that intimate partner violence (IPV) perpetrators often use transportation as a tool to control and coerce their immigrant partners. Sprawling urban environments, therefore, make women reliant on cars, often leaving immigrant women emotionally vulnerable and at greater risk in terms of safety.

On the whole, the physical barriers to women's mobility, particularly immigrant women, are closely connected to access to economic resources and other resources such as technology, housing, and skills. According to a study on women's driving habits in the US, "immigrant women, unless highly educated and in white-collar occupations, are relatively slow to learn to drive, and when they do, they are less likely to have access to a family car" (Walsh, 2008, p. 394). This driving skills limitation keeps them immobile. Moreover, in urban environments where PT is inadequate, the lack of access to private vehicles transportation exacerbates these issues. For example, research shows that given that PT is often unreliable or insufficient in the neighbourhoods where immigrant women usually live, many have to rely on more expensive ride-sharing services (Matsuo, 2016; Nahar & Cronley, 2021). While these services offer flexibility, comfort, and broader coverage, their higher costs contribute to economic hardship among immigrant women. Consequently, the combination of limited car access and inadequate PT in sprawling urban environments disproportionately restricts the mobility of immigrant women in the Global North. As discussed, this restriction not only widens economic disparities but also limits their access to other gendered resources like technology, housing, and job opportunities, further entrenching inequality.

2.3.4 Perceptual and Psychological Factors

Gendered perceptual and psychological factors are central to women's daily mobility (Law, 1999). Law (1999) and Loukaitou-Sideris (2016) research in gendered transport and mobility highlights how perceptions of fear and anxiety of harassment or victimization significantly restrict the physical movement of women. For example, women commonly limit their traveling time to daytime hours, avoid certain routes or places and avoid certain transport modes as a self-precautionary measure to protect themselves (Law, 1999; Loukaitou-Sideris, 2016). Importantly,

Loukaitou-Sideris's study found that in cities in the Global North, low-income and minority women living in high-crime areas often face heightened fear and anxiety in public spaces and PT, partly because they work late and have fewer private transportation options compared to wealthier women. The mobilities of immigrant women in the Global north, therefore, are more susceptible to perceptual/psychological barriers.

Importantly, mobilities researchers point out perceptual/ psychological factors affecting women's mobilities are not simply developed by each individual's experiences but are constructed, reinforced and naturalized by social norms. Law (1999) contests, "the social coding of a body as female in our society produces a specific vulnerability to sexual assault by men, and an associated set of norms of respectable and safe behaviour" (Law, 1999, p. 580). When considering Latin American contexts, social norms associated with masculinity are widely accepted across the region (Viveros-Vigoya, 2016). A study carried out in twelve countries in the region found that "there is widespread agreement with norms that reinforce gender inequality, discourage women from seeking help, or downplay the duty of bystanders to intervene in situations of abuse" (Bott et al., 2012). Discourses of masculinity in the region are reinforced by cultural elements such as music and have a real impact which can be seen in the prevalence of violence against women in the region (Saldarriaga, 2021). According to a 2021 World Health Organization report, regional estimates of sexual violence in the region are higher than the global average (Equality Now, 2021). In this context, the fear of harassment plays a significant role in influencing travel choices among Latin American women (Rodas-Zuleta et al., 2022). Masculinity discourses limit and reinforce restrictions to women's mobilities.

These masculinity discourses go beyond the sexualization of the body and extend to the "gendered coding of transport-related activities, technologies, environments and subject identities" (Law, 1999, p.582). Mobilities research points out that cars, for instance, were originally designed "to be inhabited by the male body" (Urry, 2007, p.132). The historical association of cars with masculinity and the male body has contributed to the discrimination women drivers often face on the road (Waitt et al., 2016). The fading of these ideas in the Global North, compared to the Global South, is reflected in various transport studies, indicating that while the gap between men and women with driver's licenses has narrowed significantly in the U.S. and Europe, in the Global South, far fewer women than men own cars or possess a driver's license (Rosenbloom & Plessis-Fraissard, 2009). This reflects how "in western countries, driving is positioned as the touchstone

of empowerment, freedom and independence for the modern neo-liberal citizen" (Waitt et al., 2016, p. 77). As such, transport choices are strongly influenced by the perceived freedom and independence they offer to women in such contexts.

Nonetheless, transport and mobility studies show that driving does not necessarily represent a source of empowerment for immigrant women. Waitt et al.'s (2016) study on Chinese immigrant women in Sydney found that they decide to learn to drive as a way to align with discourses of modernity, safety, and "good parenting" in a city where cars are a necessity. This decision, however, is more about fulfilling societal expectations, often evoking "fear" and "dislike" rather than the "enjoyment" or "freedom" typically associated with driving. In this way, the author argues, the act of driving can become disempowering rather than empowering for these women. They often endure their fear of driving to meet the demands placed on them as "modern" working women and mothers (Waitt et al., 2016, p. 79). In this regard, driving does not necessarily lead to a better mobility experience for immigrant women. Instead, it can become another source of stress and obligation.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

So far, this section has shown how immigrant women's mobility is unevenly influenced by a range of socio-cultural, economic, physical, and perceptual/psychological factors, which in turn are shaped by their mobility patterns. Given the imbalances immigrant women experience with mobility and immobility, there is a need for a more detailed analysis that accounts for their unique backgrounds and social contexts. Building on these insights, this last section presents the theoretical framework used to examine how, through a mobility lens, the factors presented above influence Latin American immigrant women to RMS, or not, after they move to Aotearoa.

To understand the complexity behind Latin American immigrant women's RMS decision, this study uses a framework proposed by Tim Cresswell (2010). The framework is built on the concept of "constellations of mobility" which refers to "particular patterns of movement, representations of movement, and ways of practicing movement that make sense together" (Cresswell, 2010, p. 20). Put simply, Cresswell contends that mobility comprises three interconnected components: movement, representations, and practices.

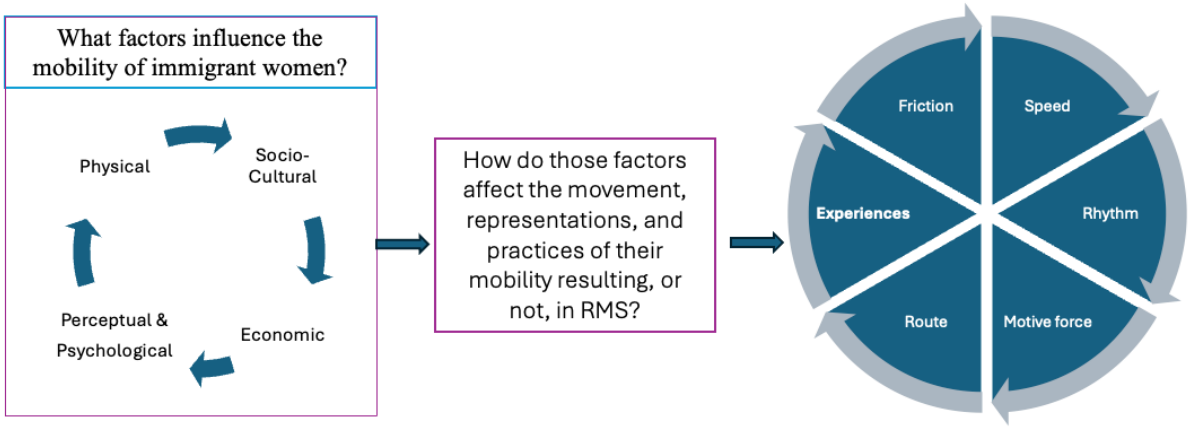
- The first component, 'movement', refers to the material aspect of mobility—the tangible act of moving from one location to another. In this study, it encompasses the act of transportation.
- The second component, 'representations', involves the ideologies attached to mobility. It encompasses, for example, the cultural meanings and narratives associated with different forms of movement.
- The third component, 'practices', denotes the actual embodiment of mobility through human experiences. It involves the lived experiences of movement, including the physical and emotional responses that accompany it. In the earlier

literature review, this dimension relates to the perceptions immigrant women might feel when driving, walking or using PT.

In the process of breaking mobility down to reveal how power is produced and distributed through the processes of movement, ultimately leading to the emergence of new patterns of (*im)*mobility, Cresswell (2010) proposes "six aspects of mobility that each has a politics that it is necessary to consider" (p.22): Motive force, speed, rhythm, route, experience and friction. Cresswell argues that although these dimensions are intertwined, considering them individually can offer insights into the dynamics underlying social and power structures.

In this sense, this research employs Cresswell's (2010) framework to explore the motive force, speed, rhythm, route, experiences and friction behind the change in transport mode of Latin American immigrant women after they move to Aotearoa. Grounded in the literature review findings, this study aims to explore the cultural, economic, physical, and perceptual/psychological factors that shape these six aspects of mobility, encouraging or discouraging immigrant women to RMS. The following diagram provides a clearer depiction of the approach:

Figure 1
Theoretical Framework



In short, the proposed framework is useful given that analysing the observable movements of immigrant women to understand RMS provides only a partial view of mobility. A focus on physical movement alone reveals little about the underlying meanings or the context in which these movements occur. This framework recognizes that physical mobility is also an experienced and embodied practice, influenced by a complex interplay of social and cultural factors. As "power disparities produce and are produced by how me move" (Cresswell & Uteng, 2016, p. 2), by

examining these dimensions of mobility, a comprehensive understanding of immigrant women's RMS and its broader societal implications can be gained. The methodology chapter will provide more detail on how to consider these dimensions when studying mobilities.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter aimed to critically review transport and mobilities literature to understand immigrant women's daily mobility and travel choices. This review helps in developing the theoretical basis to conceptualize this research. The review shows that the NMP recognizes mobility as encompassing both the large-scale movements of people, as well as the everyday experiences and practices of immigrant women.

The chapter proposed a conceptual framework based on Tim Cresswell's (2010) work and the transport and mobilities literature that covers socio-cultural, economic, physical, and perceptual factors that affect the mobility of Latin American immigrant women. This framework can offer a deeper understanding of the factors contributing to RMS in Latin American women in Aotearoa. The next chapter develops the method and proposes a research design to apply this framework in Auckland city.

Chapter 3 - Methodology and Research Design

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology of this research. It starts by briefly outlining the theoretical basis of the qualitative approach applied, which broadly sits within the post-positivist paradigm. It then presents and justifies the process used for collecting and analysing the data. The chapter concludes with the ethical considerations of the study and a summary.

3.2 Qualitative Approach

A qualitative methodology is applied to this research in order to broaden the understanding of the mobilities of Latin American women in Auckland. As mentioned in chapter 2, traditional transport research has favoured qualitative approaches under rationality and efficiency assumptions (Spinney, 2009). These approaches are based on the positivism paradigm under which understanding is linked to measuring (Smith, 2022). Conversely, mobilities researchers argue that shifting the focus away from purely efficiency-based metrics can provide a more nuanced understanding of travel by allowing us to take into account experiences and contexts (Jain & Lyons, 2008; Sandercock, 2004; Sandercock & Attili, 2010; Sheller, 2018). Notably, there have been wider calls for an increase in the use of experience-based knowledge in planning practice, research and teaching, as a way to provide "intimate information about local settings, characteristics, circumstances, events, and relationships that might not be apparent from aggregated and quantitative analysis" (Friedmannre, 2011). Therefore, this research employs a qualitative approach to capture information about the experiences and meanings of Latin American women's transportation in Auckland and advance towards closing a gap in transport planning created by an overuse of qualitative approaches.

3.2.1 Narrative Research - Stories and Policy Analysis as Methods

Narrative research employs an individual's life story to gather information (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Stories, as part of narrative research, have been used over time across the globe to transmit

knowledge (Riessman, 2008). While stories can be shared in various ways, for the primary research of this study, Latin American women's voices are used to represent their *im*mobility stories. Stories have been chosen as the method for this research for two main reasons. Firstly, considering that a story is "an account to self and others of people, places, and events and the relationships that hold between these elements" (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009, p. 7), accessing the stories of these women can enable deeper understanding of how changes in such relationships encourage or discourage immigrant women from embracing driving after migration. Secondly, stories have been chosen as a means of capturing and acknowledging the ways of knowing, sensing and being immigrant Latin American women, which often lack legitimization and attention in traditional formal planning practices (Ortiz, 2023).

The use of stories in planning has grown over the years as a way to plan for equitable and inclusive cities. Sandercock (2004), for instance, argues that stories are particularly important in planning in and for multicultural cities given that, in such contexts, "there is usually a dominant culture whose version of events, of behaviour, and practices, are the implicit norm" (Sandercock, 2004, p.19). Such an implicit norm creates an 'official story' in planning which overlooks historical injustices and is used to justify biased decision making. Deconstructing the dominance of the 'official story', Sandercock states, is important to reshape a future in which multicultural cities are fair and participatory. Doing this requires listening to and telling new stories, the stories of disempowered communities such as migrants, Indigenous people and poor people.

3.2.1.1 Planning Policy Analysis

Telling and listening to stories is not only important to make sense of the past, but it is relevant in planning practice to imagine and prepare for the future (Sandercock, 2004; Van Hulst, 2012). Stories that are part of planning processes "often contain explicit ideas about future events and the role of various actors (human and non-human) in bringing them about"(Van Hulst, 2012, p. 300). Accordingly, stories are used in planning to illustrate what actors imagine for the future through documents and plans, as well as a tool to shape and imagine new futures.

Considering this, as a contextual strand of this study, the stories portrayed in relevant national and local planning policy documents are explored to understand what they reveal about the future of Auckland's transport system and how such futures are to be attained. The aim of this overview is

to analyse how, or if, the factors that impact immigrant women's mobilities are taken into account in those stories.

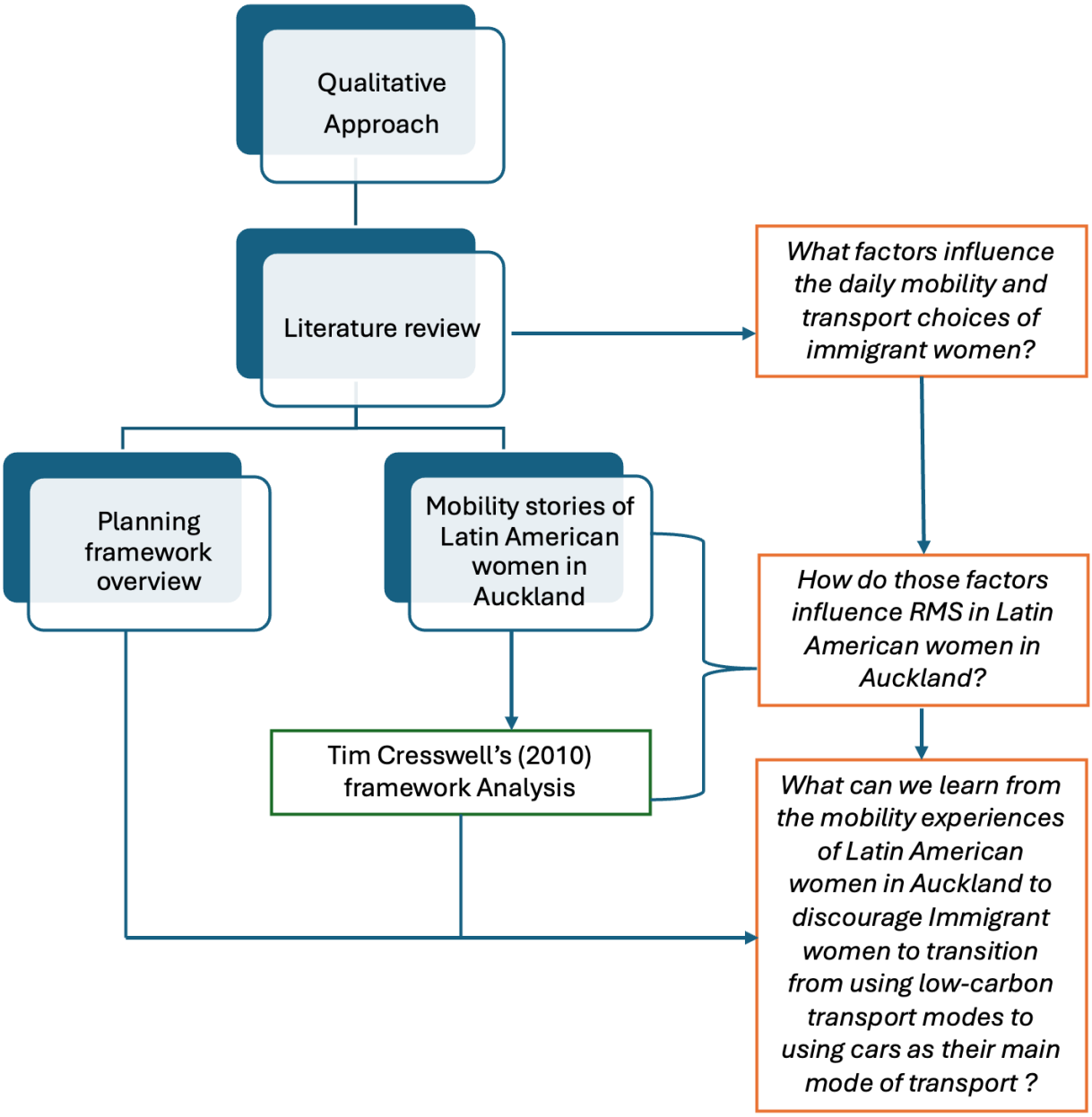
3.2.2 The Role of the Researcher

While the aim of using stories as a primary research method is to empower immigrant women by allowing them to control the information that is divulged, it is important to point out the caveats of using such a method. When telling a story, the narrator interprets their own experiences and represents them to the listener (Ali et al., 2015). The narrator chooses, consciously or not, the part of the stories they tell in order to deliver the meaning they expect the listener to take from the story (Bailey & Tilley, 2002). In this regard, the "interaction between the researcher and the participants will have an effect on the data that the researcher obtains" (Kendall & Kendall, 2012, p. 175). The researcher should "aim to 'get the other right' by engaging with the story without preconceived notions and acting as an 'intelligent reader' not only of another person's narrative, but also of the context in which it takes place" (Vecchio, 2020, p. 3). They also need to be aware of the reason they are interpreting a story as well as why the story is being told" (Kendall & Kendall, 2012, p. 179). In this regard, when using stories as a method, researchers need to be cautious when collecting and interpreting the data.

3.3 Research Design

The process used for both primary and secondary research in this thesis is illustrated in Figure 2. and is also reflected in the document's structure. This study adopts a qualitative approach, drawing on Latin American women's narratives and a review of policy documents to address the research questions. To establish a foundation for analysis and discussion, an initial review of transport and mobility literature was conducted, focusing on the factors influencing immigrant women's daily mobility and transport choices. The insights from this literature review informed the design of the research strands used to explore women's narratives and policy documents. These insights also intertwined with the theoretical framework applied to answer the research questions.

Figure 2
Research Design Diagram



The next sections of this chapter explain in more depth the procedure employed to collect and analyse the research data.

3.3.1 Primary Research: Latin American Women Stories

3.3.1.1 Data Type and Collection – Semi-structured Interviews

The centre of this research was the semi-structured interviews carried out with twenty-one Latin American women living in Auckland. Semi-structured interviews provide a greater degree of flexibility than structured interviews or surveys as questions are used as a guide, but they are primarily informed by the interviewee (Esin, 2011). This type of interview allowed participants to share the richness of their mobility stories which would otherwise have been limited by a structured interview or a survey.

The questions included in the semi-structured interviews were built on the findings from the literature review. Therefore, the interview questions were intended to capture the relationship between socio-cultural, economic, physical and perceptual factors and the women's mobilities stories (Appendix A). In particular, the interviews intended to guide participants to think about those factors in the context of Auckland as well as in the context of Latin America, in order to explore whether changes in such contexts did or did not influence their RMS.

3.3.1.1.1 Recruitment of Participants

Participants were recruited through a range of methods. First, I posted about my research on the Facebook groups of Latino communities in Auckland and in WhatsApp groups of Latino American women in Auckland (Appendix B). I also used a snowball sampling method by asking participants, friends and acquaintances to refer other possible interviewees. Finally, I attended Latino American food markets and events across Auckland to share information about my research with attendees and ask women to participate.

The criteria for selecting the study participants were:

- Women who were born and grew up in Latin America, and
- had been living in Auckland for at least four years, and
- were 22 years or over, and
- who spoke Spanish and/or English.

The criteria were defined with the intention of recruiting women who had been living in Auckland long enough for their transport behaviours to be altered. Research suggests that immigrants travel behaviour evolves during the first five years of migration. After five years, it tends to largely assimilate to the typical patterns (Tal & Handy, 2010). In view of this, women who had been living in Auckland for at least four years were interviewed in order to explore the experiences of those who had not transitioned to the typical travel pattern in Auckland (driving), those currently in the process of doing so, and those who had already made the transition. Additionally, women who were at least 22 years old were interviewed, as the minimum age for driving in some Latin American countries is 18. By interviewing women over 22, the researcher aimed to ensure that the participants had the option to drive prior to migration and had been living in Auckland long enough to transition, or begin their transition, to driving.

3.3.1.2 The Interview Procedure

The interviews were carried out between July and September 2024. Given that "narrative structures and conventions differ across languages and cultures" (Wei & Moyer, 2009, p. 320), I intended to carry out all interviews in Spanish, which is my mother language and the primary language across most Latin American countries. The only interviews carried out in English were those with Brazilian women. Considering that people tell their stories differently according to the interview setting, such as in an office versus a bar (Polletta, 2012), I intended to set an informal but at the same time comfortable environment for the interviews. In addition, and to make sure the participants feel safe, I gave them the option of choosing between meeting at a café, library, my home, their home or via videocall. When we met in person, we shared snacks or a hot drink while we talked. Most participants chose to meet at either their home or mine, or at a café. No one wanted to meet at a library.

All interviews were voice recorded and lasted between one and two hours. Immediately following each meeting, I wrote a page or so of notes about the interview as a way to have in hand a short summary of the main ideas presented by each participant. Interviews were later transcribed and translated into English.

3.3.2 Participants and Travel Behaviours

The profiles of the twenty-one participants are summarized in Table 2. Women of six different nationalities participated in this study: four Mexicans, two Argentinians, five Chileans, five Colombians, three Peruvians and two Brazilians. They ranged in age from 31 to 60 and migrated to Aotearoa between 4.5 and 33 years ago. Seven were mothers and one was expecting her first child at the time of the interview. Eleven of the participants had a postgraduate degree, six had an undergraduate degree, three had an incomplete undergraduate degree and one a high school qualification.

Table 2
Participant's Profiles and RMS Status

Name	Country	Age	Number of children	Time in Aotearoa (Years)	Current Suburb of Residency	Main Transport Mode (Auckland)	Main Transport Mode (Latin America)	RMS Status
Olga	Mexico	36	0	6	Mairangi Bay	Car	PT	RMS
Luisa	Peru	60	3	33	Henderson Valley	Car	Personal driver and taxi	RMS
Nubia	Colombia	34	0	4.5	Panmure	Car	Bus, walk and Uber	RMS
Silvia	Chile	41	2	15	Beach Heaven	Car	Bus, taxi, colectivo	RMS
Rosio	Chile	33	0	7	Glenfield	Car and scooter	PT	RMS
Flor	Chile/ Argentina	56	3	23	Titirangi	Car	PT	RMS
Ligia	Argentina	33	0	7	Mt Eden	Car	PT	RMS
Juliana	Mexico	40	1	8	Glenfield	Car	Walking and PT	RMS

Tania	Colombia	32	0	5	Mt Eden	Car	Bike and bus	RMS
Sara	Peru	57	3	22	Remuera	Car	Personal driver and taxi	RMS
Martina	Mexico	33	0	5	Avondale	Car	PT	RMS
Ines	Brazil	46	1	8	Greenlane	Car	PT	RMS
Mariela	Chile	40	0	8	Kohimarama	Car	PT or partner drove her	RMS
Clara	Colombia	31	0	4.5	Parnell	Bus	Bus, bike, walk	In progress
Eli	Chile	36	0	9	Mt Eden	Walk and partner drives her	Walk and taxi	In progress
Mayte	Mexico	34	Pregnant	6.5	Pakuranga	Bus, walk or Uber	PT	In progress
Sandra	Peru	36	0	5.5	Grafton	Bus and walk	Bike, walk and bus	In progress
Antonia	Colombia	49	2	15	Albany	Bus, uber and husband drives her	PT and Taxi	Has given up
Karen	Brazil	35	0	4.5	CBD	Walk and bus	Car	Mode shift
Lorena	Argentina	39	0	10	Herne Bay	Bus, walk, bike	Walking and biking	NO
Camila	Colombia	36	0	8	Glenfield	Car	Car	NO

Table 2 also displays the participants' main travel modes in Auckland (at the time of the interview) and in Latin America (prior to migration). Only two of the participants formerly drove a private vehicle as their main commuting mode in Latin America. Most of them used to use PT. Currently in Auckland, fourteen drive a private vehicle as their main commuting mode and seven use another mode of transport. Of those seven, four are currently in the process of embracing driving as their main transport mode. This means they are currently in the process of obtaining their driving license or already have a driving license, but for reasons that will be presented later, have not fully embraced driving in their daily commute. Only one participant has never driven or tried to drive as their main commuting mode, and one tried to do so in Auckland but has now given up.

3.4 Ethical considerations

Prior to interviewing the participants, I applied to Massey University Ethics Committee for ethics approval. As this research did not involve significant ethical challenges, my ethics approval was granted under a low-risk notification in June 2024.

3.4.1 Consent and Confidentiality

Participants were sent an information sheet and consent form (Appendix C). Additionally, prior to each interview, I explained to the participants what the aim of the study was and what I intended to do with the information captured in the interviews. I emphasized their right not to answer any of the questions and to withdraw from the research. All participants were happy to be included in this document. However, I have changed their names to protect their privacy.

3.4.2 Content Analysis

To analyse the interview findings and capture the women's stories in a way that represented what participants wanted to express, I had to familiarize myself with each of their stories. To do so, I first re-read the notes I wrote immediately after each interview to make sure I was understanding the participants correctly, and I then transcribed the interviews in the original language using the Microsoft word transcription tool, Microsoft teams transcription tool and TurboScri. I then listened

to the interview recordings repeatedly to make sure that the information captured in my notes and the transcriptions accurately captured the participants' interviews.

After several weeks of familiarizing myself with the stories of each woman, by listening to the recordings, and rereading my notes and the transcripts, I could identify key patterns and commonalities in the stories and the factors that influenced the participants to alter their travel choices. In view of the fact that "a story implies a change in situations as expressed by the unfolding of a specific sequence of events" (Tomashevski, 1965, p. 70), I was able to capture similarities in those sequence of events which influenced most participants to decide to embrace driving and some to continue using PT or active modes. Furthermore, as "any story has to involve both a sequence of events and the interpretation of their meaning" (Sandercock, 2004, p. 19), such as an explanation about why we needed to act in a certain way or a moral concern about what happened, I attempted to identify key patterns in the meanings behind the participants' decision to RMS or not.

3.5 Framework Analysis

Using the findings from the stories, Tim Cresswell's (2010) framework was applied to explore how power and social dynamics contribute to the emergence of new patterns of (*im)*mobility, influencing whether the women would or would not engage in RMS after migration. In light of the importance of studying transportation through a mobilities concept, as discussed in chapter 2, this framework was employed to understand the role of movement in "organizing the power around systems of governing mobility, immobility and barriers" (Sheller, 2018, p. 11).

To explore the six aspects of mobility proposed by Cresswell (2010): motive force, speed, rhythm, route, experience and friction, the following questions were used to analyse the stories' findings. These questions are presented by the author as part of his framework:

- why does a person or thing move?
- how fast does a person or thing move?
- with what rhythm does a person or thing move?

- what route does a person or thing take?
- how does a person feel when moving?
- when and how does a person or thing stop?

Furthermore, following the concept of "constellations of mobilities", which highlights the role of social and historical contexts in shaping present-day mobility, a strong emphasis was placed on exploring the pre-migration mobilities of Latin American women given that, as Cresswell (2010) argues “we cannot understand new mobilities without understanding old mobilities” (p.29). This relates to the earlier discussion around how power imbalances, which inherently infuse mobility with racial and gender biases, are shaped and also shape the historical and cultural contexts in which they evolve. Understanding the current mobility practices of immigrant women requires understanding their past.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the methodology employed in this research, which is grounded in a qualitative approach, underpinned by a post-positivist perspective. This methodology was chosen as the most suitable for addressing the research questions. Narrative analysis was used to explore the stories of Latin American women, gathered through semi-structured interviews, as well as the narratives embedded in planning policy documents. The application of Tim Cresswell’s (2010) framework has also been discussed, offering a lens through which to understand Latin American women’s RMS within the context of mobilities.

Chapter 4 - Transport Planning in Auckland

4.1 Introduction

The previous section presented the importance of stories in planning. Importantly, it highlighted how stories are used in planning documents to reflect what planners imagine for the future and how that future can be reached. This section explores what the stories portrayed in relevant planning policy documents can tell us about the future of Auckland's transport system and how it will be shaped. The aim is to explore if the factors that impact immigrant women mobilities are taken into account in these documents and how. Given the importance the literature on transportation and mobility places on particular factors that impact immigrant women's transportation choices, any analysis will need to be sensitive these. The following policy analysis will be sensitive to the role of socio-cultural, economic, psychical and perceptual-psychological factors, and how these feature in the stories presented in the planning documents.

To do so, this chapter is divided into three parts. First, a brief description of the transport planning policy framework is provided. Then, the vision for Auckland's transport system is drawn out, based on an examination of relevant national and local policy documents. At the national level, the Government Policy Statement on land transport (GPS) 2021 and the GPS 2024 provisions are reviewed as a way to shed light on how different governments' priorities portrayed contrasting narratives about what Aotearoa's transport system will look like. At a local-level, four primary policy documents are reviewed: the Auckland Plan 2050, Auckland's Climate Plan (Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri), the Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP) 2024-2034 and the latest Auckland Long Term Plan (LTP) 2024-2034. Second, the chapter provides an overview of how the socio-cultural, economic, psychical and perceptual factors influencing immigrant women's mobilities are taken into account - or not - in those documents. Finally, the chapter concludes with an analysis on how changes in planning narratives reflect a shift in the prioritization of factors that might influence immigrant women's mobilities.

4.2 Transport Planning policy framework

The policy framework governing Auckland's land transport planning is extensive and interconnected. There are three main pieces of legislation which work together to integrate

transport planning outcomes: the Resource Management Act (RMA 1991), the Local Government Act (LGA 2002) and the Land Transport Management Act (LTMA 2003) (Quality Planning, 2013). Under these legislations, local and national entities are required to create a range of documents to plan for transport related matter

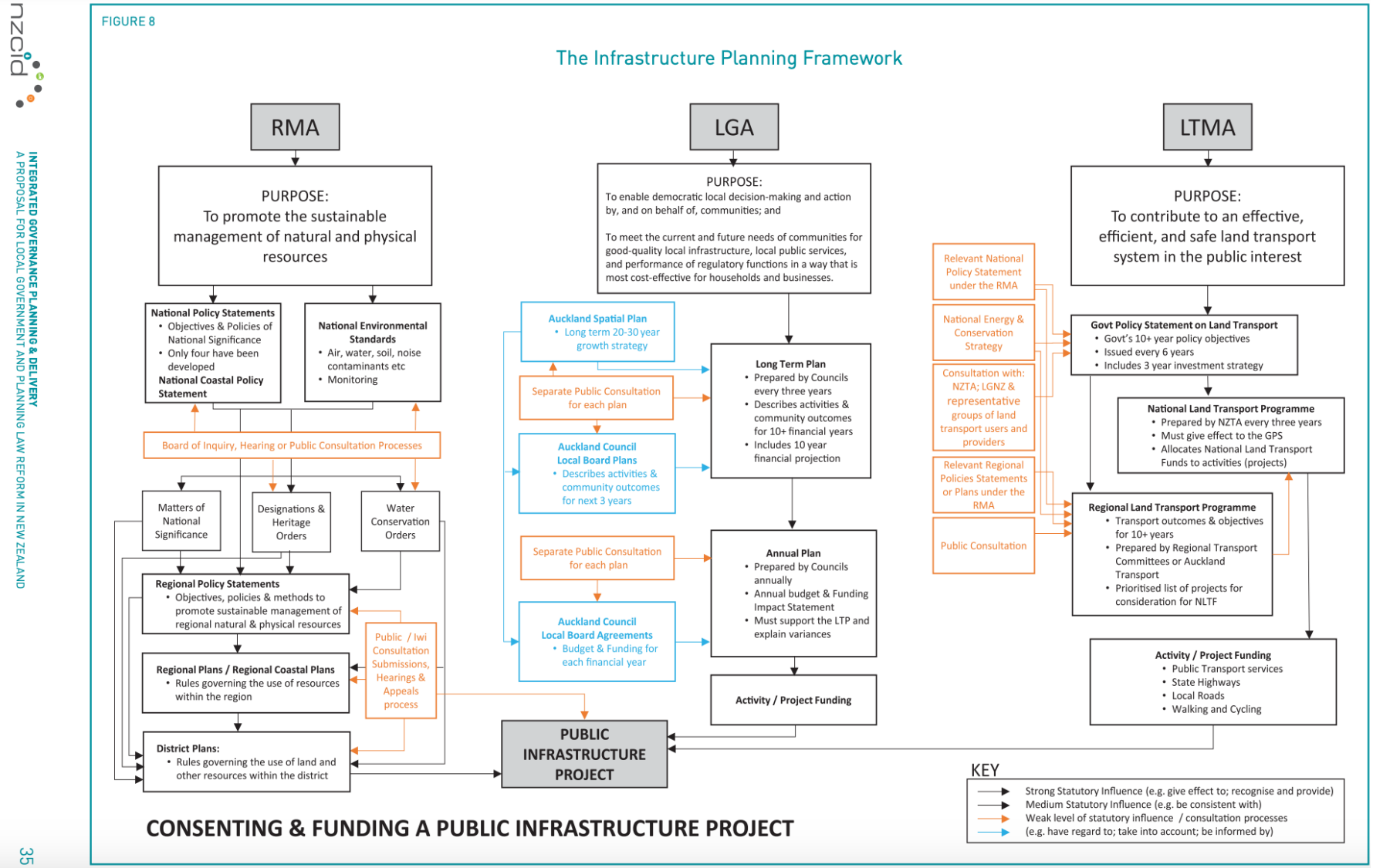
Figure 3 summarises the key planning policy documents for transport infrastructure investment required under each act. It also shows their statutory influence. As shown in the diagram, the plans developed under these legislations are closely linked, aiming to give effect to certain provisions or provide guidance for others.

These three legislations have different purposes but together aim to ensure that transport planning aligns with environmental, social and economic objectives. First, under the RMA (1991), Auckland's transport projects are required to align with sustainable management principles and the local land use and development plans. Under the LTMA (2003), transport investments need to ensure that national and local objectives are aligned "to contribute to an effective, efficient, and safe land transport system in the public interest" (LTMA, 2003, sec. 3). The Act requires the Minister of Transport (MOT) in power to create a GPS to provide strategic direction on land transport planning across the country, over a 10-year horizon. It also requires Waka Kotahi (New Zealand Transport Agency) to prepare a National Land Transport Fund (NLTF) to administer funds to support the delivery of transport outcomes. At a local-level, the LTMA requires Auckland Transport (AT) to collaborate with Waka Kotahi, Auckland Council (AC) and central government to prepare a RLTP. The RLTP is a 10-year plan which aims to guide regional transport projects and funding applications to the NLTF. Both, the NLTF and the RLTP must align with the GPS. As a whole, these plans are required to align with the purpose of the LTMA and consider the environmental and land use requirements of the RMA.

Under the LGA (2002), AC is empowered to develop a range of strategic and operational plans to "promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities in the present and for the future" (LGA, 2002, sec. 10(b)). At the strategic level, the local authority is required to develop the Auckland Spatial Plan, which presents a 20-to-30-year vision for the city in a range of areas including transport, housing, community facilities, etc. In order to advance the spatial plan objectives, the LGA requires AC to prepare a LTP to guide activities and funding over a 10-year period. In this regard, the Spatial Plan informs the LTP as well as the RLTP. As a whole,

the plans developed under the LGA are expected to align with well-being and sustainability objectives.

Figure 3
Planning Framework Diagram (Nzcid, 2015, p.35)



Importantly, under the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act 2019, transport decisions are required to align with the country's international obligations to reduce greenhouse emissions and adapt to climate change. The Zero Carbon Act mandates the creation of Emissions Reduction Plans (ERP) to define targeted measures for high-emission sectors - such as transport - to achieve emission reductions. National and local level provision such as the GPS, the RLTP and the Auckland Spatial Plan are required to align the ERP goals. In Auckland, in order to contribute to the ERP's goals and to align with the objectives of the RMA (1991) and the LGA(2002), AC has developed Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri to integrate priorities and actions to reduce emissions in a range of sectors, including transport. Local planning provision is encouraged to align with Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri as a way to integrate with the national and international climate goals and commitments.

With the view that the planning framework governing transport in Auckland is extensive and interconnected, this section provides an overview of the planning documents most relevant to this research. In this context, the provisions reviewed in this chapter do not necessarily have the highest statutory influence but play a significant role in shaping transport outcomes in terms of equity and sustainability.

4.2.1 Central Government Planning Documents

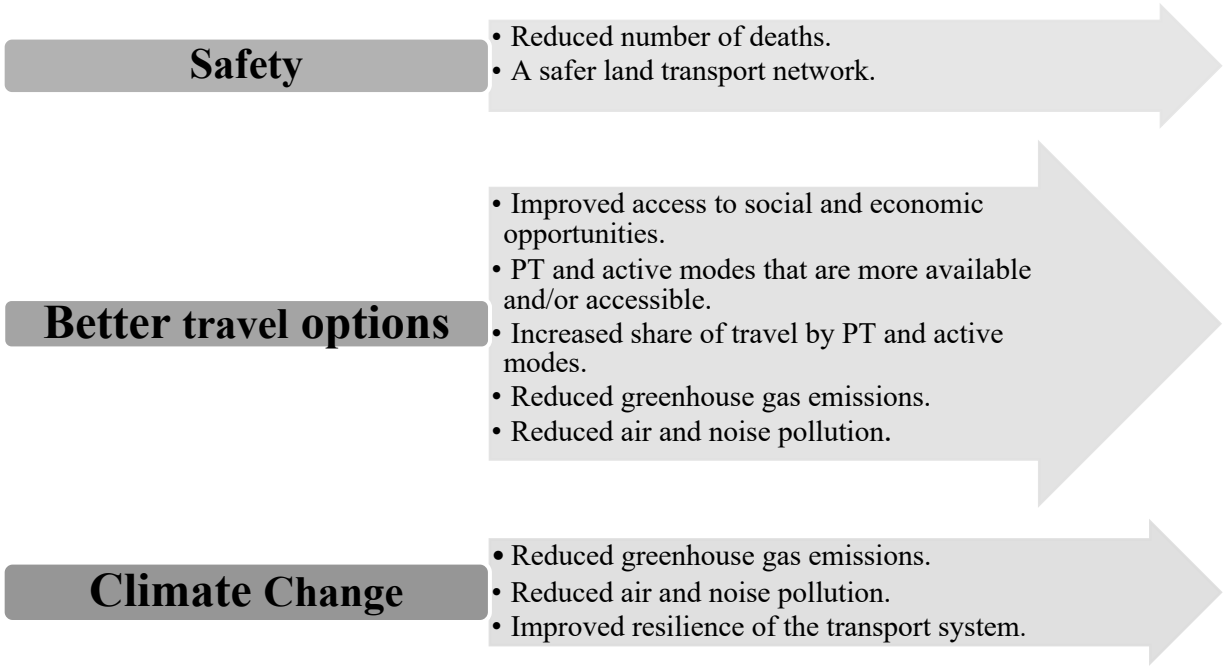
The GPS, issued by the MOT every three years, sets out what the Government expects to achieve around land transport over a 10-year period and how it will be achieved. It provides direction to local governments, KiwiRail and Waka Kotahi on the type of activities they should consider in their planning provision. The GPS is expected to reflect the policy priorities of the government of the day by setting out the strategic priorities, objectives, and funding allocation for the country's land transport system. In this regard, tracking the changes to the planning narratives of different GPSs gives us a sense of the change in priorities under different governments and, thus, a sense of how the different factors affecting transport mobilities are expected to shift.

4.2.1.1 GPS 2021

The GPS 2021, issued by a Labour-led government (2017-2023), aims to improve the well-being and liveability of Aotearoa's cities. It portrays rapid population growth and climate change as the

two biggest challenges the country's transport systems need to face in order to achieve the plan's aim. To meet those challenges, the plan sets out four strategic priorities around s*afety, better travel options, climate change* and *improving freight connections*. Through those four priorities, the government expected to achieve five specific outcomes: *Inclusive access , healthy and safe people, economic prosperity, environmental sustainability* and *resilience and security*.

Figure 4
GPS 2021 Medium Term Results



Focusing on the GPS 2021's primary outcomes relevant to passenger transportation, the plan tells a story about a future transport system in which:

> *…no-one is killed or seriously injured while travelling*, *people have better travel options to access places for earning, learning, and participating in society* and *emissions reduction targets are met*.

To work towards this future, the plan highlights that transport planners need to implement a range of actions in Aotearoa's cities. Key proposed actions include improving the transport network

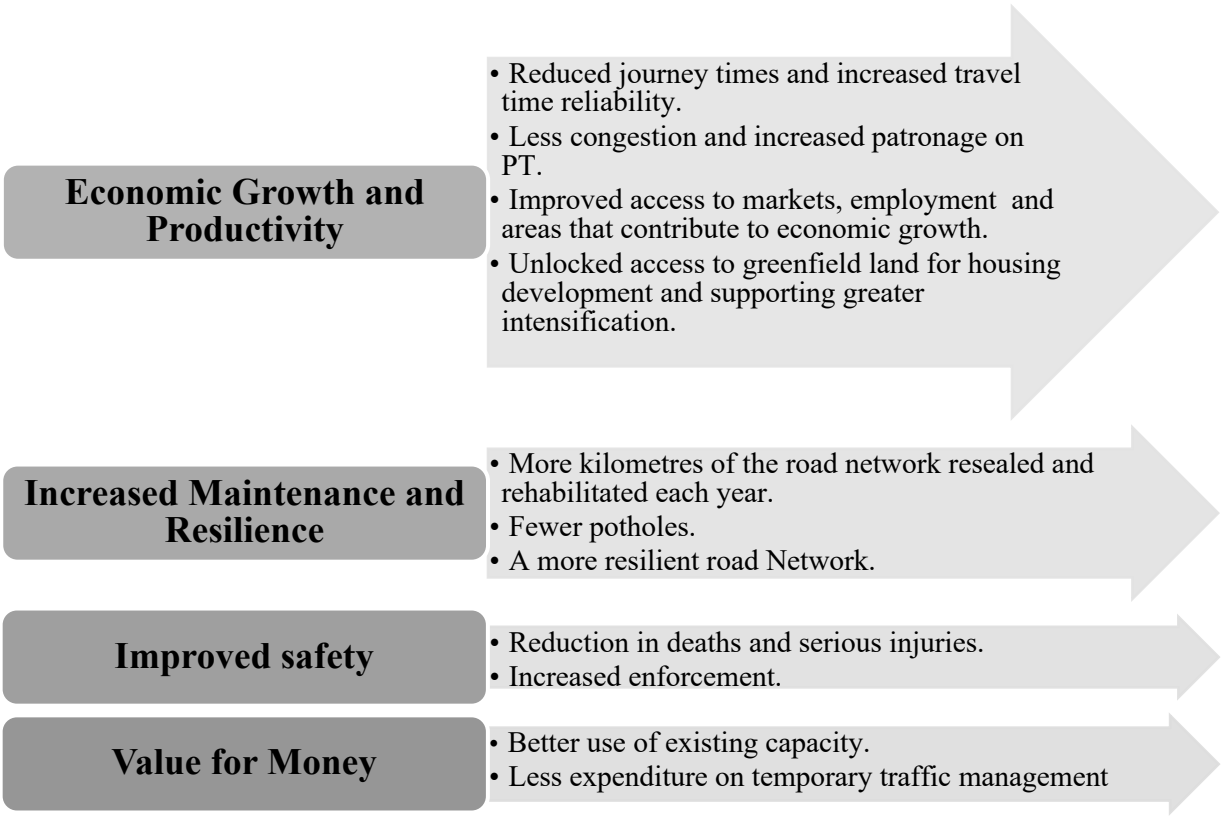
infrastructure, encouraging people's mode shift, and working collaboratively with land use planning to shape urban forms that contribute to the plan's objectives. These actions are portrayed as key outcomes delivering a transport system that enhances the well-being and liveability of Aotearoa's cities.

4.2.1.2 GPS 2024

In contrast to the GPS 2021, the GPS 2024, issued under the current National party led government (2023 onwards) , shifts the aim of transport planning towards delivering economic growth and increasing productivity. In this regard, the plan portrays infrastructure deficits, weather events and other natural disasters as the big challenges Aotearoa's transport systems need to tackle. Importantly, the main focus around infrastructure deficit refers to the lack of road networks, and the financial constraints around building and maintaining them. In order to meet those challenges, the plan sets out four strategic priorities: *Economic Growth and Productivity, Increased Maintenance and Resilience, Safety* and *Value for Money.* The document emphasises that the *Economic Growth and Productivity* strategy is the primary focus of the policy.

Under each of those four strategic priorities, the GPS 2024 aims to deliver the following outcomes for passenger transportation in the short to medium-term:

Figure 5
GPS 2024 Medium Term Results



Putting together the GPS 2024 outcomes related to passenger transportation, the final report tells a story about a future transport system in Aotearoa that:

> *connects people quickly and safely, supports economic growth and creates social and economic opportunities including access to land for housing growth, is resilient to the impacts of weather events and other natural disasters and is cost efficient and effective.*

In contrast to the GPS 2021's vision for safe and liveable transport systems, GPS 2024 projects a future in which the transport system promotes economic and operational efficiency and effectiveness throughout Aotearoa.

In order to support the delivery of this future, the current GPS proposes a range of actions. Some key actions include investing in transport network infrastructure to improve productivity, including the Roads of National Significance and major PT projects, limiting investment in PT and walking and cycling services and infrastructure to projects where there are clear economic and safety benefits, increasing investment in road maintenance and increasing PT revenue. The plan, therefore, directs transport planning to focus on road related activities to generate economic benefits and ensure "that Kiwis can get to where they need to go, quickly and safely" (MOT, 2024, p.4).

Importantly, the activities proposed by the plan do not align with the first ERP (2022). The document specifies that the GPS 2024 does not intend to do align, as "the intended emissions reduction policies foreshadowed by the previous Government are being reassessed" (MOT, 2024, p.5) While the plan acknowledges the need to reduce emissions from the transport system, it proposes improvements to the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) and EVs infrastructure to reduce carbon emission. Under this plan, therefore, market-based solutions and technological advancements are expected to deliver a climate friendly transport system.

4.2.2 Local-Level Planning Documents

This section explores the local planning documents that are crucial in shaping the future of Auckland's transport planning. This examination focuses on two strategic planning documents— Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri, and the Auckland Plan 2050 — and two key investment planning provision — the RLTP (2024 – 2034) and the LTP (2024-2034). This review attempts to explore how these planning documents may inform us about the future of the city's transport system, and the actions that will be employed to achieve it.

4.2.2.1 Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri

At a local-level, Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri, delivered in 2020, tells a story driven by environmental values. In response to the challenge of climate change, the plan aims to reduce emissions in Auckland and make the city resilient and healthier. The plan aligns with and informs several planning provisions at a local and national-level. Importantly, the plan reflects the Zero Carbon

Act goals and is expected to complement the GPS direction. At the local-level, it carries the Auckland Plan 2050 sustainability goals and influences the LTP.

The plan takes a strong approach to Māori collaboration. For example, the plan is guided by Te Ao Māori, and specifically "speaks to the struggles of Atua as a result of human behaviour which is out of balance with the world around us"(Auckland Council, 2020b, p. 10). Integrating Māori knowledge and values, Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri presents two specific goals for Auckland:

- *to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by 50 per cent by 2030 and achieve net zero emissions by 2050*
- *to adapt to the impacts of climate change by ensuring we plan for the changes we face under our current emissions pathway (p.41).*

Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri highlights the importance of reducing emissions in a range of sectors in order to achieve these objectives. In particular, it presents Auckland's transport system as the biggest source of emissions at 43.6% of the total. The plan sets a transport priority - te ikiiki **-** with the aim to guide action towards achieving a "low carbon, safe transport system that delivers social, economic and health benefits for all" (p.81). The Transport Emissions Reduction Pathway (TERP), explained next, was created in order to enact this priority.

4.2.2.1.1 Transport Emissions Reduction Pathway

Auckland's TERP was issued in 2022 and gives effect to *Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri.* It sets out the pathway for AC, Auckland Transport (AT) and other key actors to reduce the city's emissions by 64% by 2030. The TERP provision is expected to be reflected in both the national and local level planning provision. The core objective of the TERP is to achieve a low-carbon, safe and equitable transport system. Specifically, the TERP portrays a 2030 future where the distance travelled in light vehicles in Auckland is about half of what it was in 2022. In order to achieve this, the plan requires actors to work hard to achieve mode shift, increase electric vehicle uptake, and a reduction in car trips. These actions, the plan states, also involve partnering with Mana Whenua partners and other transport sector groups to ensure a just transition. In this regard the TERP portray a future transport system in Auckland that:

Is low-carbon, safe, affordable and accessible for all Aucklanders (Auckland Council, 2022).

The plan presents four strategic directions to achieve the stated goal. It calls to "*reduce reliance on cars and support people to walk, cycle and use PT, rapidly adopt low-emissions vehicles, begin work to decarbonise heavy transport and freight and empower Aucklanders to make sustainable choices*"(Auckland Council, 2022, p. 24). The plan proposes a range of actions to deliver these priorities which include making walking and biking safer, incentivise the uptake of micromobility, delivering a congestion pricing scheme, enabling greater intensification, improving PT services, and delivering behaviour change programmes, among other actions. Importantly, the plan requires the mitigation of negative impacts on disadvantaged communities that may result from the implementing of certain actions. Decarbonising Auckland's transport system under this plan, therefore, requires implementing equity and low-carbon transport policies.

4.2.2.2 Auckland Plan 2050

The Auckland Plan 2050 is the city's long-term spatial plan. It was issued in 2018 and aligns with several key planning provisions, including the GPS 2021. In doing so, the plan paints a prosperous future for Auckland, "with many opportunities and a better standard of living for everyone" (Auckland Council, 2018, p. 23). In order to achieve that future, the plan provides high level direction on how to tackle the major challenges and make the most of the opportunities that the city is expected to face over a 30-year period.

The Auckland Plan points out three key challenges for the development and growth of Auckland. The first challenge is the fast population growth, driven by both natural population increase and overseas migration. This population growth, the plan states, is expected to put pressure on different aspects of Auckland's composition, such as housing, transportation, and environment. The second challenge is about "sharing prosperity with all Aucklanders". The plan points out how Auckland's success requires tackling the socio-economic deprivation affecting particular geographic areas, as well as some ethnic and age groups. The last challenge is about "*reducing environmental*

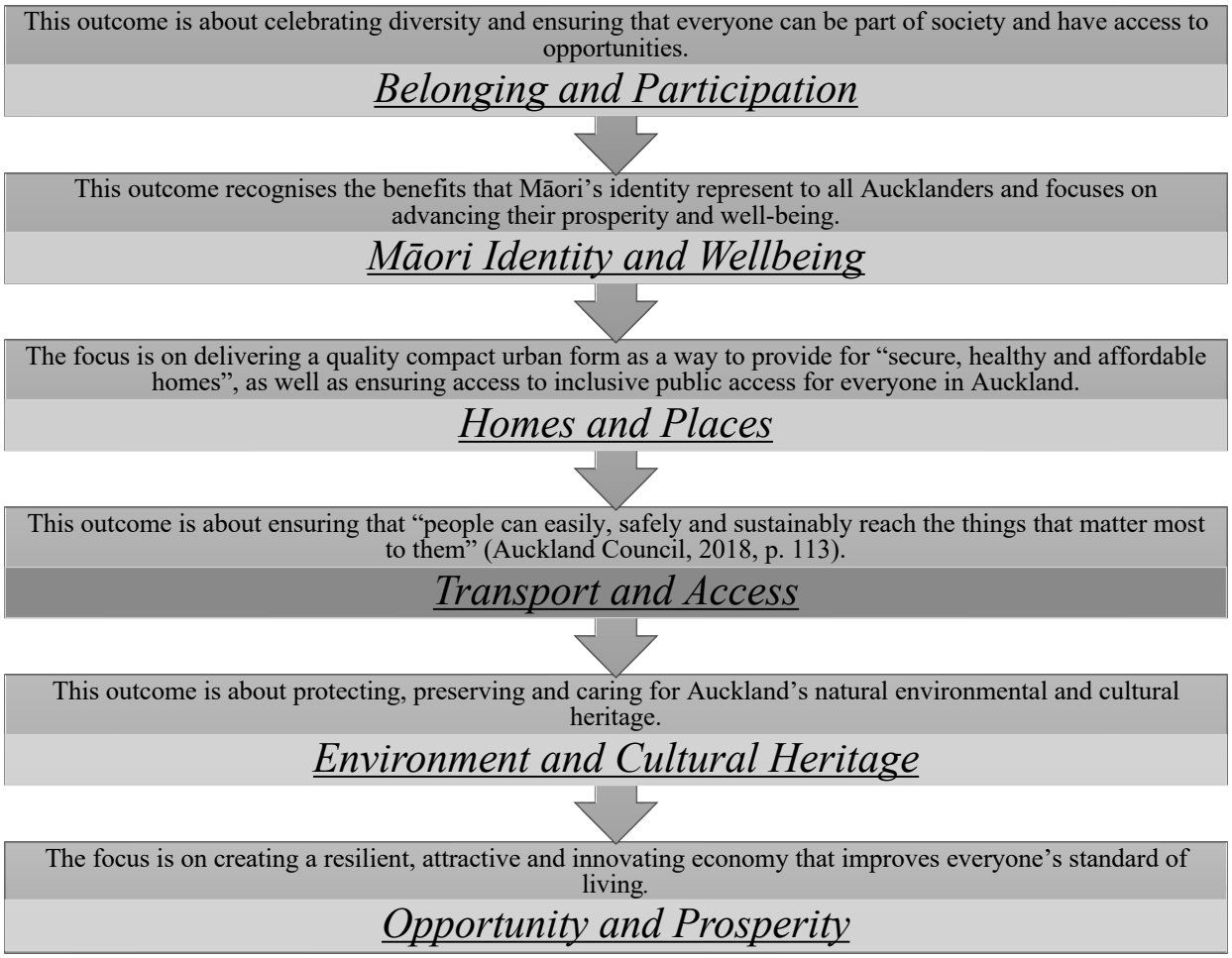
degradation" caused by human activities. In this regard, the plan calls for shaping growth, development and behaviours in a way that considers those three challenges.

In proposing to tackle those three challenges, the plan portrays a future Auckland where:

> *Everyone has access to essential infrastructure, can benefit from the social and economic prosperity, can participate in and enjoy community and civic life, and future generations can enjoy of Auckland's environmental benefits.*

The provision defines six areas of long-term focus in order to achieve the following outcomes and achieve the portrayed future:

Figure 6
Auckland Plan 2050 Outcomes



Regarding the *Transport and Access* outcome, the plan portrays a future Auckland transport system that is connected, provides people with genuine and safe travel options and protects the environment. To achieve this, the plan calls for implementing a range of actions around infrastructure investment, asset management and travel behaviour change. This include making better use of the existing transport network, strategically investing in roads, rail and PT, encouraging innovation and use of new technologies, making low-carbon transport modes more attractive, integrating land use and transport planning and increasing efforts to achieve a safer and sustainable transport network. Thus, the Auckland plan 2050 directs transport planning to take an integrated approach to address Auckland's transport challenges, focusing on people's needs.

4.2.2.3 Auckland Long Term Plan 2024-2034

The Auckland LTP sets out what AC will work on over a 10-year period and how the work will be funded. The plan, with a focus on infrastructure and financial planning, is required under the LGA. It informs the RLTP and needs to be consistent with the direction of the GPS and the Auckland Plan 2050. The LPT is also expected to take into account Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri and TERP objectives.

In this regard, the LTP 2024-2034 portrays a future Auckland which is financially secure and physically resilient. The plan sets four challenges that the city needs to tackle over the next 10 years if that future is to be attained: *inflation, population growth, weather events* and *a limited funding system*. In this regard, the plan focuses on three main outcomes to align with the Auckland Plan 2050: *Provide for our communities of greater need, deliver Māori outcomes* and *mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change.*

The provision presents a range of activities that will be funded across several sectors. In particular, AC is mandated by the LGA 2002 to address two specific groups of activities (GoA) related to transport: Roads and footpaths, and PT and travel demand. Based on the final report, the investment planned for the first GoA over the next ten years focuses on the maintenance, safety, resilience and optimisation of the current infrastructure. Regarding the second GoA, the plan states "the goal is to move people quickly and reliably around the city, switching easily from one mode of transport to another" (Auckland Council, 2024b, p. 227). To achieve this, the plan aims to maintain PT services, complete rapid transit projects, and implement fare incentives to increase

PT use. In this regard, the latest LTP, as it relates to transport, focuses on investing in physical infrastructure, asset optimisation, reduced congestion, and cost minimisation.

4.2.2.4 Auckland Regional Land Transport Plan 2024 -2034

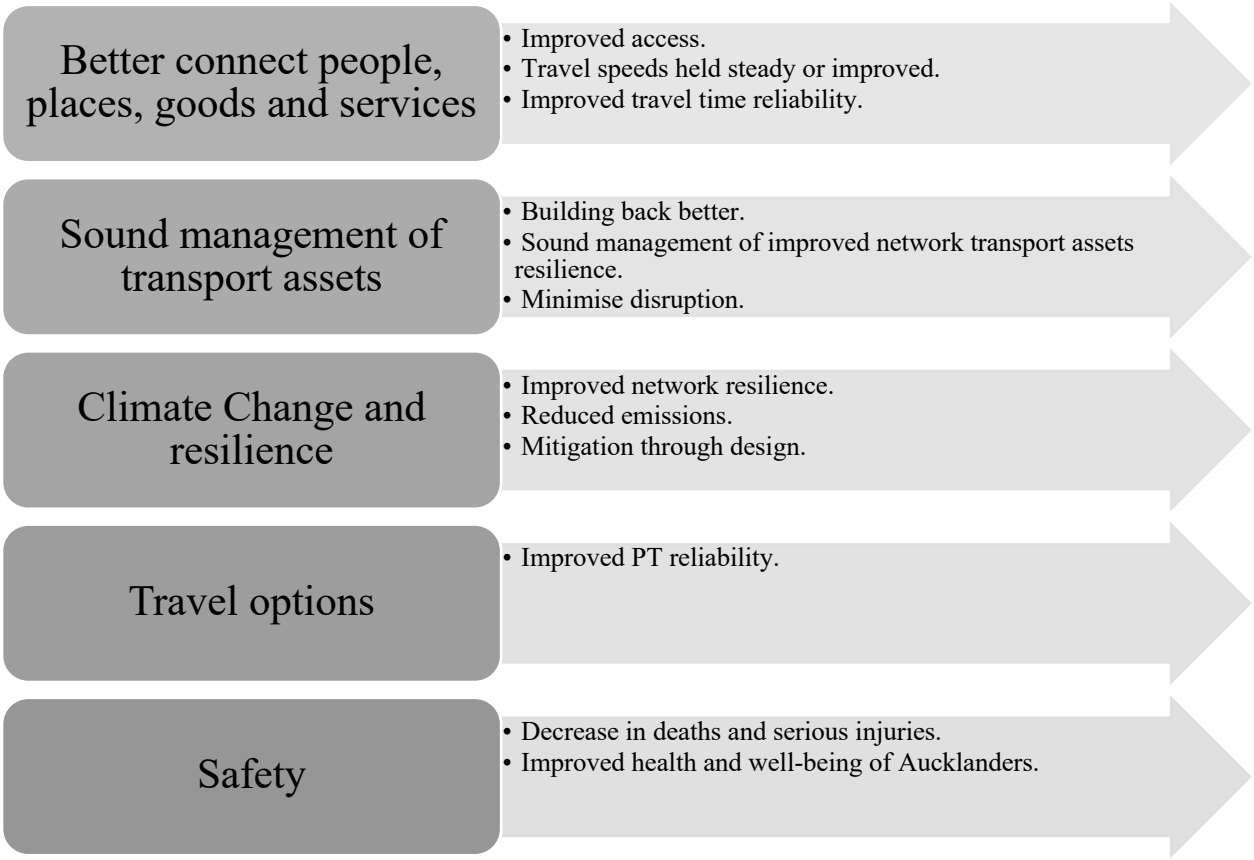
The RLTP 2024–2034 outlines the region's "land transport objectives, policies, and monitoring measures for the next 10 years" (Auckland Transport et al., 2024, p. 7). Through the plan, transport agencies including AT, Waka Kotahi and KiwiRail propose a range of investment projects for the region and their required funding from the NLTF. The plan is prepared following a public consultation process and is intended to align national and local policy direction and funding.

The aim of the latest RLTP is to improve Auckland's transport network and PT to drive economic productivity, target congestion, reduce travel times, improve safety and reduce transport emissions. In view of this, the plan draws a future in which:

> *Auckland's transport system is well managed, with a fast and reliable PT, well-maintained road networks, and where more people walk or bike for transportation.*

The plan presents five main challenges the city needs to face to achieve this aim: increasing travel demand, high car dependency, low level of investment in transport assets, the transport system's susceptibility to climate change and harm to human health. Based on these challenges, Figure 7 presents the plan's objectives and envisioned outcomes.

Figure 7
RLTP 2024-2034 Outcomes



The RTLP seeks national funding for specific projects to deliver these outcomes across the region. It places priority on maintaining and improving the existing PT services and roads and completing projects that have already started. Funding for these activities is regarded as mandatory. Regarding new investments, it presents rapid transit projects as a priority, along with investing in other projects that could improve congestion and encourage the use of active modes. This includes investment in highways as well as in cycleways. As a whole, the RLTP attempts to balance out the futures portrayed in the GPS 2024 with the local-level strategies. However, since the plan's investments heavily depend on NLTF approval, which must align with GPS objectives, there is great uncertainty about the implementation of new PT and active modes projects in the region.

4.3 Planning Documents Analysis

This section analyses the planning documents presented in section 4.2, and how they influence immigrant women's mobilities. The analysis is informed by the literature review in section 2,

which highlighted the importance of socio-cultural, economic, physical, and perceptual factors on the group's mobilities.

4.3.1 Socio-Cultural Factors

Transport and mobility research highlights that women's mobilities are often shaped by socio-cultural norms around motherhood, elderly care, and domestic responsibilities. Women, literature suggests, often move at different times and for different reasons than men due to gendered household roles. Furthermore, the difference in transport patterns is even greater when considering immigrant women as they often enter the workforce post-migration, having to perform low-skill jobs while also remaining responsible for household care and responsibilities. Providing for the transport needs of immigrant women, therefore, requires actions that extend beyond merely reducing traffic congestion or increasing PT frequency during peak hours, and instead can be improved by incorporating knowledge of their complex lives and needs.

The shift from GPS 2021 under Labour to GPS 2024 under National suggests a shift in how the transport needs of Aucklanders are considered. While the specific needs of immigrant women are not explicitly addressed in these documents, they are likely to be affected by this change. At first glance, comparing the narratives reveals a clear shift in visions for the future—from a focus on well-being, climate initiatives, and strong public financial support to a market-oriented plan emphasizing private sector, operational efficiency, and market mechanisms. This shift is concerning, as it suggests the replacement of a more human-centred, publicly funded approach with one driven by a market-focused perspective, rooted in a neoliberal ideology of limited government intervention.

We can see how these differences in narratives play out at a more technical level. For instance, the GPS 2021 proposes to monitor progress around the "*Better travel options*" strategic priority by using *access to essential services* as an indicator. Importantly, this indicator includes access not only to work or education services, but also recreation, healthcare, shopping and other facilities. With this indicator, the document directs transport planning to not only focus on ensuring access to jobs, but also to provide for other types of journeys that more often than not are performed by women rather than men. This is particularly important for Latin American households where women often face stronger role stereotypes than Western women. Conversely, the GPS 2024

directs planning to focus on actions that can reduce congestion and travel times, with little focus on providing for different transport needs. While the GPS 2024 does not propose any progress indicators, the outcomes of the "*Economic growth and productivity*" strategic priority suggest trips made for "unproductive" purposes are not to be considered in transport planning. Instead, the plan directs transport investment towards actions that improve "access to markets, employment and areas that contribute to economic growth" (Ministry of Transport, 2024, p. 24). Explicitly, the GPS 2024 directs planning towards road investment rather than PT, walking and cycling:

> *"Investment in walking and cycling should only take place where there is either clear benefit for increasing economic growth or clear benefit for improving safety and where there is an existing or reliably forecast demand for walking or cycling" (p.16)*

Given the shift in vision, the latest GPS is unlikely to guide planning provisions to cover the transport needs of those immigrant woman engaged in various roles including motherhood, caregiving, and housekeeping. Since immigrant women are a) more likely to travel by PT, walk or bike than the rest of the population, and b) their transport journeys, which differ from common patterns and could be considered 'unproductive' under a plan that emphasizes narrow conceptions of work, the plan is unlikely to deliver necessary outcomes for migrant women.

Regarding local-level documents, the strategic direction documents narrate a future Auckland where people with different journey patterns can easily and safely move. Like the GPS 2021, the Auckland Plan 2050 and Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri guide transport investment in Auckland to focus on providing for diverse transportation needs, such as trips for work, school, friends, recreation and healthcare. In order to achieve this, the Auckland Plan 2050 calls for ensuring that people have more travel choices "to travel in a way that best suits their particular needs"(Auckland Council, 2018, p. 119). If the future of the Auckland Plan was to become real, in 30-years' time all Aucklanders would "be able to get where they want to go, more easily safely and sustainably"(Auckland Council, 2018, p. 6), regardless of how "productive" their travel purpose is for the economy. Similarly, Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri points out the differences in accessibility needs across the city and how those differences need to be considered in order to plan for climate change.

The plan calls for AC processes and practices to consider current and future accessibility inequalities when planning for a low carbon, safe transport system for all.

The TERP, giving effect to Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri, follows an equity-first approach, and aims to tackle the lack of transport options which limit the ability of some people to "participate in social, cultural and economic activities" (Auckland Council, 2022, p. 14). Specifically, the provision requires planning for a PT system that is "much more useful to many more people for a wider range of trips, not just journeys to work and education" (Auckland Council, 2022, p. 32). This means, "services must be more frequent at all times of the day, be faster and more reliable, and connect to more places" (Auckland Council, 2022, p. 32). Furthermore, PT needs to be affordable for people who take multiple short trips throughout the day, or for groups travelling together. The plan proposes a range of actions that planning can implement to improve transport accessibility for disadvantaged groups, including expanding the "data collection and understanding about the transport needs of these groups, as well as the trips they forgo because of a lack of transport options." (Auckland Council, 2022, p. 15). The plan, therefore, calls for planning to deliver a transport system that serves everyone in Auckland, with a focus on doing so through low-carbon modes.

At the investment level, the LTP and the RLTP 2024-2034 seem to fall short in meeting the needs approach directed under the Auckland Plan 2050, Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri and the TERP. As it relates to transportation, the LTP proposes to optimise the transport network and particularly focus over the next decade "on renewals and maintenance to ensure roads and other network assets are kept in good order" (Auckland Council, 2024a, p. 25). While the plan is expected to align with the high-level provision, the LTP states that, given the current financial limitations and cost increases, "ensuring maximum value from every dollar spent is critical" (Auckland Council, 2024a, p. 25). On the other hand, the RLTP seeks funding to provide better travel options to all Aucklanders, such as walking or biking. However, there is uncertainty related to whether these projects will secure funding. In general, the plans present financial limitations as a significant barrier to address the transportation needs of individuals whose journeys do not align with the norm, portraying a transport system in Auckland that maintains the current status quo, with a focus on efficiency and optimisation that more closely aligns with the narrative of the GPS 2024.

Overall, the most recent plans seem to be moving away from planning for the transport needs of people whose travel patterns do not align to those of the majority of the population. On the one hand, the latest GPS guides future provision to focus on planning for 'productive' journeys, leaving out trips for recreation, healthcare, socialising etc. On the other hand, the latest local plans, and particularly the LTP, limits investment in transport to optimise traffic movements in general but gives little attention to accommodate the diverse needs of all Aucklanders. The current national and local planning frameworks, therefore, are unlikely to cover the needs of immigrant women whose transport patterns differ from the norm, particularly as they are more likely to perform household, caregiving and housekeeping roles that do not align with traditional transport flows.

4.3.2 Economic Factors

The transport and mobility literature tells us that immigrant women's mobilities are often impacted by economic limitation which disproportionally impact them over others. Economic disadvantages, research suggests, limit their transportation options, and in particular their possibility of owning a car and accessing the skills required to drive one. Importantly, in car dependent urban environments, not having access to a car also represents a barrier to accessing jobs, community and recreation.

The planning framework suggests that, at the national-level, there is little direction to tackle the issues of transportation access that affect low-income individuals. However, taking a closer look, there is a distinction in how the previous and the current GPS provisions propose approaches to transport inequalities caused by economic disadvantages. On the one hand, the GPS 2021 envisions a future in which an inclusive transport network provides transport options to everyone. In this scenario, Aotearoa's cities are no longer car-dependent, and therefore, lack of car-ownership and driving skills are no longer a restriction to those who can't access them. In contrast, the GPS 2024 portrays a future where cars remain the primary mode of passenger transportation, with planning focusing on connecting places through road infrastructure. In this scenario, the transport inequalities resulting from limited car access are likely to be exacerbated. In this regard, while the previous GPS could have benefited low-income individuals by reducing the need for a car, the current provision might leave them at a continued disadvantage.

At a local-level, transport affordability issues are approached in different ways at the strategic and investment levels. For instance, similar to the GPS 2021, the strategic provision guides planning to reduce car-dependency as a way to reduce transport inequalities created by economic disparities. The Auckland plan 2050 portrays a future in which people can access places easily, affordably and safely. To progress toward that future, the plan asserts that planning needs to shift away from the current car-focused transport system, incentivised by widespread car ownership and sprawling urban forms. According to the plan, a system in which most of the time the vehicles carry a single person increases inefficiencies and inequalities, as it creates congestion and disproportionally affects low-income households who often work far from home, resulting in lengthy commutes . To reduce car-dependency, land and transport planning are expected to work jointly under this plan.

Similarly, Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri recognises the transport equity problems created by the current income gaps, and calls for planning to consider them in the context of climate change. The document proposes a distributive approach to transport planning focused on improving access to "communal and personal transport devices for low-income Aucklanders" (Auckland Council, 2018, 2020b, p. 83) and, in particular, for Mana Whenua. The TERP, giving effect to Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri, points out at how Auckland's car-dependency particularly affects low-income people "as destinations they tend to travel to (particularly industrial workplaces and/or night shifts) are often not well served by the PT network" (Auckland Council, 2022, p. 14). In this regard, the strategy directs planning to deliver a sustainable and equitable transport system by improving other transport options, making them more affordable, and making driving less attractive.

Relevant actions in the TERP include implementing a congestion pricing plan (along with measures to address its impact on equity), planning for an increase in access via sustainable modes and a reduction in light vehicle travel, and implementing a Fairfares strategy (Auckland Council, 2022). Additionally, the TERP, by recognizing that PT and active modes are not an option for everyone, proposes to rapidly increase "the range of personal low-emissions vehicle options that are available, e.g., micromobility, e-mopeds, e-motos and microcars"(Auckland Council, 2022, p. 43). Under the TERP, therefore, AC and AT are guided to collaborate with other agencies to make low-carbon modes more attractive by making them more affordable than driving.

The LTP 2024-2034, aligning with the strategic provision, proposes investment options to expand travel choices for Aucklanders and stimulate PT demand. On one hand, the plan's investment in

PT infrastructure prioritizes completing existing Rapid Transit initiatives and making targeted investments to optimize the use of current assets. Similarly, investment in walking and cycling infrastructure is limited to "completing existing projects and delivering lower-cost cycleways" (Auckland Council, 2024b, p. 222). At the operational level, the plan aims to increase PT demand by introducing a weekly fare cap of $50 covering bus, rail, and inner harbour ferry services, as well as expanding Fareshare strategies. Furthermore, to alleviate congestion, the plan proposes the introduction of road pricing or 'time of use charging'. The RLTP, aligned with the LTP, acknowledges the affordability challenges restricting Aucklanders' travel choices and calls for measures to "support transport equity by investing in PT, walking and cycling, safety and promoting integrated transport and land-use future planning" (Auckland Transport et al., 2024, p. 57). This suggests that, at an investment level, AC and other transport agencies are striving to uphold the equity objectives of the strategic provision while navigating funding constraint.

In this regard, the current planning framework, particularly the latest GPS, envisions a future transport system in Auckland that remains heavily reliant on private vehicle use. This approach is particularly inefficient and inequitable for low-income individuals, especially immigrant women, who often lack access to private cars, the necessary driving skills, or live and work in areas with poor PT coverage. Given the significant influence of the GPS on local transport funding, Auckland's transport system is unlikely to address these inequalities in the medium to long-term.

4.3.3 Physical Factors

Transport and mobilities research revel that urban sprawled environments, such as Auckland's, disproportionately restrict the mobility of immigrant women who are more likely to live in peripheral areas poorly covered by PT. This, combined with poor walking environments, often result in them overly relying on driving a car or on other people to drive them.

There is a clear distinction in how this issue is addressed in GPS 2021 and GPS 2024. The 2021 document envisions a future where streets are people-friendly, encouraging individuals to walk, bike, or use alternative modes of transportation rather than private vehicles for commuting. Under this provision, planning prioritizes increased investment in PT services and infrastructure, as well as promoting "higher-density, mixed-use, and transit-oriented development where people live in closer proximity to where they work, learn, and play" (Ministry of Transport, 2021, p. 22).

Conversely, the 2024 plan shifts the focus toward opening up access to greenfield land for housing development while also supporting greater urban intensification. This, combined with increased road investment, presents a future where people and places are connected *efficiently, quickly, and safely* through cars and road network. Thus, the two national provisions outline contrasting scenarios for the urban form and transport systems of Aotearoa's cities. Under the GPS 2021 scenario, physical barriers restricting the mobility of immigrant women are actively addressed, whereas under GPS 2024, these barriers either persist or worsen.

At the local-level, the strategic provision envisions a future Auckland that aligns with the GPS 2021 and enhances immigrant women's mobility. Under the Auckland Plan 2050, Auckland will adopt a quality compact approach to growth and development. This plan prioritizes locating most developments within existing urban areas that are within walking or biking distance of services and facilities or in areas well connected to PT. A well-developed compact Auckland, as outlined in the plan, is expected to encourage walking and cycling, support more frequent and faster PT services, and reduce congestion.

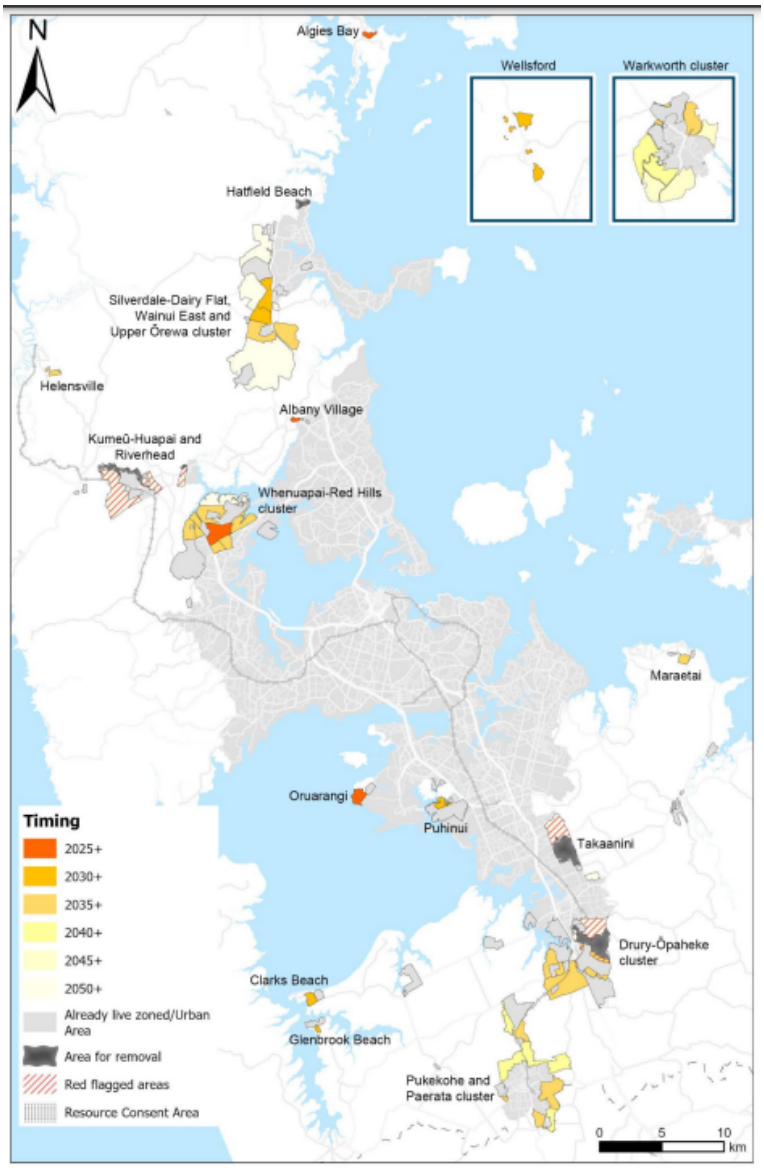
Similarly, Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri calls for planning and growth strategies that create low-carbon, climate-resilient environments. The plan endorses the quality compact urban form approach from the Auckland Plan 2050 as a means to ensure that transport infrastructure is provided sustainably and equitably. Specifically, the TERP states that creating vibrant, mixed-use neighbourhoods for everyone in Auckland requires prioritising investment in high-quality, safe and connected cycleways and pathways, as well as ensuring that the PT network "is more frequent at all times of the day, is faster and more reliable, and connect to more places" (Auckland Council, 2022, p. 32). Accordingly, Auckland's strategic provision advocates for an urban form that encourages people to shift away from private vehicle use, which would positively impact immigrant women's mobility.

At the investment level, plans aim to support the development of denser urban environments. The RLTP identifies Auckland's high car dependency as a significant challenge limiting the city's ability to achieve a high-quality, compact urban form. To address this issue, the plan calls for the completion of existing transport infrastructure projects and investment in new ones, particularly the expansion of the Rapid Transit Network. Similarly, the LTP allocates infrastructure investment to support growth in specific focus areas. In particular, the plan prioritizes completing the

implementation of the City Centre Master Plan and regenerating neighbourhoods in areas such as Takapuna, Northcote, Henderson, and Avondale, while also renewing critical assets, particularly along the waterfronts (Auckland Council, 2024b, p. 301).

Furthermore, while the LTP is expected to provide sufficient infrastructure in priority growth areas over the medium and long term (see Figure 8), the report highlights the challenges Auckland Council (AC) will face in meeting the investment required in new growth areas, where significant infrastructure development is needed. In this regard, the LTP facilitates investment in existing urban areas to "enable new housing, create walkable, well-connected, low-carbon communities, and attract investment" (Auckland Council, 2024a, p. 301). It also calls on the central government to collaborate in advancing the infrastructure needed in new urban areas. Accordingly, while the plan aligns with higher-level provisions by prioritizing growth in existing urban areas, it also considers the development of greenfield land to accommodate future expansion. However, concerns remain about whether a non-car-dependent, "quality compact" city is achievable under these plans.

Figure 8
Future Urban Areas (Auckland Council, 2020a, p.47)



The mobility restrictions created by sprawled, car-dependent urban environments are expected to persist under the scenarios outlined in the current GPS and the latest local provisions, which heavily rely on central government funding and direction. As planning shifts away from delivering quality compact urban forms - favouring greenfield development and prioritizing car use - immigrant women are likely to be disproportionately affected, as they are more likely to live or work in non-central areas and have limited access to cars.

4.3.4 Perceptual and Psychological Factors

As the findings from Chapter 2 showed, immigrant women's mobilities are impacted by how they feel and perceive their daily transportation (Law, 1999; Loukaitou-Sideris, 2020). On the one hand, fear of sexual harassment or assault while using PT, walking, or cycling disproportionately affects them, as they are more likely to live in high-crime areas. Furthermore, while many embrace driving - encouraged by discourses of modernity, parenting, and safety - it often fails to improve their mobility. Instead, driving can evoke fear, stress, and anxiety, turning it into a source of obligation and disempowerment. In this regard, their mobility is deeply shaped by how they perceive their transport experiences.

The national-level planning documents frame improvements to people's travel experiences around enhancing physical infrastructure and addressing safety concerns. There are differences in the approaches taken by the new and previous provisions to achieve this. On the one hand, the GPS 2021 envisions a future in which people can "safely and enjoyably travel by low-emissions transport modes"(Ministry of Transport, 2021, p. 23). To achieve this, the provision directs planning efforts toward physical improvements to the urban environment, reducing speed limits, and increasing road policing. Conversely, the GPS 2024 gives little attention to improving people's travel experiences beyond directing planning to enable "people to get to where they need to go quickly and safely" (Ministry of Transport, 2024, p. 4). The plan's safety priority is focussed on delivering "safer roads, safer drivers, and safer vehicles"(Ministry of Transport, 2024, p. 21). To achieve this, the government promotes increasing road policing and law enforcement while removing speed management measures proposed under the previous government's safety strategy. Arguably, the GPS 2024 provision benefits some drivers' experiences - for example, by allowing them to move faster - while sacrificing the experiences of others, particularly those traveling by low-carbon transport modes.

Furthermore, there are significant differences between the last two GPS documents regarding the recognition of transportation as an embodied experience that both affects and is influenced by perceptual and psychological factors. The GPS 2021 took a step forward by acknowledging transportation as an activity that impacts people's well-being. Specifically, it highlights how improved active travel options and urban environments can positively affect the physical and mental health of Aucklanders. In contrast, the latest GPS gives little attention to the psychological

and perceptual dimensions of transportation, framing the movement of people and goods in the same way. As a result, the current GPS reduces human transportation to a purely functional activity performed for productivity purposes, prioritizing efficiency and safety in moving people and goods. This approach stands in stark contrast to the more human-cantered GPS 2021, which focused on enhancing well-being and liveability by making transportation and urban spaces more enjoyable and attractive.

At the local-level, the strategic provisions closely align with the GPS 2021 and direct investment toward improving Aucklanders' transport experiences by enhancing urban spaces and safety. Both the *Auckland Plan 2050* and *Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri* direct planning efforts toward making walking, cycling, and other low-carbon transport modes more attractive, safer, and more accessible. In particular, the Auckland Plan 2050 describes how "to lead successful and enjoyable lives, it is vital that people can easily, safely and sustainably reach the things that matter most to them" (Auckland Council, 2018, p. 113). The provision directs local investment towards delivering people-oriented streets that are managed and designed in a way that "prioritises walking, cycling and quality urban spaces ... embedding accessibility into all parts of the journey" (Auckland Council, 2018, p. 125). Importantly, the 30-year plan notes that improving the health and well-being of all Aucklanders requires removing barriers, discrimination, and disadvantages in several areas, including transportation. Overall, these local-level plans present a challenge to the national government-led shift toward a market-oriented *GPS 2024*, while also offering an opportunity to advance the goals of a human-cantered and sustainable transport system.

The TERP provides a roadmap for reducing carbon emissions in Auckland's transport system while improving accessibility for disadvantaged groups. It supports Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri's transport and accessibility goals by addressing the unique challenges faced by certain communities. For example, the plan seeks to reduce inequalities affecting women, who often face harassment, violence, and safety concerns in public spaces (Auckland Council, 2022, p. 14). Additionally, it highlights the disproportionate impact of Auckland's car dependency on low-income households who "experience disproportionally higher rates of road trauma and transport-related pollution", (Auckland Council, 2022, p. 15). To tackle these issues and improve transport experiences for all Aucklanders, the plan outlines a range of targeted actions.

Like the Auckland Plan 2050, the TERP emphasizes the need to enhance public perceptions of safety and improve the appeal of PT and low-carbon transport options through thoughtful urban design and management. It also calls on planners and policymakers to work towards "mindset shifts and collective action to deliver systemic change across the transport and land use system" (Auckland Council, 2022, p. 56). A key initiative outlined in the plan is the promotion of ongoing, meaningful dialogue with Aucklanders on climate action, alongside efforts to increase awareness and understanding of sustainable transport choices (Auckland Council, 2022, p. 57). By focusing not only on physical infrastructure improvements but also on behavioural and perceptual change, the TERP aims to create a more inclusive and sustainable transport system. Achieving its goals will require addressing the perceptual and psychological barriers that disproportionately limit the mobility of immigrant women.

At the local investment level, the LTP and the RLTP 2024-2034, aligning with the Auckland Plan 2050 and part of the TERP, allocate funding for safety and physical infrastructure improvements to enhance Aucklanders' travel experiences. An example of infrastructure investment targeting people's experiences includes urban regeneration projects, which the LTP states aim to enhance the vibrancy of selected areas. Regarding investments to improve Aucklanders' perceptions of safety, the LTP proposes implementing safety hubs across the CBD, increasing funding for the compliance team, and expanding CCTV surveillance in certain areas. Both the LTP and RLTP allocate funding to reduce deaths and serious injuries on the road network. Specifically, funds are allocated to road renewals and improvements, including cycleways. Additionally, the LTP designates funding for speed reduction measures and initiatives to raise road safety awareness for drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians. The current LTP and RLTP, therefore, prioritize enhancing people's transportation experiences by making urban spaces more attractive and secure. However, they overlook key actions outlined in the TERP aimed at fostering mindset shifts toward low-carbon transport modes. Without addressing the perceptual and psychological barriers to change, these modes may continue to be perceived as disempowering, making people less willing "to give new ways of travelling a go" (Auckland Council, 2022, p. 56).

Altogether, there are differences in how (and whether) people's transportation experiences, including those of immigrant women, are considered in planning frameworks. On the one hand, both the previous GPS and the current local strategic provisions direct planning efforts toward enhancing people's experiences of the city by creating attractive streets and safe walking and

biking environments. Notably, the TERP emphasizes improving the experiences of disadvantaged groups and fostering mindset shifts that empowers people to choose low-carbon transport modes. In this regard, the plan acknowledges that for Aucklanders to opt for walking, biking, or PT over driving, we must change how they perceive transportation, housing and related aspects. Unfortunately, the latest GPS undermines these perceptual shifts by portraying such transport modes as unproductive and inefficient.

4.4 Conclusion

There are noticeable contrasts in priorities and actions between current national and local strategic planning provisions. It is reasonable to assume that these contradictions will impact the mobility of immigrant women. The latest GPS 2024 focuses on transforming Aotearoa's transport system to support economic growth and productivity. However, it omits the equity approaches outlined in the previous GPS 2021 and current local-level strategic plans. This shift raises serious concerns about how the transportation needs of immigrant women and other disadvantaged communities will be addressed.

Additionally, given that local investment is largely constrained by national transport provision and funding, Auckland is expected to remain - or become even more - car-dependent in the near future. This may further exacerbate transport inequalities by neglecting the needs and experiences of diverse communities.

Chapter 5 - Interviews Findings and Analysis

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 emphasized the importance of using stories in academic research and in planning. This research makes the important point that a story "has to involve both a sequence of events and the interpretation of their meaning" (Sandercock, 2004, p. 19). Meaning in stories shapes how people interpret events, influencing decisions - such as transport choices - by framing them through personal values, identity, social norms, etc. This chapter presents and analyses the stories of the interviewees, exploring the key events that led to shifts in their transport modes and the meanings or reasoning behind their decision to RMS or not.

To do this, the chapter is split into five sections. The first section presents 'the past' of participants' stories, i.e., how women described their mobility prior to deciding to drive. This provides insight into the reasons why women took different modes of transport prior to arriving in Aotearoa. The second section aims to capture patterns in the events that act as catalysts in their decision to change transport modes. The last section describes how participants' perceptions and meanings affected their RMS decision. This includes an exploration of how women perceived their RMS decision and what happened after transport mode shift decisions were made. This is important for understanding how RMS have impacted women's mobility experiences The chapter closes with a summary of the factors that encouraged the RMS of Latin American immigrant women in Auckland.

5.2 Before RMS

This section details commonalities in the past transport experiences and contexts of the participants before RMS. Nineteen of the twenty-one women in this research did not use to drive before moving to Aotearoa. They either walked, biked, used PT, hailed car or van services, or were driven by someone else. While a small number of them knew how to drive, and a fewer number even owned a car, they all explained they did not used to drive for several common reasons. Only two of the participants drove in their commute in Latin America.

The most obvious and common reason for why participants did not drive back home, or when they first moved to Aotearoa, was lack of a driving license. However, several women recalled having a driving license but not having much experience. In fact, five women affirmed getting their license just before moving to Aotearoa. They said, they somehow found out that 'they were going to need it'. Ligia recalled:

> *"I didn't have a driver's license in Argentina, I got it a week before coming and I got it only because I knew that way it was going to be easier for getting the license here"*

Many women also recounted how they did not use to drive as they were able to rely on someone else when needed. Luisa, who migrated over 30 years ago with her family, explained:

> *"[in Peru] My husband had a driver. So, if there was anything I needed, he would send him to me… He knew that I like walking everywhere and so I did. But if I wanted to save time, he would send me a driver"*

Luisa's narrative brings up another important reason why women did not drive back home. They used to enjoy walking, biking or using PT. In contrast, several women mentioned that their dislike of driving was a key reason for avoiding it. As Eli explained:

> *"I hate driving because I grew up in a Chile-Argentina border town with heavy truck traffic and saw many accidents as a child… I think that's why I'm afraid any very large car when I am driving*"

Another common reason women did not drive was living in an area with good PT options or where they could walk for commuting. Several participants described not needing to drive during their first migration period as they lived, worked and studied in the CBD or surroundings. Luisa narrated how she used to move when she first arrived in Auckland:

"When we arrived, we lived very close to the city…K-Road wasn't the dangerous street we know today. I would go to K-Road, and there was the grocery store, the bank, everything. Everything by walking distance. It was easy"

Economic conditions back in Latin America, or when they first arrived to Auckland, were also used to justify not driving and instead using other transport modes. Ligia explained:

"I couldn't afford to buy a car in Argentina, and I was also a little afraid that my car would be stolen…being a woman driving in the west zone… there was a great chance that my car would be stolen, so I never had a car, I used a lot of PT"

Similarly, having to work in low-skill, poorly compensated jobs, when they first migrated was a barrier to driving. As Ange described:

"When I arrived in NZ, I was studying English and working in the city centre. I was earning the minimum salary, which is very little… to get a good car you need at least $6.000 to $7000…. I couldn't access a vehicle, so I had to walk and use PT"

Finally, environmental concerns were also a reason for some participants choosing not to drive. As Lorena, the only participant that has never driven, expressed:

"I don't like driving, and I'm against cities like Auckland where you have to depend on a car, which is why I use a bicycle, walk, or take the bus. It's my choice …. If I must, I try to do car-pooling or take any other option. I try to."

Despite choosing not to drive, Lorena acknowledged her awareness of the privilege she has in being able to choose to live in a central Auckland suburb. As she explained, she understands that not everyone can afford such choices.

The stories point out both the diversity and commonalities in Latin American women's reasons for not driving. Those who did not like driving, for example, often chose to live in areas where they could walk or use PT for commuting in Auckland. Many of those who did not have much experience driving also had the option to rely on their partners or someone else when needed. Some women who did not have the resources to get a car were also limited by having to work in low skilled jobs due to language or visas restrictions. These are all important commonalities that offer a glimpse into why they chose to embrace driving and the significance of such decision in Auckland's context. The next section examines how experiences in the Auckland's context impacted women's mobility leading them to mode shifts toward driving.

5.3 The Unfolding of Events

This section explores the key common events or series of events in participants' lives that influenced their decision to start driving as their main commuting mode. In particular, I identify common economic, physical and sociocultural factors influencing their RMS decision.

5.3.1.1 Socio-cultural Factors

The literature review findings suggested that immigrant women's mobility is frequently influenced by socio-cultural and religious factors. Most participants did not recall religion as a factor that influenced their RMS decision. Instead, some women recounted how their spiritual beliefs encourage them to use other more active transport modes, as a way to care for their bodies, minds, and the environment. However, a significant common factor to emerge from participant's stories is how views around motherhood and household roles had a great influence in their driving decisions.

The narratives of the participants that are mothers brought up the mobility struggles they had to face after migrating or becoming mothers in Aotearoa. At the time of the interview, seven of the participant were mothers and one was expecting her first child. Most women who migrated with

their kids recalled how a lack of family in Aotearoa meant less help them with their kids, altering their mobility. Luisa, for example, described why she decided to learn to drive:

> *"It was more for.. for necessity. Because I had to mobilize my children to school and if it rained, I couldn't bring them. And the baby was small…in Peru, my sister used to take care of the children. My dad used to take one of them to school and pick him up... I used to walk to work because it was very close*"

Many women also recalled how, after migrating, having to work, be mothers, and even study at the same time impacted their mobilities significantly. For many of them, working and/or studying was part of their visa conditions. Flor, who migrated 23 years ago with her family, explained how she used to move during her first years in Auckland:

> "*I often had to take two buses to get to work and Google maps didn't exist back then... I had to go to areas I didn't know and often missed my stop…. I had to go back carrying the baby in my arms, who always fell asleep, along with the backpack with class materials. Even a radio - it was a battle*"

Contrary to Flor, women who had the option to fully dedicate themselves to motherhood also described their role as a factor that greatly affected their way of moving. Ines shared:

> *"I'm a full-time mum now. Most of the time I take care of my child because my husband works… You need a car more because the mobility with the kid is different. I think it's possible [to move] but it's much easier with a car"*

Mayte, who is currently expecting her first child and learning to drive, narrated how pregnancy has influenced her RMS decision:

"I think that the pregnancy was what triggered the idea that 'I need to start learning to drive' ...I got pregnant, and just walking those 15 minutes to go to the bus made me feel very tired.…Also, the fact that I am going to need the car to be able to do more activities with the baby or in case of an emergency"

In short, the combination of motherhood, household roles and being a migrant, intermix as factors that together contribute to RMS.

Participants who are not mothers did not portray household roles and responsibilities as important factors in their decision to shift to driving. Most of them affirmed that they share responsibilities with their partners, with both contributing through their paid work. However, several participants who migrated with their (ex)partners, described changes in their relationship status as significant RMS factors. Clara, for example, explained:

"*One of the reasons [to start driving] was when I temporarily separated from my partner. At that moment, I thought, well, I'm not going to have anyone to drive me around anymore, so I'll have to do it myself. Here [Auckland] you can't just get by without a car. I mean, if you want to go to the supermarket, travel or do whatever, you need to have a car*"

Some participants suggested that a socio-cultural change around people's views of female drivers had an influence on their decision to drive. This related to how, in Latin American societies, households often assign men the driving role, as Clara pointed out:

"*I think in Colombia there has always been that negative connotation of being a female driver... I mean, as if just because you're a woman and a driver, you don't know how to drive or you're going to drive poorly*"

This socio-cultural change around female drivers might explain why several participants described how their partner encouraged them to embrace driving after migration. As Luisa described:

> *"When I had my third baby [in Auckland], my husband told me: 'get a car now'. Because in an emergency situation… so my husband bought me a car"*

The experiences of Latin American women in Auckland highlight the significant impact of socio-cultural household roles on their decision to drive. However, their motivation to drive is not necessarily linked to a shift in gendered labour roles but rather to the challenges of fulfilling these roles in Auckland without a car. While existing literature suggests that immigrant women often become hypermobile as they enter the workforce in their host country while still managing household responsibilities, the findings from interviews reveal a different reality for Latin American women in Auckland. Many participants had paying jobs in their home countries, but those who were already mothers benefited from family support and access to taxis or private cars for transportation. In Auckland, such resources were largely unavailable, making driving a necessity for some mothers, not due to evolving views on gender roles but due to a lack of external support. This suggests that in Auckland, gender roles within Latin American households shift specifically around driving, rather than work or parenting. Driving becomes an essential tool for women to balance motherhood, employment, and other responsibilities, reinforcing its role as a practical instrument rather than a symbol of changing gender norms

5.3.1.2 Economic Factors

The literature review findings illustrated how economic factors impact immigrant women's mobility. The interview findings here confirm and challenge some of those findings.

For instance, several women stressed how having to do low-skilled jobs in Auckland impacted their mobility's needs. Particularly, some participants recalled having to do low remunerated jobs during their first period of migration due to language and visa restrictions. For some, driving became necessary to be able to do those jobs. Luisa explained:

"I've done so many things that as a Latina we have to do here… First, I made food at home because I had a newborn baby…My husband would drive me to do the deliveries. Then, I started doing babysitting, then cleaning… I didn't always have a car, but I needed it for my work. Especially when I had to clean the houses. For babysitting I also had to go by car."

Getting a car to be able to work was a reason for RMS for several women. Six participants recounted how being required to drive in order to get a job in their profession was an important factor in deciding to RMS. For many, securing such a job was necessary for obtaining or retaining a visa. Nubia described why, after working for several years in low-skill jobs, she decided to acquire her license and how:

"When I was looking for an architect position, the vacancies would say 'full-license required'.. So, I decided to go to Colombia to get the license there. It seemed to me faster and easier than doing the whole process here"

Economic resources were a barrier to car ownership primarily to those participants who recalled having to do low remunerated jobs. However, several women recalled cars' affordability as a key reason to RMS. They highlighted how more affordable car prices in Aotearoa compared to Latin America encouraged their decision to purchase cars. Ligia described why she bought her first car:

"At the time we were living with my ex a little far from the centre. So, it was like ...for having the ease of moving more, applying for jobs, etc., and because it was very cheap to buy a car. It was a joke"

In addition to car's being more affordable in Aotearoa, the cost of PT also incentivised several women to RMS. Martina's narrative explain this further:

"*When I decided to learn to drive and buy a car, I did my calculations, and the truth is that I decided to invest the $65 I spend on PT per week in buying my car, which is a hybrid and uses little petrol. I am close to finishing paying the loan... However, my reasons for not driving before were not economic, but my fear of driving*"

These findings are consistent with the literature review to some extent. There are clear economic factors that influence the transport behaviour of immigrant women. However, while changes in car affordability were a barrier to car ownership for some, as this research suggests, it was also a key reason for others to buy one. Most women agreed, cars are considerably more affordable in Aotearoa. Consistent with the literature review, for all participants, being able to drive and own a car were important to open up work possibilities and improve their economic circumstance. In some cases, it did not only make working easier but also possible. Importantly, for several women being able to obtain a job also meant being able to secure a visa. Driving, therefore, was an essential tool to work and to legally remain in Aotearoa.

The literature review also suggests that economic restrictions often impact immigrant women's mobility by forcing them to live in peripheral areas where PT services are poor. The next section analyses the RMS impact of the physical conditions of the environments where women need to commute to and from.

5.3.1.3 Physical Factors

The literature on immigrant women's mobilities and transport choices puts forward how the physical characteristics of the urban environment impact the way they move. In particular, research suggests that economic limitations often force immigrant populations to live in peripheral areas with inadequate PT services. However, as Auckland is a city characterized by vast urban sprawl and low density development, defining what would be considered a 'peripheral area' is not so simple. If 'peripheral areas' are understood as "ones which are on the edge of a larger area" (Collins English Dictionary, n.d.), only two participants recalled needing to move to the edge of the city due to economic restrictions.

Indeed, the areas where most participants were living when they decided to embrace driving do not fit the definition of 'peripheral areas' and, in several cases, would even be considered central suburbs. Eli, for instance, recalled deciding to get her license while living in Eden Terrace, a central suburb in Auckland. She explained:

> *"when I started working in the south, I wanted to use the train because I like to travel looking out the window, but I started doing the whole license process because I discovered that, in reality, PT is not reliable, it doesn't work… they used to cancel the train every day!"*

Similarly, Juliana described why she decided to buy her first car while living in the CBD:

> "*I bought the first one about two years after arriving in NZ. Because I got a job very far away, I was living in the city and my job was in East Tamaki, and to get there by PT it took me about 2 hours... and then the pandemic came… and went back to walking... and then after that, I started using it again when my baby was born*"

Changes around work location and motherhood, rather than living in remote areas, were highlighted as key reasons for Eli and Julietta to drive. However, the slowness and reliability of Auckland PT was a key limitation. Additionally, most women also described having to make multiple connections to get to a single place as a significant inconvenience when commuting. Nubia explained why she barely uses PT now:

> *"It was difficult to get to certain places in Auckland using PT because I had to take more than one bus, in addition to the train...It was very time-consuming, and I had to get up very early. Sometimes the routes were cancelled … I initially used my car for the job that I told you required me to have one … now I use it to go everywhere"*

Some women portrayed changes in their place of residency as important RMS events. Luisa, Silvia and Ines, for example, described how having a baby and needing to move out of the CBD to a more spacious place impacted their mobilities. As Ines described :

> *"[after migrating] I lasted two years without a car. Then, even with a car, I used PT and walked because I was in the CBD… Since I moved to Greenlane I only use my car"*

Ines, like three other participants, bought her first car while living in the CBD. Although she barely used it, her reason for buying it was so she could travel out of Auckland. Wanting to go on trips influenced her RMS decision, as well as many women's. However, it was not recalled as the primary motivation. As Ligia explained:

> *"I don't know if it's a requirement [to have a car in Auckland], but I do feel it's very normal. The fact that it's so cheap, that you need it to go on holidays, to go to the beach…"*

Despite the inconvenience and unavailability of Auckland's PT, most participants characterised Auckland's buses and trains as more comfortable than back in their home countries'. However, their narratives suggest that it is not enough of an incentive when they compare it to the time, effort and money they save with a car. Ligia pointed out:

> "*In Buenos Aires, there are a lot of buses always, it's incredible…In Auckland, you travel very well in PT, with air conditioning, it tells you the time, where you need to get off…that's wonderful…but PT works in reduced schedules. If you go out at night, the train and bus won't pass. PT here is slow, it's expensive and it's not available at any time"*

In general, characteristics of the urban and natural environment affected participant's mobility experiences. Natural features of the city, such as Auckland mountainous geography or rainy

weather were reasons for not walking or biking as a commuting mode, but not used as justification to start driving. However, some highlighted the darkness and quietness of Auckland's streets as characteristics that triggered feelings of fear that encourage them to drive. Silvia narrated how she used to feel when walking to the bus stop:

> "*What I didn't like about living in Howick is that the distances are horrendous... and in between, there are large spaces of nothing. Grass... like three blocks of grass to get to the bus stop. You know? No houses, no people. How am I supposed to walk like that? And then add the rain to that. In Chile, there are way more people, and the weather is much more stable. You can easily walk 20 blocks*"

Silvia added living in such an urban environment pushed her to learn to drive. She explained:

> "*I had to depend on my ex for everything… like, "let's go to the supermarket." No, I don't know what happened to me. So, I decided to learn to drive to be independent. To have my own resources. To be myself. Autonomous"*

The interview findings are coherent with the literature on immigrant women's mobilities and transport choices. Apart from affecting women's ability to move fast, cost-effectively and with certainty, urban sprawl, accompanied by lack of (good) PT, often made them dependent on others. These factors impact their ability to work and engage in other life activities when and how they want. This encourages them to embrace driving. The next section further explores how ideas of independence, and other feelings and perceptions impacted women's RMS decisions and current way of moving.

5.4 The Meanings and Perceptions of the Events

This section shifts from a focus on the sequence of events to the interpretation and meanings attached to them. The previous section examined a series of events drawn from the interviewees'

narratives, framing them within socio-cultural, economic, and physical factors that influenced their RMS decisions. Now, I turn to the "interpretation of their meaning" (Sandercock, 2004) by exploring the participants' perceptions of these events. As Sandercock suggests, while there is always an interplay between external factors and individual perceptions, disentangling them can provide can offer valuable insights into the behaviours and actions of individuals and communities.

The interviews revealed that how Latin American immigrant women perceive their RMS decisions plays a crucial role in shaping their current travel behaviour. By immersing myself in the participants' stories, I identified two contrasting ways in which most participants experienced their transition from PT and active modes to car driving. Some viewed this shift as a necessary yet voluntary decision, while others felt compelled by external forces, with driving seen as something not necessarily desired. Below, I explore the narratives of each group regarding their RMS, outlining the distinct factors that influenced or constrained their transition.

5.4.1 Driving as a Voluntary Decision

The narratives presented in this section belong to women who described their decision to embrace driving as a voluntary choice.

Eight women described their RMS decision as necessary but not imposed. On the one hand, they described how feelings of dependency after migrating influenced their RMS. Reliance on partners or friends was a topic often brought up in the participant's stories. Wanting to be independent was a clear reason for driving. This idea is visible in Luisa's narrative:

> *"When I was studying the Bible, I didn't have a car yet, … So I asked a sister [preacher] if she could take me to 'Salon de Reino' [church]. She lived in Mt Albert and I was ashamed that she had to come all the way here, and then go back… And on top of that, she still had to translate for me, because I didn't speak any English"*

Ideas of independence, together with feelings of shame or guilt associated with asking for help, were important reasons for participants to voluntarily start driving. Freedom was also expressed

through narratives as a desire that motivated women to drive. Flor expressed how she felt before driving:

> *"Here, it kind of became something vital. That kind of pushed me to do it [to learn] … When I arrived, most women I knew had families and got around by car. I was always the one getting picked up, and I wanted the independence to take my kids to activities while my husband worked. Do you see? Those were the limitations"*

Overall, women who narrated their RMS as voluntary described feeling empowered by driving and, for most of them, driving has become a source of enjoyment and peace. Luisa explained:

> "*When I'm stressed, I grab my car and put on my electronic music. I feel like flying on the motorway …Yes, it is my car. It's my space*"

For Luisa and for many participants, their car has become a place where they feel safe. However, fear of harassment when commuting in PT or other active transport modes was not a significant reason that influenced women to embrace driving. Most women described feeling safer using PT or walking in Auckland, compared to Latin America. While some women still feel unsafe when walking in certain areas of the city or at certain hours, they do so to a lesser extent than they used to back home. Ligia narrated:

> *"Obviously things happen in NZ, and you have to be careful. No, it's not a heavenly place, but it's not that constant adrenaline thing"*

While safety concerns are not presented as a main reason for deciding to embrace driving, changes in the perceptions around discrimination of female drivers were influential. Ligia's narrative explains this idea further:

"In NZ there are no barriers for women [to drive]. You see? we are always going to receive the odd comment from a man, but in Argentina there is this thing about 'the woman who drives'... here it seems to me that the woman who drives is something super normal"

The interviews findings align with the literature on women's mobilities, which discusses how discourses around masculinity and its association with cars influence their driving decisions. The participants' stories highlighted how these discourses are perceived differently by women in Latin America than in Auckland. This change in perception upon coming to Aotearoa, together with discourses of independence and freedom associated to modernity, good parenting and safety, culminates in a strong influence on the decision to drive of a number of women.

Notably, the women's narratives do not necessarily imply a change in what independence and freedom mean to them after they migrate. Most of them used to work and had similar households' responsibilities and personal aspirations in Latin America. What changes, therefore, is the relationship between driving, freedom and independence. They stressed, they did not need to drive to feel free and independent in Latin America. They also did not feel 'out of norm' by not driving there. However, being free to decide whether they want to drive, regardless of whether they are a woman or a man, an immigrant or a citizen, can be an empowering experience when driving is a choice and not a compulsion.

5.4.2 Compelled to Drive

This section presents the stories of participants who felt pressured to start driving. Rather than a personal choice, they described it as something they were forced or required to do.

Ten women described driving as a something that they had to do despite the struggle that it meant to them. This is epitomised in Eli's narrative when she described why she had to learn to drive in Auckland:

"I've never liked driving but… in a job they were asking me so much [if I drive], everyone talked to me so much about it that I said, oh, okay, I'm going to do it, but it was only because of that… that and the fact that the PT is so bad! … so, it ended up making changing… why does everyone insist so much?"

Eli is one of the five participants who are currently trying to embrace driving in their day-to-day mobility. One participant, Antonia, has now given up. She migrated fifteen years ago with her family from Colombia and recently tried, once again, to unsuccessfully embrace driving. She explained:

"I felt somehow obligated some time ago when I said, ok, I'm going to start driving and get rid of that fear and all that, but after trying and trying I said, no, I don't want to arrive stressed and shaking everywhere. So, I left it behind"

Similarly to the women who described driving as a voluntary choice, those who saw their decision as a compulsion also framed independence as a motivation for RMS. However, none identified independence as their primary reason for driving. Instead, they perceived it more as an ideal, an almost unattainable notion. Sandra, for instance, recalled:

"*Honestly, I feel that I lose independence because of my fear. I mean, because of that sensation of not being able to drive, right? Sometimes I would like to…if my boyfriend goes to do something else, and the car is there, I say…oh, I'll go to buy something! and then I think like... oh no, I don't want to drive*"

Similarly, ideas of freedom were also presented as incentives for driving by many participants. Mayte expressed her desire:

"I imagine it in my head …when I start driving and when I have my car, I'm going to move a little further to the North Shore to be able to learn to surf... I always wanted to learn to surf, I mean, it's part of my list of things to do… that car would give me the freedom to do just that"

Mayte's and Sandra's narratives highlight driving as something that could make them more independent and freer to do what they want. However, the way they actually feel when they are driving is totally different. Mayte continued:

"I've fantasized about it that way, but every time I get in the car, I associate it with anxiety… I continue to have this thought that I'm a fool… I don't like traffic; I hate feeling two cars next to me. it scares me a lot"

Like Mayte and Sandra, most women in this group mentioned feelings of fear, stress and anxiety as perceptions impeding their driving. Some women continue to attempt driving, and some have manage to embrace it. However, for most, the fear is still there. This is better narrated by Olga, who had a serious car accident in Mexico:

"I still limit myself a lot when it comes to driving, I mean, I only drive to go to work and back... the truth is that if I had the option of having a PT that worked in my daily life, I would use it, because that's what I did in Mexico"

Olga currently drives as main mode of commuting. She recalls, her mobility is limited to driving routes she knows well and during sun light. She described how driving is also important for her to be able to have a social life.

Despite her perceptions of fear, stress or anxiety when driving, Olga, along with most participants, found that, in Auckland, those perceptions were less strong than what she used to experience in Latin America. Olga explained:

"In Mexico, people drive very aggressively and there are also too many cars… I didn't like driving in Mexico because it's a constant stress. Here, it's much more peaceful"

Changes in the physical conditions, i.e. the amount of traffic and people, make Latin American women feel less scared, anxious and stressed when driving. This, accompanied by changes in their perception of other driver's attitudes, encouraged their RMS. Eli described how she feels when practicing driving:

"*I'm worried that obviously people are in a hurry and are kind of a little rough sometimes., I have seen that most people are not… but still worries me as it is not so comfortable, right? …However, in Chile its's worse. Bus drivers don't respect, nobody cares if you are learning or anything"*

While most women felt that it is somehow easier to drive in Auckland than in Latin America, like the other group, most women also said they feel less anxious about harassment or victimisation when using PT or walking in Auckland. Mayte explained:

"*I definitely prefer Auckland's PT than Mexico City's. In Mexico, cities are unsafe, streets are unsafe, PT is unsafe. You don't know when a thief is going to get on to assault you on PT…In Mexico I didn't walk in the dark or anything, in fact, there was a time that I stopped going out of the house because of the security thing*"

Mayte, who is currently learning to drive due to her pregnancy, stressed she'd like to continue using PT if she could. However, as most women in this group, she recognises the time, effort and money that not driving in Auckland represents for her. In Mayte's words:

"…here, time is money"

In general, safety concerns are not presented as a main reason for participants deciding to RMS. In fact, most women in this group said they'd rather walk or use PT if they could. However, one of them, Rosio decided to RMS due to fear of using PT:

> "*The main reason [to stop using PT] was because I had a bad experience on a bus. I was talking on a video call with my family in Chile...and when I was about to get off, a Kiwi woman said in front of the whole bus, 'don't you care about people? go back to your country if you want to speak another language*"

Contrary to the women who narrated their RMS as volitional, Rosio and all women in this group described how they felt somehow forced or compelled to start driving. Tania, who was requires to drive to get her first 'professional' job in Aotearoa, is the only women in this group that portrayed driving as something she now enjoys. She explained:

> "*Driving used to scare me, but it was also a challenge. I thought I would never be able to learn how to drive. I used to believe I would do something wrong or something bad would happen. Maybe it was related to those preconceived notions that 'women don't drive well', I don't know. But when I learnt to drive, I felt really good as It was one of those things I thought I would never achieve…Now I enjoy it. Knowing that I can control the car, go fast, and do what I want to do feels great*"

Despite of this, Tania, along all women in this group, said she would like to be able to use PT to commute. Tania explained:

> "*I think my quality of life improved with the car because I can travel, do social activities… But I also think my life is now more sedentary and I became dependent on the car. In*

Colombia, I used to walk or bike because I had to, now I force myself to do exercise because I need it… I would also like to use PT more because of the environment"

These findings are coherent with the literature review regarding how immigrant women are often pushed into driving in order to align with discourses of modernity, good parenthood and safety. Most women in this group decide to drive despite their dislike or fear, due to reasons out of their control. Being required to drive to get a job, being pregnant and not being able to walk to the bus, being racially violented in PT, etc. The discourses of modernity, good parenthood and safety which are closely related to the ideas of independence and freedom are influential, but they are not the main reason for them to take the decision to start driving.

Five of the women who described their driving decision as a compulsion currently drive as their main commuting mode, four are currently trying and one has now given up. All of them emphasized, if they could freely choose, they would prefer to use another form of transport. Driving, for many of them, still represents a great psychological and emotional effort. For some, driving is a form of dependency and having to do it a restriction to their freedom.

5.5 Conclusion

There are similarities and differences among the factors that influence Latin American women to embrace driving. Particularly, there are similarities in how socio-cultural, economic and physical factors impacted the driving decision of the participants. The women narrated how their lack of driving restricted their mobility capabilities, limiting their well-being and access to opportunities and community. Key factors influencing RMS included motherhood (i.e. having a baby) and working in a sprawled city. Women descried how continuing to move in low-carbon transport modes became very difficult in spite of the fact that they were used to walking, cycling and using PT in their home countries. Driving, therefore, was a means for them to offset such obstacles.

Most participant's stories suggest they embraced driving out of necessity, and many of them even felt compelled to do so. It is here, within the perceptual and psychological factors, that two distinct stories emerge. Ideas of independence and freedom are clear motivations for women who described their RMS as voluntary. However, for those who described it as a compulsion, ideas of

independence and freedom are almost in dissonance to how they relate to driving. While most participants feel less scared, anxious and stressed driving in Auckland, most women who narrated driving as a compulsion still have those feelings and are the reason why many haven't been able to fully embrace driving. In short, the women's stories showed that for Latin American immigrant women the decision to drive can't be simply put in terms of reducing commuting time, cost an effort. For many, the effort of driving is much more representative than the time and cost they spend using PT or other transport mode. If some of them had a choice, they wouldn't choose driving. These findings emphasize how immigrant women have to accommodate their transport choices to cover other needs, often sacrificing their mobility experiences.

Chapter 6 - Discussions Chapter

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 2's literature review on transport and mobilities research addressed the first secondary question of this study: *What factors influence the daily mobility and transport choices of immigrant women?* It identified four key influences: socio-cultural, economic, physical, and perceptual or psychological factors.

Building on these insights, this research explored how these factors shape RMS decisions among Latin American women in Auckland. Chapter 5 provided a preliminary answer by identifying commonalities and differences across interviews, illustrating how these factors influenced the participants' RMS. The findings suggest that Latin American women often turn to driving post-migration to meet their needs, sometimes at the expense of broader mobility experiences.

This chapter further examines the structural forces shaping their RMS decisions. Grounded in mobilities theory and aimed at advancing practical planning approaches, the analysis moves beyond individual factors to consider in more depth the broader social and power structures influencing transport choices. This requires questioning not only who can move but also who has the freedom to remain in place (Sheller, 2018). This is accomplished by applying Cresswell's (2010) mobilities framework, which provides a lens to examine how structural dynamics shape and reinforce mobility inequalities for Latin American women in Auckland, resulting in their RMS.

The chapter is divided in two sections. The first section applies Cresswell's framework to the findings from Chapter 5 by analysing the women's stories through the lens of his six aspects of mobility, deepening our understanding of the structural forces at play. The second section integrates these insights with the transport policy review from Chapter 4 to discuss how planning strategies could encourage immigrant women to adopt low-carbon transport modes. This discussion connects mobility experiences with Auckland's planning context and contributes to a broader conversation on fostering a more equitable and sustainable transport system.

6.2 Factor Influencing Latin American Women to RMS

This section examines the structural forces influencing Latin American women's RMS after relocating to Auckland. Drawing on the findings from Chapter 5, Cresswell's (2010) six aspects of mobility are applied: *motive force, speed, route, rhythm, experiences, and friction.* Cresswell argues that analysing these aspects individually provides valuable insights into the social and power dynamics shaping the meanings, experiences, and movement dimensions of mobility. In this context, his framework offers a more integrated understanding of the factors driving or limiting Latin American women's RMS.

6.2.1 Motive Force

An important aspect for Cresswell in understanding mobility is 'motive force', which offers valuable insight into factors driving movement, such as an individual's agency. In this research, this involves asking, *what forces affect Latin American women's mobility and influence their RMS?* When considering the motive forces behind the participants' RMS, their stories revealed the diverse reasons behind their decision to embrace driving (Table 3). For example, some women shared that after migrating, they lacked family support for childcare while they worked or handled other responsibilities. As a result, they had to start driving to get around with their children. A women spoke of her need to drive because she was racially violated on a bus in Auckland and is now scared of using PT. Many were motivated to drive by the idea of being independent. Others recalled how they were required to drive in order to get a job, something that did not occur in their home country. Key to this point is how, for many participants, getting a certain job was also important for securing visa. Although the motive forces behind each women's RMS is unique, they all described it as something they needed to do in order to do something or feel a certain way in Auckland.

Table 3
Motivating Force for Participants Deciding to RMS

Socio-Cultural	• Motherhood & household roles. • Lack of family support.

Economic	• Needing to accomplish low –skilled jobs. • A job requirement. • High PT fares. • Low car prices.
Physical	• PT slowness and unreliability. • PT unavailability. • Urban and Natural environment not walkable/bikeable.
Perceptual/Psychological	• Ideas of independence and freedom. • Perceptions of shame. • Less discrimination of female drivers. • Social pressure. • Fear of using PT.

Notably, the stories highlighted that while the reasons for embracing driving are diverse, participants experienced their RMS in two contrasting ways: Some felt compelled to drive while others described their decision as a voluntarily choice. Although "the difference between choosing and not choosing is never straightforward and there are clearly degrees of necessity" (Cresswell, 2010, p. 22), the distinction that all participants made when describing their mobility experiences in Auckland compared to their home countries suggest a much higher degree of necessity for them to drive in Auckland than in Latin America. After migration, the participants encountered both external and internal motivations that they hadn't experienced in the same way, or to the same extent, back home. This is clearer in Clara's claim:

> "*Before, I did not associate driving with independence because, as I told you, in Colombia I could do everything and get everywhere without a car*"

For her and for most participants, driving in their home country was not necessary.

The need to embrace driving can be seen as a limitation to the freedom of women who felt compelled to do so, and to some extent, even those who described their decision as voluntary. As Manderscheid & Case (2010) explain, the modern neoliberal concept of freedom largely associates moving with being free. Under such concept, each individual should have the "freedom" to move more and more flexibly in order to increase their own social and economic well-being. In car dependent cities like Auckland, cars are the tool that allow individuals to move that way and

provide for their own well-being. However, as the authors contend, this form of freedom subjects people "to choose the road, the speed and the destination among preselected options" (Manderscheid & Cass, 2010, p. 5), thereby heavily circumscribing their freedom. It also forces them to consume objects, such as petrol, and activities, such as travelling or working. Furthermore, it restricts the freedom of those using other forms of transportation, by for example, occupying and polluting the space. In this sense, automobility represents a "a highly regulated and governed form of freedom of choice, one restricted and restricting in various ways" (Manderscheid & Cass, 2010, p. 5). The need to drive, therefore, in car dependent city like Auckland, is a limitation to immigrant women's freedom as well as to others.

It is important to clarify that the goal of this discussion is not to suggest that women in Latin America can freely choose how to move. In fact, the modern concept of freedom that associates more movement with economic productivity is present in Latin American contexts as well. However, in Auckland, immigrant women's freedom to choose how to move is highly restricted to driving. Several women stated, if they could choose how to move, they would not drive. However, not driving makes them *im*mobile, and driving affects their well-being in ways that are explored in more depth later in this chapter. Unlike in Auckland, women's mobility in Latin America is not highly dependent on driving.

Latin American women's agency in deciding whether to drive is shaped by a modern concept of freedom embedded in Auckland's urban environment. This concept acts as a structural force, encouraging them to embrace driving as a means to enhance their social and economic well-being in a car-dependent city.

6.2.2 Speed

In this context of modern freedom and a car-dependent environment, speed is a dimension of mobility that can provide rich information about other broader dynamics influencing Latin American women to embrace driving in Auckland. Asking, *how fast does a person or thing move?* can tell us about mobility's imbalances when considering that being able to move fast or stay in place is not an option for all (Cresswell, 2010).

Thinking about the influence of speed changes in the participant's RMS decision, the stories suggest it had a considerable influence in their decision to embrace driving. For instance, Auckland's PT slowness was perhaps the most common complaint among all participants. Many participants described using PT consistently in their home countries, or active modes like walking or biking, partly because it was faster than driving due to traffic. This is the opposite in Auckland. Furthermore, their stories pointed out that, in several cases, their decision to drive was not only encouraged by the inefficiencies and slowness of Auckland's PT but also by changes in how fast they needed to move post-migration. For example, having to do jobs that required them to move quickly from one place to another, such as houses cleaning or caring for disabled people, or needing to carry out multiple roles at once such as studying, working and caregiving. Many participants described how having to wait for PT services that often never arrived, as buses and trains were constantly cancelled, created feelings of frustration and stress. Cars, therefore, provide the speed Latin American women in Auckland need when slowness is a costly or undesired option.

Table 4
Influence of Speed in Participant's RMS

Socio-Cultural	• Need to move faster to accomplish mother, household, and other roles.
Economic	• Need to move faster to be able to work. • Buying a car is much faster in Auckland.
Physical	• PT is slow. • Moving by car is faster.
Perceptual/Psychological	• Waiting for PT is stressful and frustrating.

Cresswell (2010) argues that speed is inherently political, as it reflects not only economic disparities but also broader social and structural inequalities in mobility. In Auckland's context, cars could be considered a tool immigrant woman use to economically progress faster and in opposition to slow PT. However, the stories showed that their RMS motivations extend beyond maximizing economic utility. Reflecting on the speed of the mobilities of Latin America women in Auckland begs the question: "who has the time and space to be slow by choice?" (Cresswell, 2010, p. 23). To reflect on this question, it is essential to first consider the context of their migration.

Women in Latin America, for example, face labour discrimination, lack of professional opportunities and imposition of family responsibilities (Flores-Novelo et al., 2021). They also experience higher rates of sexual harassment and violence than the average women across the globe (Equality Now, 2021). Under such contexts, migration is not only a way for Latin American women to improve their economic position, but It is also a way to advance toward equality and safety by, for example, gaining access to state services that can help them to "attain more control over household decision-making, over personal and household expenditures, and over spatial mobility" (Pessar, 2005, p. 5). Considering that being able to work, study or obtain the economic resources to legally remain in the Aotearoa often depends on being able to drive or have access to a car, as discussed on chapter 5, the choice of slowness is a luxury that Latin American women who migrate to Auckland looking to improve their well-being can rarely afford. Slowness does not only represent a financial loss but also a loss of equity and safety.

Although the speed that cars provide can help Latin American women improve their well-being in various dimensions, it comes with a sacrifice in their mobility's experiences. Their stories showed that the same speed that allow them to progress their economic, equality and safety goals also acts as a source of fear and anxiety for many women. Again, if most of them really had choice, they would rather move by PT or other transport mode. Thus, their RMS is driven not by the slowness of PT and other modes, but by the limitations these impose within a context of modern freedom, car dependency, and the need to secure greater equality and safety.

6.2.3 Route

Route is another important aspect of (*im)*mobility as it shapes how movement is organized and accessed. Asking: *What routes do Latin American women take in Auckland*? can provide important information about the dynamics shaping their decision to embrace driving.

The participant's stories revealed the significant impact of changing their commuting routes in an urban sprawled city with inadequate PT. For instance, several women recalled choosing to live in the CBD or nearby during their first period in Auckland as a way to walk or use PT to commute. Some women described their need to start driving as they had to move further from the CBD or started working far away. Those changes meant that they had to take new routes which often involved complicated routes with several transfers when commuting by PT. Most participants

complained about having to go all the way to the CBD to take a train or bus connection. Additionally, those who had to accomplish motherhood and household roles described the difficulties of trip chaining by PT in Auckland as a motivation for RMS. This was also the case for those whose jobs required them to go to several locations the same day. In general, changes in location or travel patterns encouraged their RMS due to the inefficiency and difficulty of PT routes.

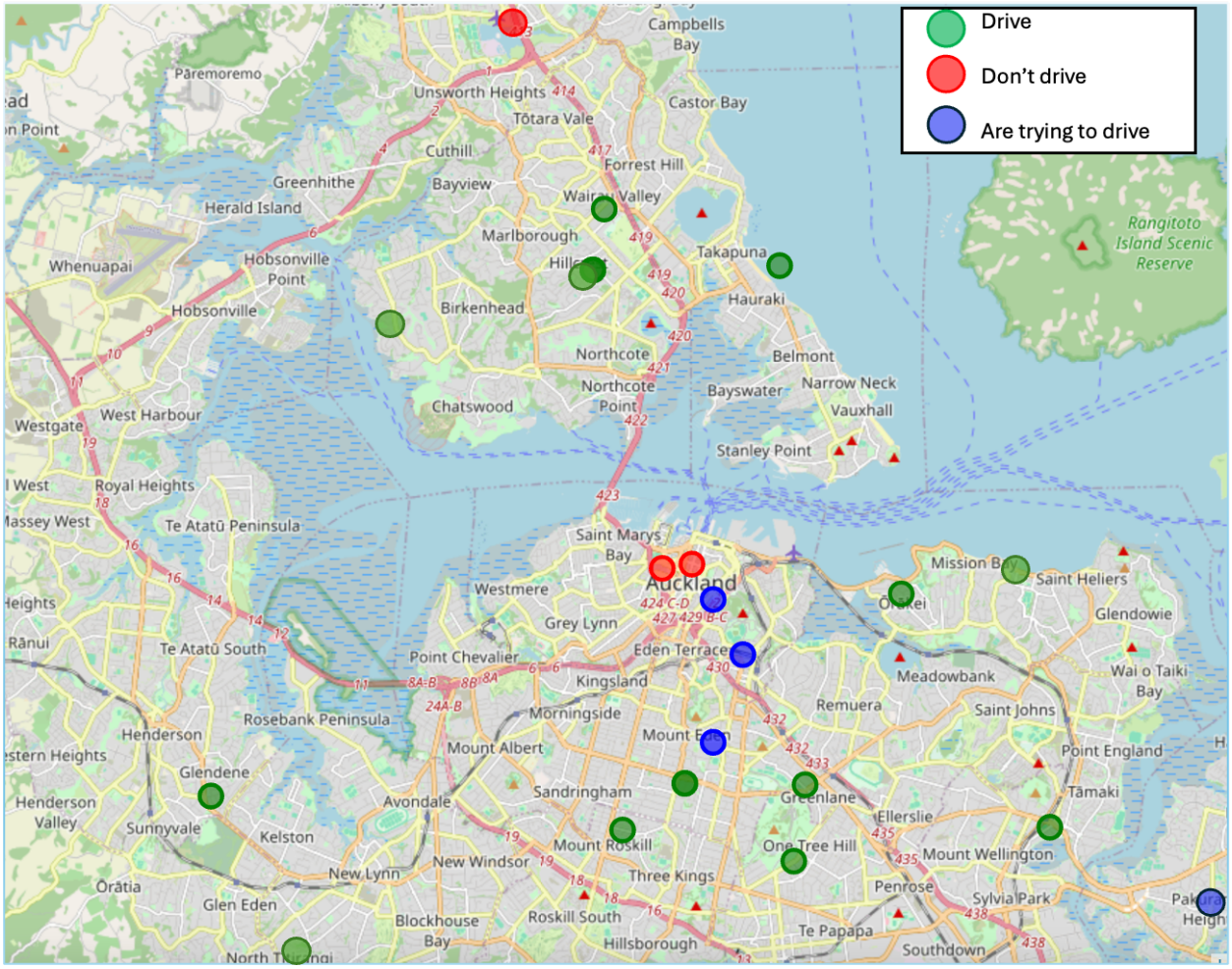
Table 5
Route's Influence in Participant's RMS

Socio-Cultural	• Trip chaining travel patters to accommodate household and work responsibilities.
Economic	• Jobs with multi-stop travel patterns.
Physical	• PT routes are long and non-linear. • Walking and biking routes are physically demanding.
Perceptual/Psychological	• Taking longer paths to get to the same place (via PT) is exasperating.

Participants also described Auckland's geography as a barrier for using low-carbon transport modes. Several participants used to walk or bike in their home countries as their main commuting mode, and they described wanting to continue this when they first came to Aotearoa. However, the effort involved in doing so due to Auckland's mountainous geography was a new challenge. Cars, therefore, enabled them to move through shorter routes in a less physically demanding way.

With this in mind, one could contend that driving improves Latin American women's mobilities. However, thinking about mobilities requires thinking about how differences in the routes people (are forced to) take produce and reproduce inequalities in access and capabilities, reinforcing social and power structures. For example, if the routes people take are highly dependent on where they live or work, the ability to choose where to live or where to work significantly affects this.

Figure 9
Map of Participants' Residential Locations and Their Driving Status at the Time of the Interview



The stories presented in chapter 5 showed that Latin American women's areas of working and living are significantly limited by their transport options. As discussed, many participants recalled deciding to live in in Auckland's CBD because it allowed them to move without a car. As events unfolded and circumstances changed, many had to move to the suburbs and embrace driving. However, those who haven't been able to embrace driving or have chosen not to, are limited to living and working close to PT and, ideally, close to the CBD (Figure 9). Considering that such areas are highly sought after and the least affordable across Auckland (Mattingly & Morrissey, 2014), a car dependent city environment does not only limit immigrant women's ability to choose how to mobilize but it amplifies economic disparities by forcing them to live in areas that are disproportionally expensive. Additionally, those who manage to embrace driving and move out of

the central suburbs but still have to commute long distances to work, for example, are likely to face an increase in their commuting costs (Figure 10), as commuting to and from such areas can be up to five times larger than in the central areas (Mattingly & Morrissey, 2014, p. 75). Therefore, car-dependent cities such as Auckland amplifies economic disparities, disproportionally impacting those who are less likely to be able to choose where to live and work and are less likely to drive, such as immigrant women.

Figure 10
Auckland's Mean AnnualCcommuter Variable Cost (Mattingly & Morrissey, 2014, p. 75).

6.2.4 Rhythm

Rhythm, "composed of repeated moments of movement and rest, or, alternatively, simply repeated movements with a particular measure" (Cresswell, 2010, p. 23) is another important dimension of mobility. Asking: *in what rhythm do Latin American immigrant women move in Auckland?* can unveil patterns of inclusion and exclusion, shedding light on how RMS is influenced by the underlying structural forces at play.

The participants stories highlighted how simply becoming an immigrant reconfigured their rhythms and led to many adopting driving. For example, women spoke of having to work in jobs like hospitality, cleaning or babysitting during their first migration period due to visa restrictions, language limitations or difficulties obtaining recognition for their education. Such jobs are characterized by varying schedules and locations which result in irregular multiple commuting trips. Similarly, women who migrated with their kids described how a lack of childcare support disrupted their mobility rhythms as they were limited by the extra time and energy they had to put into mobilizing with their kids, or had to stay home with them. Therefore, migration and Aotearoa's migrant status heavily impact the mobility rhythms of Latin American women, overwhelmingly encouraging them to drive.

Table 6
Rhythm's Iinfluence in Participant's RMS

Socio-Cultural	• Needing to mobilize with kids or stay home with them.
Economic	• Having to do jobs with varying schedules or locations.
Physical	• Urban zoning separation of residential vs working areas.
Perceptual/Psychological	• Moving and stopping when using PT becomes tiring, overwhelming or impossible.

Such changes in mobility rhythms have often been argued to be an intended part of existing social orders. For instance, Reid-Musson (2018) explains how control over migrants' rhythms, such as unfree labour arrangements, "is integral to reproducing labour migration regimes and the social differences upon which migration regimes rest" (Reid-Musson, 2018, p. 893)". Additionally, intervention of women's rhythms by "the spatial separation between residential suburb and urban

workplaces is integral, not incidental, to the conceptual and practical separation of home and economy and to the difficulties that women experience in combining domestic and wage labour" (Hanson & Pratt, 2003, p. 8). As such authorities have the power to alter urban rhythms by structuring the conditions of access to spatial resources for some groups of the population (Penninx et al., 2006).

We can see how this plays out in Auckland and the influence of planning on migrant women's rhythms. The city has traditionally prioritized single-use zoning in its land-use planning and has only recently started to transition towards embracing more mixed-use zoning (Greenaway-McGrevy, 2024). Transport infrastructure and services in single-use urban forms are primarily designed to support the 'productive' rhythms of commuting between residential and work areas. The dominance of single-use regulations in Auckland, therefore, conditions the mobility of 'unproductive' rhythms, such as home-bound and social network movements, as well as those involved in movements out of employment areas, such as individuals working in house cleaning or care services for disabled or elderly people. Hence, Auckland land-use zoning conditions the transport access of those whose rhythms do not match the 'productive' rhythms of the norm, potentially limiting their mobilities.

In view of this, cars could be perceived as a tool Latin American women employ to break boundaries imposed by rhythm interventions. Cars allow them to participate in both, 'productive' and 'unproductive' rhythms - enabling them to navigate inequalities of gender, race and income as exacerbated by land-use planning. However, considering that cars are the same mechanism that has enabled planning to justify single-use zoning for decades (Jacobs, 1961), presenting cars as a resource that empowers immigrant women and reduces inequalities leaves out the fact that car focused planning exacerbates their rhythm disruptions. Latin American women, therefore, are encouraged to drive in Auckland to challenge boundaries, yet this can inadvertently reinforce dominant social structures.

6.2.5 Experience

The stories in Chapter 5 demonstrate how daily transportation is shaped by feelings and perceptions. Asking *How does it feel to move in Auckland as a Latin American woman?* allows for an exploration of their mobility embodiment and how it evolves after migration, leading some to

drive in Auckland while others refrain. This, in turn, reveals the underlying structural forces that shape their choices.

The RMS stories captured in the interviews showed that Latin American women experience transportation in Auckland in similar and different ways. As described earlier, while most portrayed Auckland's PT as comfortable, most of them also narrated feeling stressed and angry by how slow, long and unreliable their PT journeys were. Most women also recalled feeling safer when walking or using PT in Auckland than in Latin America. However, for some, the fear they used to feel in Latin America often reemerged when walking alone in Auckland, especially at night. Their stories show that Latin American women experience both, positive and negative feelings, when walking and using PT in Auckland.

Such seemingly contradictory emotions can lead to unpredictable RMS decisions and outcomes. For example, the negative feelings associated with using PT or walking in Auckland, combined with a desire for freedom and independence, influenced some participants' decisions to embrace driving. While most participants acknowledged that driving in Auckland is easier than in Latin America, due to factors such as traffic levels, the number of bikes and motorbikes, road size, and driver interactions, many still found it exhausting. Women who felt compelled to drive often described it as "hard work" or, as Cresswell (2010, p.26) puts it, an "energy-consuming business." Of the ten participants who viewed their RMS as a compulsion, only half had adopted driving as their primary mode of transport at the time of the interview. For the other five, driving remained an almost "impossible" activity due to the fear, stress, and anxiety it triggered. This highlights how feelings and perceptions significantly influence women's decisions to embrace driving and their ability to adopt it as their primary mode of commuting over time.

Table 7
Experience's Influence in Participant's RMS

Socio-Cultural	• Feeling like a "bad mother". • Feeling socially stigmatised for not driving.
Economic	• Desires to feel economically independent.
Physical	• Moving by PT is tiring. • Feeling dependent on PT schedules and availability. • Relying heavily on a partner.

Perceptual/Psychological	• Feeling ashamed or as a burden when asking for help. • Wanting to feel equal and valued.

The narratives of those five women who haven't fully embraced driving show that Latin American women's RMS is not only influenced by how they experience the act of transportation itself, but they are also encouraged by a variety of meanings that are given to driving globally and in Auckland. For example, they described how being unable to drive for their main commuting mode in Auckland evokes feelings of frustration and often of incapacity and exclusion, as shown in Sandra's quote:

> "*I feel like the odd one here for not driving. I mean, I see it as so natural for everyone else that I question myself. I mean... why is it so complicated for me?"*

Feeling socially stigmatized, incapable, silly, a bad mother, or a burden, were some of the ways participants described feeling due to not being able to fully embrace driving. Hence, driving is not only considered a way to move easier or more enjoyably in Auckland, but also a way for Latin American immigrants to feel equal and valued.

In this regard, although meanings associated to driving cars encourage Latin American women to embrace driving in Auckland, the way some experience and feel when driving often acts as a limitation to their transition. This exposes how car-dependent environments can deepen mobility inequalities for immigrant women. For example, while perceptions of driving anxiety and fear are experienced by about 30% of Aotearoa's population, research has shown that it disproportionally affects women (Taylor et al., 2011). Furthermore, considering that experiencing anxiety and fear while driving is often attributable to traumatic experience such as car related accidents (Gössling, 2023), the fact that driving fatality rates in Latin American countries are almost twice the level observed in high-income countries (Martinez et al., 2019) suggest that Latin American women are considerably more likely to experience such feelings. Thus, although Latin America women decide to embrace driving as a way to align with meanings embedded in Auckland's car culture, the way many of them actually experience driving and the social stigma associated can amplify inequalities by making them feel incapable and isolated.

6.2.6 Friction

Friction is the sixth dimension of mobility proposed by Cresswell's (2010) framework. Here, asking *what stops Latin Americans when moving in Auckland, and how?* can provide valuable insights into the structural forces influencing their RMS. As Cresswell highlights, just as understanding the forces driving RMS reveals agency, analysing friction helps uncover the barriers that impede it. Friction is not merely an obstacle but a force that shapes mobility patterns, influencing who can move, where, and under what conditions.

As described in section 5.2, most participants used low-carbon transport modes back in their home countries as well as during their first period in Auckland. Moving by PT in Auckland, their mobilities were restricted to when and where the bus or train stopped. Having to take multiple connections, having to wait at the bus stops or other places, and so on, forced friction into their movement. For those that used to walk or wanted to bike, physical fitness was described by many as something that created friction to their mobilities. Deciding to embrace driving was a way to challenge those frictions and fulfil other needs and desires discussed earlier.

A closer examination of the participants' RMS processes reveals multiple external and internal frictions. On the one hand, external frictions include the lack of economic resources for buying a car or learning to drive. The stories also exposed other external frictions, such as the process to obtain a driving license. Many participants, for example, described having to ask friends and acquaintances to teach them how to drive or to help them practice for the practical driving test. Some women even described having to break the rules by practicing on their own while holding a learner's license, as they were required to drive with a full-license holder but had no one to accompany them. Silvia's experience explains how significant this friction can be for a person's well-being; *"I had to do my practical driving license test many, many times. When I finally passed it, I came home and cried. I finally did it."* This is just one of the many frictions that unequally affect migrants, who are more prone to lacking the support of family or a community, and especially women, who are more likely to arrive in Aotearoa without a license.

Table 8
Frictions Restricting Participant's RMS

Socio-Cultural	• Being told that women can't drive. • Not having community support to learn and practice driving.
Economic	• Lack of economic resources to buy a car. • Lack of economic resources to learn to drive.
Physical	• Fast speed highways. • Unfamiliar roads and driving norms.
Perceptual/Psychological	• Feeling incapable of driving. • Fears of hurting someone or themselves.

Latin American women also encounter powerful internal limitations in the form of deeply held beliefs that act as a friction in their transition towards driving. Many women described, for example, how a belief that they would hurt someone else or themselves if they drove, or that they were incapable of driving well, limited them from driving earlier and/or continues to limit them. The stories suggest that such believes often stemmed from past experiences or from things they had been told growing up. As presented in chapter 5, some women explained how their fear for driving originated due to past traumas related to car accidents. Having a loved one who died from a car accident, seeing one or multiple car accidents as a child, or being in a car accident themselves were some of the reasons brought up in the interviews. Others said they did not feel capable of driving in their home countries as they grew up being told that women can't drive. The stories of the women showed that overcoming these internal frictions, or believes, is often more challenging that overcoming any external challenge. The five women who are currently trying to RMS, and the one who has given up, serve as evidence of this. This indicates that changing from one mode of transport to another one involves facing internal frictions, or transforming believes, deeply embedded in us.

While findings suggest that external frictions are less difficult to overcome compared to internal frictions, such as those shaped by past experiences, both can still pose significant challenges to Latin American women's RMS. These frictions, in turn, exacerbate inequalities in transport and mobility, underscoring the need for a new approach to planning in Auckland, which will be discussed in the next section.

6.3 Planning for Mode Shift

The last question of this research asks: *Whan can we learn from the mobility experiences of Latin-American women in Auckland to discourage Immigrant women to transition from using low-carbon transport modes to using cars as their main mode of transport?* To answer this, this section integrates the previous discussion with the insights from the review of Auckland's transport planning framework in chapter 4. The aim of combining these sources is to bridge the gap between the lived experiences of immigrant women and formal planning practices, leading to more informed and effective recommendations on how planning can support them in adopting PT and other active transport modes.

The planning documents overview in chapter 4 suggested contrasting priorities between the national and the local planning strategies. Importantly, the chapter raised concerns around the focus on economic growth and efficiency of the latest GPS 2024, as it is unlikely to meet the mobility needs of immigrant women and other community groups whose travel patterns do not align with the narrow conception of "productive traveling" favoured by the plan. The plan deprioritises investment in low-carbon transport modes, supports the development of greenfield land and shifts the focus away from emission reductions in the sector. Under this plan, and contrary to local strategies, Auckland is expected to remain, and potentially become even more, car-dependent due to the significant influence of the GPS on transport funding decisions.

In view of this, a first step for encouraging immigrant women to use low-carbon transport modes and avoiding their transition to driving, is aligning national and local planning strategies. This demands a return to a national land transport direction that adopts an equity-needs-approach, similar to what the earlier GPS 2021 proposed. This approach aligned with Auckland's strategies, such as the Auckland Plan 2050 and Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri, by directing transport planning to provide for people's needs and well-being first. Under such plans, mode shift is not in itself a goal but the result of providing people with real transport choices, better quality of life and more liveable urban environments. This approach is appropriate, given the earlier discussion about the motivations behind Latin American women's RMS. They embrace driving in order to offset economic, socio-cultural and physical obstacles and fulfil their needs. Thus, aligning local and national planning priorities to focus on the experiences and needs of immigrant women can help develop research and planning strategies that reduce car dependency and discourage RMS.

The reviewed plans proposed a range of actions to be implemented when taking an equity-needs-approach to transport planning. Key actions for Auckland include aligning transport planning goals with land use planning to shape quality compact urban forms, improving the safety and accessibility of walkways and cycleways, enhancing PT services, expanding the availability of new technologies and micro-mobility options, and making PT fares more affordable. These actions are designed to reduce car dependency, which, as highlighted in Chapter 5, is particularly critical for immigrant women in Auckland. To effectively discourage future reliance on private vehicles, it is essential that planning integrates efforts to address the underlying structural factors, such as outdated land zoning practices, that drive the need for car use and contribute to transport inequalities.

The results from applying an equity-needs-approach to national and local transport planning under the labour government period showed that although car use decreased in Auckland, such an approach needs to be complemented with other approaches in order to be effective. While during 2018 and 2023 car use as a main mode of transport decreased, cars continue to be the dominant form of transportation in the city (Figure 11). Furthermore, data suggest that this decrease was not primarily a result of an increase in the use of PT or other active travel modes, but mainly an increase in people working from home. (Lowrie, 2024). Given that more than 65% of people in Auckland still drive to work, this indicates that the proposed equity-needs approach to transport needs to be further developed and strengthened to be truly effective.

Figure 11
Main Mean of Travel to Work in Auckland (Lowrie, 2024)

The stories of Latin American women suggest that, in addition to providing people with real transport options to move without the need for driving, planning for mode shift requires understanding and changing the meanings and experiences related to cars as well as to other transport modes. Most actions proposed under the reviewed plans aim to alter the physical dimension of mobility by making other modes of transport more accessible, safer and attractive. However, the documents lack direction and actions to influence the meanings and experiences associated to traveling.

The findings from this research offer hints for what planning should consider to promote mode shifts and limit RMS in an equitable and effective way. On the one hand, planning for cities where people choose to use low-carbon transport modes requires changing the modern narrative of freedom under which moving more and having more flexibility to move means being freer. Chapter 5 findings revealed that Latin American women's desires to start driving in Auckland were deeply influenced by ideas around how driving could provide them with more freedom and independence. As discussed above, such ideas that portray driving as the main means of freedom and independence are in fact a powerful way to regulate individual's freedoms and social structures.

In particular, the stories showed that if most participants could freely choose, they would choose not to drive. However, discourses connecting driving to freedom and independence are often reinforced in planning through arguments that emphasizes the use of individual forms of transportation as a mean to create economic growth and productivity, as seen with the GPS 2024. Thus, in the first instance, planning for mode shift requires encouraging a shift in discourses framing driving as the key enabler of freedom and economic wealth.

As a start, Manderscheid & Cass (2010) argues, we need to reshape the concept "of what it means to be a free moder citizen" (Manderscheid & Cass, 2010, p. 16), which in today's cities, justifies individualism and automobility. An example of influencing such discourses in a new direction through planning is presented in the TERP. The plan proposes to increase "deep and ongoing dialogue with Aucklanders on climate action and increase the awareness and understanding of sustainable transport options" (Auckland Council, 2022, p. 57). The plan highlights the need for mindset shifts in Auckland to move away from individualism and focus on "bringing communities along the climate action journey" (Auckland Council, 2022, p. 56) as a way to reframe low-carbon transport modes, rather than cars, as empowering. To shift the meaning of cars for Aucklanders and influence transport behaviours, planning must intentionally create spaces that foster meaningful conversation and reflection.

Across the globe, a range of cities have implemented initiatives with the goal of fostering such conversations, effectively discouraging car use. An example of a successful campaign is the Travelsmart campaign in South Australia which aims to move people away from using cars through a two-component-model: "a community development approach and an individual conversation-based approach" (Zhang et al., 2013, p. 16). Research has shown that the campaign has been successful in increasing sustainable transportation awareness and positively influencing travel behaviour (Zhang et al., 2013). International initiatives to change discourses around automobility have also taken a 'marketing' approach. For example, since March 2022, France has required car adverts to include climate-friendly messaging to encourage people to bike and walk. The adverts need to include one of these messages; "on a daily basis, take PT", "consider carpooling", or "for short journeys, walking or bicycling is preferable" (Limb, 2022). Such initiative denotes an intention not only discourage RMS, but by forcing car companies to implement such messages, it also signals a distancing from modern discourses of freedom prioritizing economic growth and

protecting a ‘free’ market. Taking action to encourage mode shift, therefore, requires planners to collaborate with policy makers to change what automobiles represent in today’s societies.

Additionally, the findings from this research indicate that changing discourses to alter transport behaviours also requires taking into consideration the way people experience their mobilities. The stories of Latin American women in Auckland showed that their transport choices are strongly defined by how they feel when moving. For example, the stories highlighted how the process of embracing driving was so challenging for some, permeated with emotions of frustration, sadness, anger, tiredness, etc., that driving itself represents a form of achievement now. Some even said that finally embracing driving has given them the confidence to try to accomplish things they once thought impossible. Conversely, the inability to drive has made others feel socially stigmatized, burdensome, and dependent on others. This implies that being able to drive in Auckland can influence how valued and capable women perceive themselves. This reflects, as Gössling (2023) explains, the power of cars in today’s society to give or take identity. Reclaiming that power from cars is needed if the aim is to discourage immigrant women from embracing driving. This requires us to start asking how individual’s feelings and ideas attached to driving can be transformed.

To start answering this question, recent mobilities research has pointed out that, for planning to be able to influence individual transport choices, it needs to consider the psychological state of society and individuals. For example, Gössling (2023) explains, a city’s “higher motorization may reflect on readiness to escape, or a willingness to outcompete” (p.176). Conversely, “high cyclist shares would suggest a rise in empathetic values” (p.177). In this regard, the author proposes planning strategies that could employ emotional appeal in their designs in order to increase the use of PT or active modes. For instance, “an emotional appeal design may underline that cyclists are healthier, appealing to the desirability of being a ‘fit’ person.” Implementing actions that promote positive emotions such as actions based on community values, and moving away from those that promote feelings such as fear and guilt are important in avoiding feelings of dismissal and anger. Enhancing the emotional appeal of low-carbon transportation is key to avoiding RMS. This starts with recognizing transportation as an embodied experience - one that both influences and is influenced by perceptual and psychological factors.

Given the discussion so far, to discourage immigrant women from embracing driving, planning and policy decision-making should shift away from the dominance of market-based approaches.

In transport planning, this requires acknowledging that moving objects and moving people is not the same. For example, while the GPS 2024 integrates freight and passenger transport under a shared goal: *to ensure faster, safer, and more cost-effective movement*, the stories captured in this research showed that human transportation is an embodied practice, shaped by meanings and experiences not only from the present, but also their past. Namely, the participants described how distressing past experiences, such as traumatic car related accidents and feelings of gender discrimination when driving in Latin America, have a significant impact on the way they experience driving now. In particular, such events continue to limit many of them from driving. Although Latin America women in Auckland are encouraged to embrace driving in order to reduce travel cost and time, their stories showed that their transport choices are very much influenced by believes and emotions. Therefore, planning for mode shifts under the assumption that a population's transport decisions are primarily driven by individual market rationality is, at best, inaccurate. The dominant market approach to transport planning must change if the goal is to discourage people from driving cars and this requires approaches that can understand people in their complexity.

This chapter addressed the research questions through a mobilities lens while considering the current planning context. The final chapter concludes this research, presenting some recommendations and future research ideas that have emerged from this study.

Chapter 7 - Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

This thesis explored what factors encourage or discourage Latin American women in Auckland to RMS, and proposed ways in which planning could discourage immigrant women from embracing driving as the main mode of commuting. Theoretically grounded in the mobilities concept the research took a qualitative approach to answer the research questions, tracing and drawing together planning documents with ground experiences of Latin American women.

Based on an analysis of planning policy documents, the thesis examined how the mobility of immigrant women is addressed in recent strategies and investment plans relevant to Auckland's transport system. The review raised concerns about a shift from equity- and sustainability-oriented planning toward a more traditional 'rational planning' philosophy, which treats transport decisions as consumption choices and prioritizes strategies accordingly. Such strategies broadly favour the continuation of urban environments in which the primary commuting mode is cars. The thesis found that these recent planning shifts are unlikely to address the transportation needs of immigrant women and other disadvantaged communities.

The stories of Latin American women, gathered through semi-structured interviews, revealed the intricate and evolving nature of their mobility experiences, emphasizing two key insights. First, that there are common events or circumstances that encourage Latin American women to RMS after migration, such as motherhood, moving to a new area, being required to drive to get a job, etc. Second, that feelings and perceptions are strong catalysing factors in discouraging their RMS and they significantly affect whether they finally embrace driving as their main commuting mode in Auckland. In particular, the stories revealed that while most women who perceived their RMS decision as a voluntary choice currently drive as their primary commuting mode, only half of those who felt compelled to RMS do so. Using stories, therefore, enabled the capture of key events and common circumstances influencing RMS, as well as the meanings and perceptions behind such shift.

When applying Cresswell's (2010) framework to analyse the stories' finding through a mobilities lens, the analysis showed that Latin American women are encouraged to embrace driving as a way to challenge mobility inequalities. Although Auckland's automobility is a restricted and restricting

form of freedom of choice for all Aucklanders, it's disproportionally so for immigrant women in a range of ways. For example, their mobilities are altered by imposed regulatory restrictions to their labour which often pushes them into jobs where cars are required. Additionally, as they migrate with the expectation to improve not only their economic wellbeing, but also to move away from gender inequalities and violence, driving becomes a barrier to their goals and a new source of discrimination. Participants described feeling socially stigmatized, incapable, silly, bad mothers, a burden, etc. due to their lack of driving abilities. Embracing driving, therefore, is a way to feel more equal and valued in Auckland's context.

Additionally, the discussion highlighted that, while Latin American women are often encouraged to drive in order to challenge social structures of their current context, internal frictions, often form through past experiences such as traumas or having been discriminated as female drivers back in their home countries, significantly restrict their RMS.

Latin American women in Auckland are encouraged to use RMS as a way to address mobility imbalances and meet their transportation needs. However, since driving is an option that many cannot or do not want to take, it is clear that car-dependent environments like Auckland's ultimately restrict Latin American women's freedom to choose how to move. This limitation forces those unwilling to drive to compromise their mobility experiences in order to fulfil other needs, and exacerbates mobility inequalities for those unable to drive.

7.2 Recommendations and Limitations

Drawing the relevant planning document analysis together with the grounded research on participant experiences, the research makes three key recommendations.

7.2.1 Stories and Planning

This research underscores the importance of incorporating storytelling in planning and advocates for its broader application. Extensive literature has already demonstrated the richness and value of storytelling in planning practice and research (Ortiz, 2023; Sandercock, 2004a, 2004b; Van Hulst, 2012; Vecchio, 2020). Building on this foundation, this study exemplifies how stories can be

effectively employed to capture knowledge that is often inaccessible through other methods, thereby informing planning decisions in a more nuanced and context-sensitive manner.

For instance, in this research, storytelling proved useful in uncovering the sequence of events that led participants to adopt driving, as well as the underlying meanings (i.e. moral justification) behind this shift. Additionally, stories provided insights not only into participants' mobility patterns in Auckland but also into their past mobility experiences in Latin America. Given the significance of both present and past contexts in shaping individual mobility behaviours, the depth of information captured through storytelling has enabled this study to propose planning recommendations aimed at fostering low-carbon transport systems. By integrating storytelling into planning, decision-makers can gain a more comprehensive understanding of mobility choices and develop strategies that are both culturally and historically informed.

While stories can be useful for understanding individual's mobilities, there are limitations in their use in planning. For instance, as this research captured stories from twenty-one Latin American women residing in Auckland, their experiences should not be considered representative of all Latin American women. As Sandercock (2004, p.24) reminds us, "critical judgment will always be necessary in deciding what weight to give to different stories, as well as what stories are appropriate in what circumstances". In this regard, such stories need to be carefully weighed in planning contexts. Nevertheless, the general lack of mobility experiences within planning calls for much greater engagement with mobility narratives.

7.2.2 Applying a Mobilities Lense in Planning

This research recommends the use of mobilities frameworks, such as Cresswell's (2010), to plan for transport systems and cities. By applying a mobilities lens, planners are not only focused on moving people and goods faster and easier, or ensuring accessibility, but are encouraged to consider the broader contexts of these mobilities. For example, the framework analysis allowed the examination of the structural forces shaping the women's decision to RMS, such as the dominant societal narratives that have captured Aotearoa's transport planning and imagination. Identifying such forces is important for challenging them and achieving desired outcomes in planning. In particular, within the context of planning's focus on equity and sustainability, a mobilities lens can enhance its ability to recognize and address inequities and injustices.

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7.2.3 Encouraging Mode Shift Through a Mobility's Approach

In view of these findings, and considering the current planning framework, two main recommendations emerged from this research. First, that while an equity-needs approaches in planning to reduce car-depending is important, it needs to be accompanied by an ideological shift. Discouraging immigrant women to RMS requires planning and policy makers to change the narratives used in planning to support mindset shifts around automobiles and transportation in general. If freedom continues to be associated to driving, using low-carbon forms of transportation will continue to face stigma in comparison. Second, this research recommends planners to better understand the role of human's emotions and experiences in their transportation choices. Given that emotions and past experiences play such an important role in forming beliefs and ideas, which we use to decide how to move, planning for mode shift and discouraging immigrant women to RMS requires human centric approaches where cities are designed and planned with people's emotions at the core. In short, to discourage immigrant women to RMS transport planning need to move away from an economic growth, individual market choice focus, towards an equity-needs-approach where people are presented with other material transport options, and are encouraged to see and feel such options as empowering. This needs to be accompanied by a planning system that understands humans as experiential and emotional beings, rather than purely rational consumers.

7.3 Direction for Future Research

As discussed, the scope of this research is limited to stories captured from Latin American immigrant women. Although the findings do not intend to provide a single truth of what factors influence their mobilities, their stories have been used to provide an idea about how to understand and influence the transport choices of immigrant women in Auckland. Future research could explore the mobilities of different groups of the population to explore similarities and contrasts in the factors affecting their daily mobilities in Auckland. Additionally, it could be valuable to further explore practical options that planner could use to incorporate the meanings and experiences related to transportation in their strategies.

7.4 Final Comments

This research is founded on the belief that there are unexplored tools and approaches that could enhance existing planning practices. The findings aim to reflect of ways Auckland can work towards creating an equitable and sustainable transport systems. While this research does not aim to single out specific individuals or institutions regarding the inequalities many disadvantaged groups face, including immigrants and women, it strives to initiate a conversation about the need to critically examine the recent shift in Aotearoa's policy and planning decision-making, which has become increasingly rooted in a 'rational' philosophy.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interviews' Structure and Questions (English Version)

Cultural Factors	
What socio-cultural factors influence the mobility experiences of Latin American women?	
Sub-themes (Based on Literature Review)	**Interview questions**
Gendered division of labor and (household) activities	• How are responsibilities distributed within your household? • Do you work in a paid job? • If not, would you like to do so? • Reflecting on the previous questions, was it different in your home country?
Cultural-religious values and beliefs	• Do you have any religious practices or beliefs? • What are your views around motherhood? • Are you the primary care giver in your household? • Reflecting on the previous questions, was it different in your home country?
Ethnic division of labour	• Do you work in the profession you have been trained for? • Are you satisfied with your paid job and its payment? • Were you forced into the workforce after migrating?
Economic Factors	
What economic factors influence the mobility experiences of Latin American women?	
Sub-themes (Based on Literature Review)	**Interview questions**
Car availability and ownership	• Do you have the resources to buy/use a car? • Can you use your household's car? • Do you struggle to pay for PT? • Was it the same in your home country?

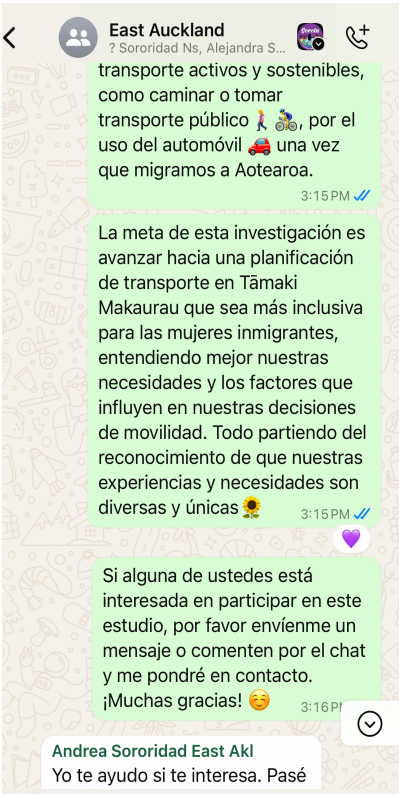
Living in Peripheral areas	• Do you live in a central area? • Is your area well serviced by PT? • If you could afford it, would you move to another area? • Reflecting on the previous questions, was it different in your home country?
Physical factors	
What physical factors influence the mobility experiences of Latin American women?	
Sub-themes (Based on Literature Review)	**Interview questions**
Uncomfortable PT	• Do you feel comfortable using PT in Auckland? • Have you ever felt sexually harassed using PT or other mode of transport? • Reflecting on the previous questions, was it different in your home country?
Not Walkable Suburbs	• Can you walk for daily commuting? • Can you bike for daily commuting? • Is it comfortable? • Reflecting on the previous questions, was it different in your home country?
Automobile Oriented / Bad PT services	• Is the PT in your area reliable and flexible? • Can you drive? • Do you need to drive for daily commuting? • Do you rely in someone to drive you around? • Reflecting on the previous questions, was it different in your home country?
Perceptual and psychological factors	
What perceptual and psychological factors influence the mobility experiences of Latin American women?	
Sub-themes (Based on Literature Review)	**Interview questions**
Fear and Anxiety about sexual abuse	• Do you avoid walking/biking/using PT in Auckland due to fear of being sexually abused? • Do you avoid travelling during night-time?

	• Reflecting on the previous questions, was it different in your home country?
Driving as a source of empowerment, freedom and independence	• Do you associate driving with freedom, empowerment and/or independence? • Do you think driving is necessary to feel part of Aotearoa's community? • Reflecting on the previous questions, was it different in your home country?
Fear, stress and anxiety related to driving	• Do you like driving? • Do you feel scared, anxious, or stressed while driving? • Do you see driving as an obligation? • Reflecting on the previous questions, was it different in your home country?

Appendix B: Participants Recruitment

- Facebook post sample:

- WhatsApp groups post sample:



Appendix C: Participant Consent Form (Interviews)

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TE KURA PŪKENGA TANGATA

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL

Understanding the Factors that Influence Immigrant Women to Reverse Mode Shift After Moving to Aotearoa New Zealand – A Focus on Latin American Women in Auckland

By Anamaria Rodriguez

I have read, or have had read to me in my first language, and I understand the Information Sheet attached as Appendix I. I have had the details of the study explained to me, any questions I had have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time. I have been given sufficient time to consider whether to participate in this study and I understand participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study at any time.

1. I agree/do not agree to the interview being sound recorded.
2. I wish/do not wish to have my recordings returned to me.
3. I wish/do not wish to have data placed in an official archive.
4. I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Declaration by Participant:

I _____ [print full name] _____ hereby consent to take part in this study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____