Canterbury Earthquake Recovery
Public Forum, Oxford Terrace Baptist Church, Christchurch
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Sustainability and Resilience

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Changing society

We live in a world of change and disruption – now and future

- Peak oil
- Climate change
- Earthquakes

Resilient and sustainable communities essential

Increasing reliance on local not global community

“Our lives will become profoundly and intensely local”

Wide acceptance

“In the first 24-48 hours of a disaster, the community bears the burden of response. It is a fallacy to rely on external help”
- Roderico Ofrinm, WHO SE Asia adviser for emergency and humanitarian action

“The challenge for urban planners will be … to generate a sense of hope through a combination of new technology, city design and community-based innovation, which together will create the Resilient City.”
- Prof Peter Newman, academic & member of Infrastructure Australia
"I encourage all Americans to recognize the importance of preparedness and observe this month by working together to enhance our national security, resilience, and readiness."

- President Barack Obama, Presidential Proclamation, National Preparedness Month, August 27, 2010

"We gotta get off oil, America has got to change its habits,“

- George W. Bush, March 5th 2008
Sustainable resilient communities

What are sustainable resilient communities?

Communities that:

- Are less reliant on fossil fuels
- Produce less harmful outputs (e.g. pollution, carbon)
- Use less finite inputs (e.g. water, energy)
- Reliant on local rather than global goods & services
- Are better able to adapt to change
- Quicker to recover when disrupted
Evidence for existence

Communities can be resilient

- Nov 07-April 08 – Americans drove 30 billion fewer kms that 06-07 (June 08 was peak oil price of $140 per barrel)
- Sept 4th when EQ hit Christchurch, local communities stepped up
- Growth in *Transition Initiative* communities
Initiatives

Transition Initiatives

- Aim is to equip communities (regions, cities, suburbs) for the dual challenges of climate change and peak oil
  - Can also apply to other challenges e.g. earthquake response and recovery
- Behaviour change is essential
  - Key is to raise awareness of sustainable living
  - Role of government is to facilitate this change among individuals and communities
Co-benefits

People who live in local resilient communities:

- Walk and cycle more
  - Improved health
  - Better social capital
  - Other benefits
Communities that promote active and sustainable transportation can:

- Reduce disparities between the rich and poor
- Promote good neighbourhood
- Enable poor to gain better access to healthy food
- Lead to decreased crime

- OECD Project on Environmentally Sustainable Transport
Concluding comments

- Resilience ≠ sustainable
- Resilience can = sustainable
- Opportunity to rebuild resilient AND sustainable communities
- Concern about ‘special powers’
  - Use them
- Outside-the-square thinking needed