



A NEW HOME FOR PAVLOVICH TRANSPORT SOLUTIONS

At a time when the COVID-19 pandemic is hitting businesses hard, one Auckland-based transport company is planning for future growth with a brand-new bus depot. Anne-Marie Emerson reports.

Pavlovich Transport Solutions has a new home.

The bus company, which has been in business since 1938 and is still owned and run by the Pavlovich family, recently opened a new depot at Westgate, in north-west Auckland.

Eighty per cent of the company's business is providing metro buses to Auckland Transport, which they've been doing since 2000, and the other 20 per cent is providing tourist coach services.

"We chose this area because it has been identified as one of the major growth corridors in Auckland," says Pavlovich Transport Solutions' Chief Executive Bernard Pavlovich.

"We're able to support the existing services, but we'll also be able to accommodate the expected significant growth in public transport in north-west Auckland."

Westgate area is located at the outer end of the NW motorway. The new depot will support Auckland Transport's

development of a rapid bus corridor project in the area.

Bernard says the depot has been a three-year project, from identifying the right site through to its official opening.

"Previously we were based at a site in Mt Roskill, but we have outgrown it. Our business has changed – we used to be solely a tourist coach business, but now we're mostly a city bus provider.

"In July 2017 we doubled our Auckland fleet and took on covering many of the West Auckland public transport runs, so things have been rather cramped at the Mt Roskill depot since then."

The new depot is 1.2 hectares in size. It can accommodate 100 buses overnight and provides parking for a similar number of staff cars. There's plenty of high-quality office space, meeting rooms and a café for staff.

All the buses' needs are taken care of at the depot. There's an eight-bay drive-through workshop, a brake-testing machine, a scissor lift, a

refuelling centre and a bus wash, and all Certificates of Fitness are done in-house.

Bernard says the depot is a busy place, operating 20 hours a day, seven days a week.

"As well as the buses, we have operations people working at the depot. Their job is to protect the bus operations, anticipate and resolve any delays and respond to driver needs."

Ground was first broken in March 2021. The depot became operational on 29 August, and was formally opened by Auckland Mayor Phil Goff on 16 September.

"The mayor is a busy man, so we're glad he was able to open our new depot. It's an indication of how significant this project is."

Bernard says the new depot was not an easy project to undertake.

"This was a difficult project for us. It was difficult in that it was hard to find large blocks of land in Auckland,

especially land to undertake a very low-density project. We weren't building 40 warehouses on this land; we were building one warehouse and a lot of bus parks, and that makes the land low economic use."

Pavlovich Transport Solutions has been providing metro buses to Auckland for more than 20 years.

"Public transport in Auckland is core infrastructure. The model we operate under means that we are fully responsible for the service, and it requires operators to invest in large infrastructure projects such as this one."

The company was fortunate that the COVID-19 pandemic had only minimal effects on the building's progress.

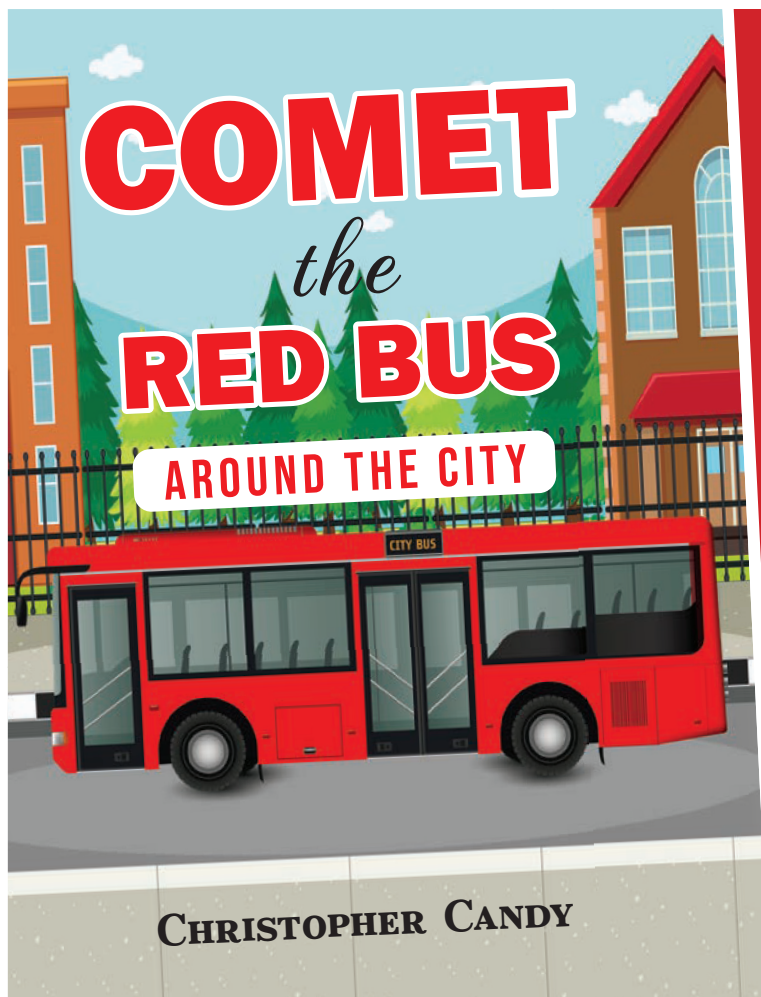
"It was really only towards the end of the project that the pandemic had an effect. It was slowed down by about three months."

Bernard says it has been good to see the site develop from bare land to a busy, operational depot.

"The new depot is a better fit for our purpose, and we think it's just a really nice place for our staff to come to work every day."



Auckland Mayor Phil Goff (right) helped Bernard Pavlovich open the new bus depot on 16 September. Photos: Pavlovich Transport Solutions & Services



Comet the red bus: Around the City,

is the first book of a series of fun and colourful children books. This book is an introduction to the character of Comet the red bus. Containing bright colour pictures throughout the book will give children much delight while reading the rhyming words.

The book sells for \$16.99 (Plus Shipping) and is available directly from www.christophercandy.co.nz or email christophercandy@icloud.com