

Auckland's Transport Accessibility Action Plan

Part of the Disability Action Plan



2026





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Read me first

Alignment with Auckland Council group strategic direction and transport planning requirements

Auckland Council current strategic direction provides the wider context for how this document should be interpreted and applied. This includes relevant Auckland Council strategies, policies, plans, investment decisions, regulatory settings, and local board direction.

Transport planning is also guided by legislation and related planning documents introduced through the reforms. This includes the Auckland Council Transport Policy Statement, the Auckland Regional Transport Committee, the 30-year Transport Plan for Auckland, the Regional Land Transport Plan, and related transport governance and planning requirements.

The Auckland Council Group Strategic Framework (Transport view), shown below, provides context for how transport-related strategies, plans and frameworks fit together. It is intended as an evolving guide and will continue to be refined as documents are reviewed and updated.

Application within Auckland Council's shared governance model

Auckland Council's shared governance model allocates decision-making responsibilities between the Governing Body and local boards. The transport reform legislation changed how this model applies to transport by assigning additional responsibilities to local boards for local and collector roads, while arterial roads and specific precincts are wholly under the decision-making responsibility of the Governing Body.

The Auckland Roding Classification Framework determines the split in road type and therefore decision making, and shows individual road categories.

This document is a key part of Auckland Council's approach to transport planning and decision-making. It should be taken into account when Auckland Council plans, funds, regulates, and delivers transport services and infrastructure.

The Allocation of Decision-Making Framework sets out the respective responsibilities of the

Governing Body and local boards. Local board decision-making responsibilities for local and collector roads include:

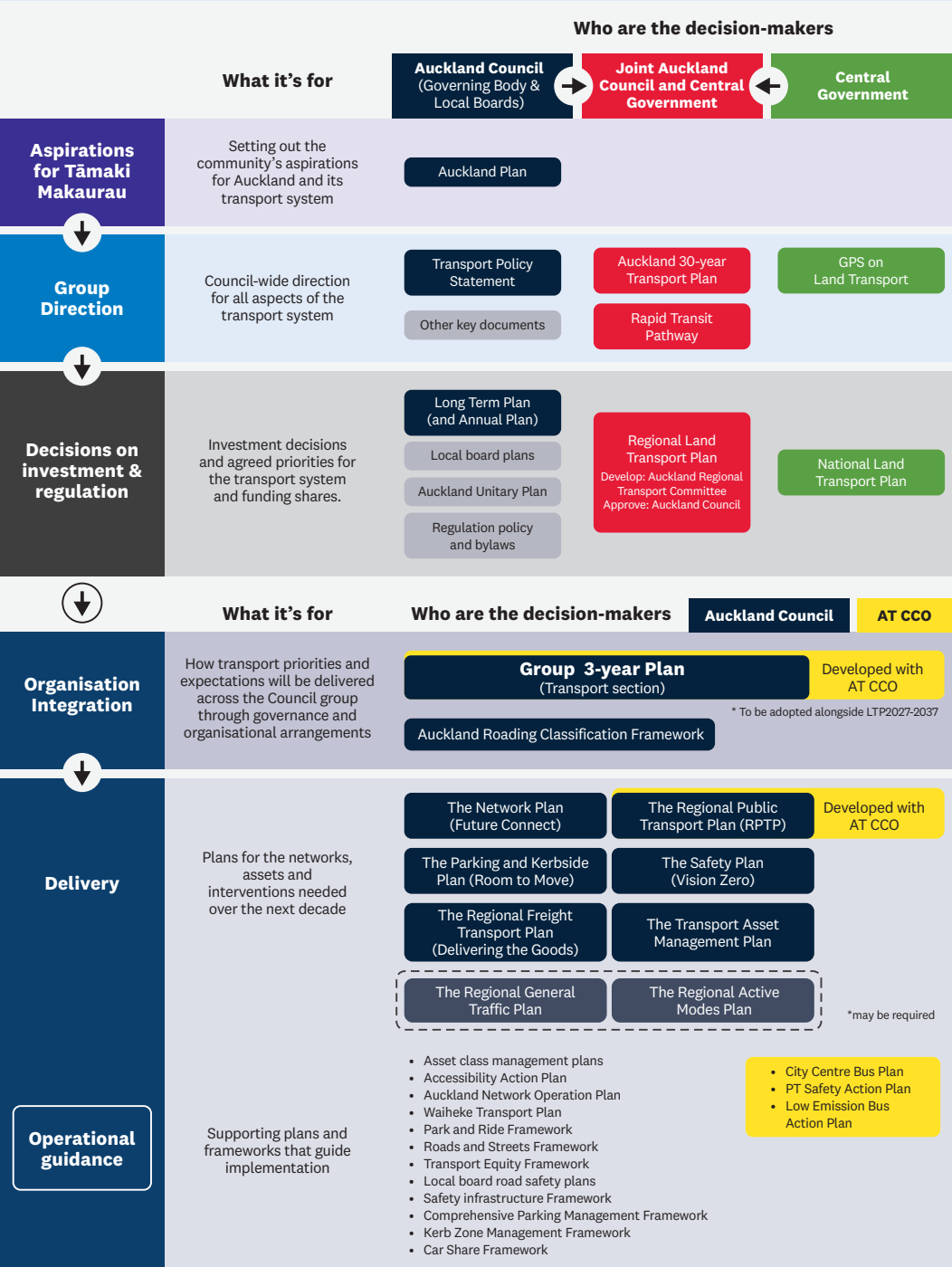
- **Parking and stopping controls:** Such as no stopping restrictions (broken yellow lines), angle parking, time restricted parking, parking zones,
- **Traffic Controls:** Such as community streets (community led play streets), pedestrian crossings, speed humps, speed limits,
- **Road corridor and network access permissions and conditions:** Corridor access approvals for events (excluding Eden Park events that impact arterial roads),
- **Property and landowner (road reserve) decisions:** Such as removal of hazardous encroachments affecting road safety, airspace and subsoil leases,
- **Infrastructure:** Such as footpaths and cycle paths (new or modified), installing monuments, removal of third-party structures.

Where local boards are responsible for decisions covered by this document, they should take it into account when making those decisions. The document does not change or limit local board decision-making powers.

Auckland Council Group Strategic Framework

(Transport view)

Simplified view only. Documents often span multiple layers and relationships. Higher-order direction takes precedence. Seek guidance where interpretation is required. Subject to ongoing refinement.





1. Overview

Tirohanga Whānui

Overview

Accessibility enables people to participate fully in everyday life by ensuring that places, services and information are easy to access and use. In transport, accessibility means that everyone, regardless of age, ability or circumstance, can travel safely, independently and with dignity.

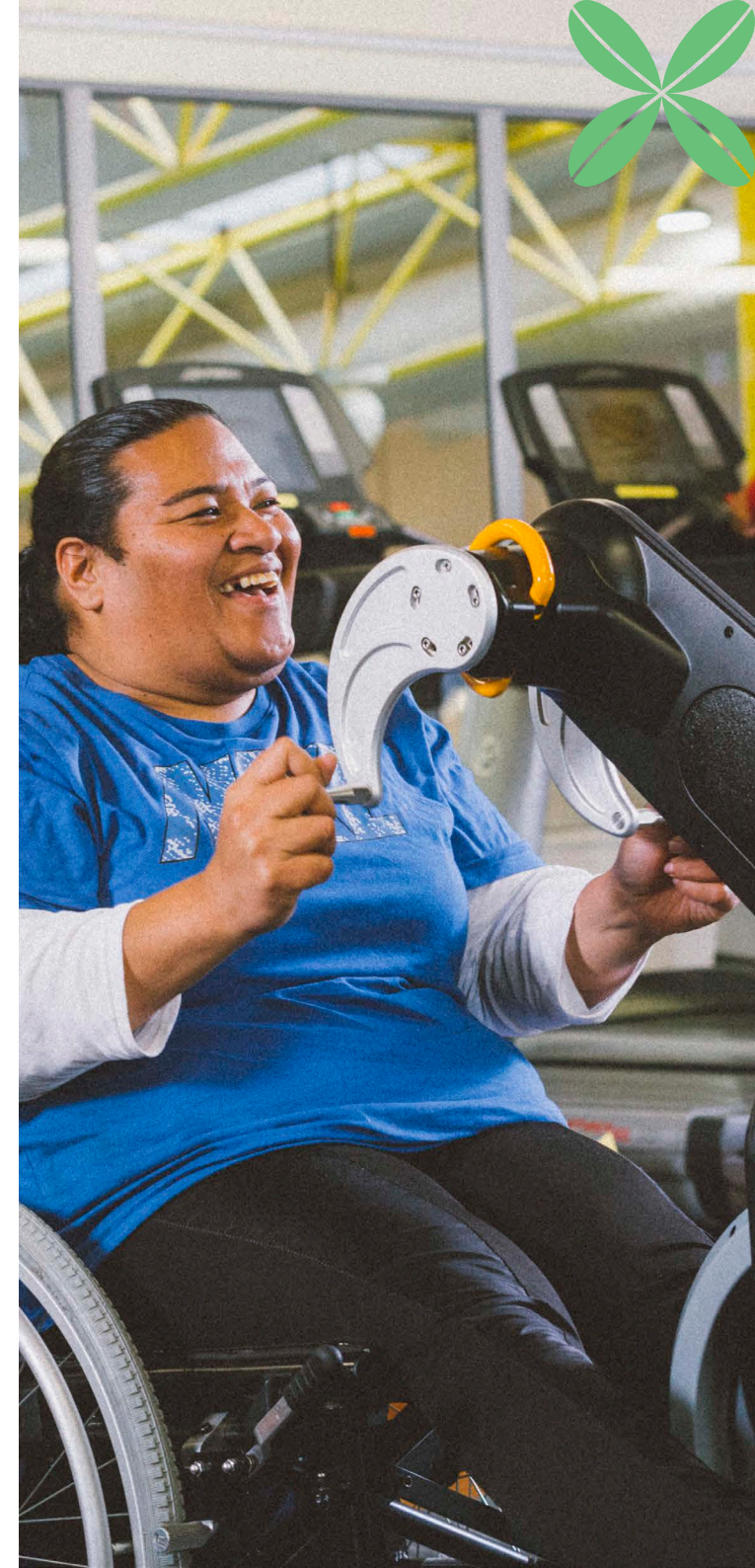
The 2026–2029 Transport Accessibility Action Plan sets out the actions Auckland local government will undertake over the next three years to create a more inclusive, accessible and equitable transport system. Building on the Auckland Transport Disability Policy (2013) and aligned with local and national strategies, the plan embeds universal design, accessible information, inclusive service delivery and equitable transport access across transport planning, operations, maintenance and investment.

The plan adopts a broad understanding of accessibility that focuses on removing physical, informational and social barriers to participation. While accessibility improvements are particularly important for disabled people, they also benefit older adults, people with temporary injuries, parents with prams, people travelling with luggage and others who may face barriers to movement.

The need for action is increasing as Auckland's population grows and ages, accessibility expectations

evolve, and the transport network faces challenges from ageing infrastructure, climate-related disruptions and inconsistent accessibility outcomes. By improving accessibility across the entire transport journey, Auckland can support greater independence, safety, participation and wellbeing for all Aucklanders.

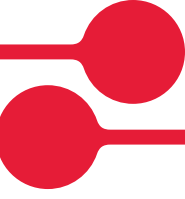
By 2030, the plan seeks to make accessibility a business-as-usual consideration in the design, delivery, operation and maintenance of Auckland's transport system. Key outcomes include universally accessible infrastructure and services, improved customer information and communications, increased staff capability, better monitoring and reporting, and stronger collaboration across government, communities and service providers. While significant progress can be achieved through the actions in this plan, further investment will be required to realise a fully accessible, safe and resilient transport network for everyone.



A white guide dog is sitting on a paved surface next to a person. The person is wearing dark trousers and dark sneakers with yellow accents. A white cane is visible on the left side of the frame. The dog is looking towards the camera with its mouth slightly open. A dark blue semi-transparent box with white text is overlaid on the left side of the image. A blue wavy graphic is in the top left corner.

Accessibility matters in all areas of life, including physical access to places like buildings, access to services like education or health, or access to information that helps a person make decisions about their life.¹

¹ New Zealand Disability Strategy 2026-2030



What's new in the 2026–2029 Transport Accessibility Action Plan

This 2026–2029 Transport Accessibility Action Plan strengthens Auckland's commitment to an inclusive and accessible transport system.

It establishes enhanced accessibility and inclusive communication requirements, supports more inclusive journey design for Auckland's evolving communities, strengthens emergency preparedness,

and promotes ongoing collaboration across the council family, government agencies and community services.

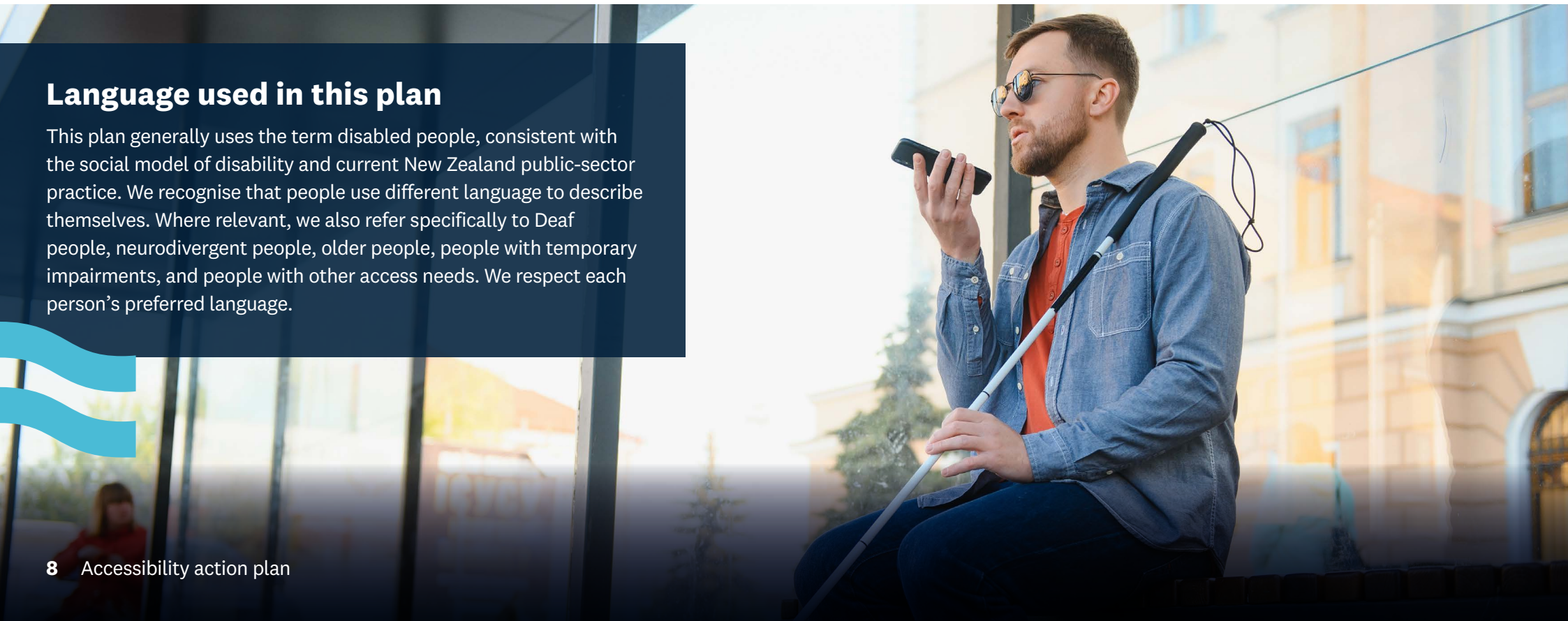
It sets directions to respond to key challenges, including our ageing population, the need to maintain growing and ageing infrastructure, climate-related disruptions, and inconsistent

network accessibility (ranging from infrastructure through to communications).

Some critical improvements remain unfunded, highlighting that future investment will be required to realise a fully accessible, safe and resilient transport network for everyone.

Language used in this plan

This plan generally uses the term disabled people, consistent with the social model of disability and current New Zealand public-sector practice. We recognise that people use different language to describe themselves. Where relevant, we also refer specifically to Deaf people, neurodivergent people, older people, people with temporary impairments, and people with other access needs. We respect each person's preferred language.





Mandating accessibility for everybody

This document mandates the actions that Auckland local government will undertake over the next three plus years related to transport accessibility. This document has its origin in the Auckland Transport Disability Policy (2013).

It aligns with Auckland Council's Thriving Communities Strategy/Ngā Hapori Momoho which aims to create a fairer, more inclusive and sustainable region where all Aucklanders belong. Ensuring everyone has access to what they need and can participate fully in civic and community life are objectives in the strategy. An accessible transport system is a key enabler of participation, helping people to get to where they need to go easily and safely.

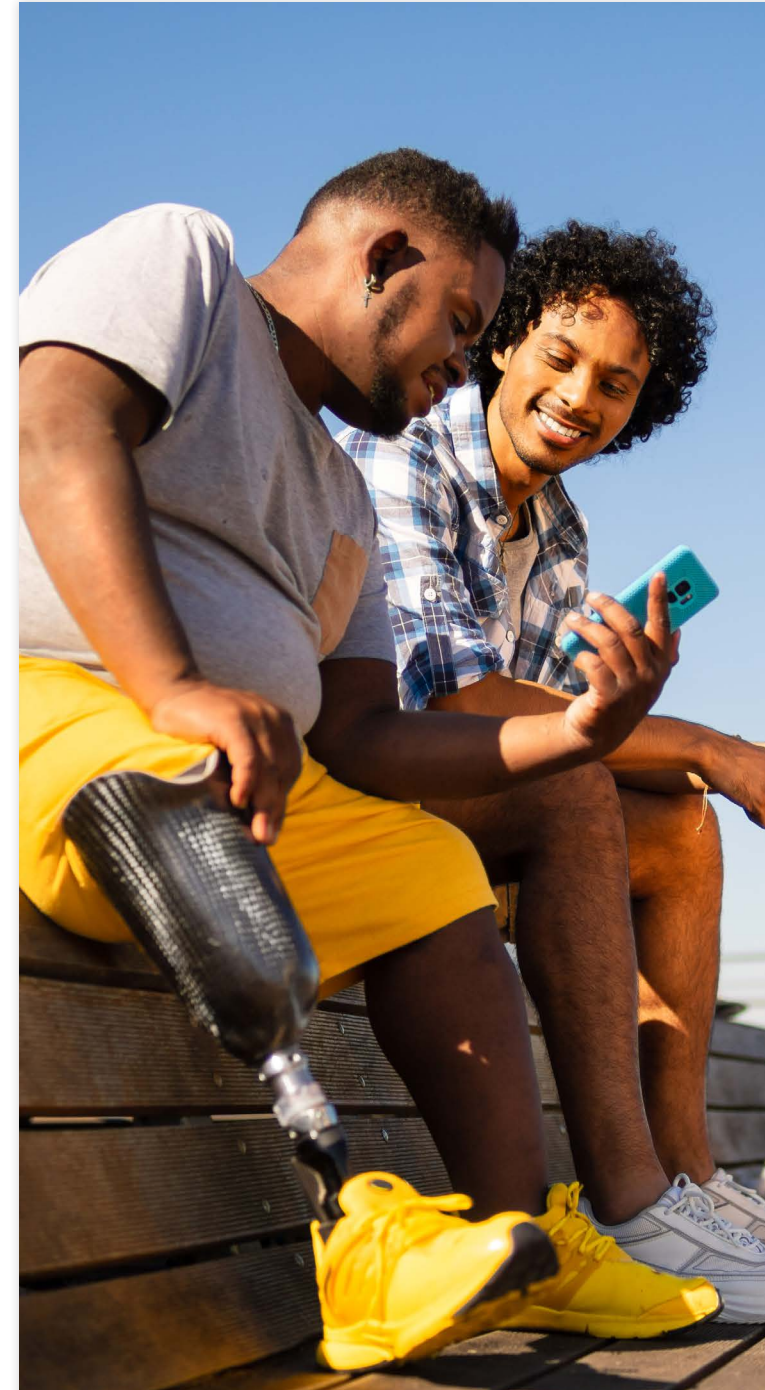
The Transport Accessibility Action Plan is also directly linked to Auckland Council's Disability Action Plan. It sets out in detail the actions Auckland Council and Auckland Transport will take to create a fairer and more accessible transport system under the Disability Action Plan's Transport Domain.

This document aligns with central government strategies and reflects the pro-active approach to transport accessibility that Auckland local government

has been taking and intends to continue. It directly aligns with Auckland Plan commitments by embedding universal design, accessible information, inclusive service delivery and equitable transport access into all aspects of Auckland's transport planning, operations and investment.

This 2026 update comes during a period of local government reform, with pending legislation for Auckland Council to regain many transport functions that sat with Auckland Transport (a Council Controlled Organisation) for the past 15 years. This presents some uncertainty around where transport accessibility roles and responsibilities will land - whether they will be with Council or with the new transport CCO. Therefore, this document refers to "council" and "local government" as including roles and responsibilities that sit with both Council and the new transport CCO. Similarly, collective terminology such as "we", "us" and "our", refer to overarching local government responsibilities.

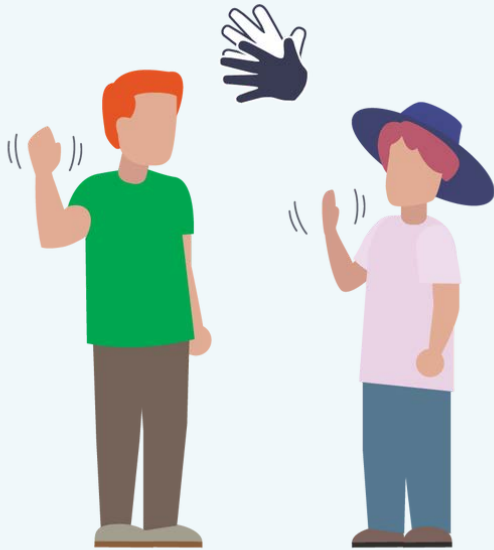
This is a 'living plan' to be updated regularly to reflect the successful completion of actions outlined here, and to add new actions over time.





Accessibility and disability

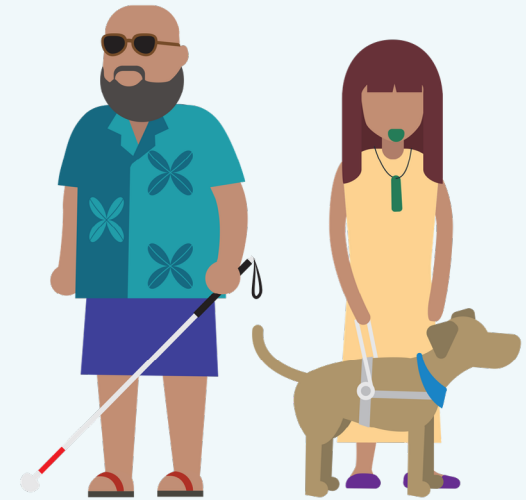
The traditional (medical) view of disability focuses on a physical or intellectual impairment as the cause of inequality, such as the examples below.



People with a hearing impairment



People with a mobility impairment



People with a vision impairment

A more accurate and inclusive view focuses on outside factors – the barriers that make the world inaccessible for someone who has such an impairment.

“...disability isn’t just caused by people’s impairments, but also the barriers in society.”²

The barriers may be physical, such as inaccessible vehicles and infrastructure, or social, such as lack of information or people’s attitudes. Local government can make a significant difference by removing or addressing physical barriers to travel and ensuring that information is accessible.

It is important to note that while we generally talk about people with disabilities as needing accessible transport, there are also people whose mobility is impaired, often temporarily, but who do not fit within a medical definition of disability. Given this, we must ensure that our planning for services, information and infrastructure benefits everyone, including those with accessibility requirements, (whether they have single or multiple needs).

Five drawings to illustrate the following examples are included: Elderly people, pregnant women, people with an injury or illness, people with prams or strollers or small children on foot, people with luggage.

The illustrations are from the Auckland Design Manual, developed in collaboration with Auckland Council’s Universal Design Forum.

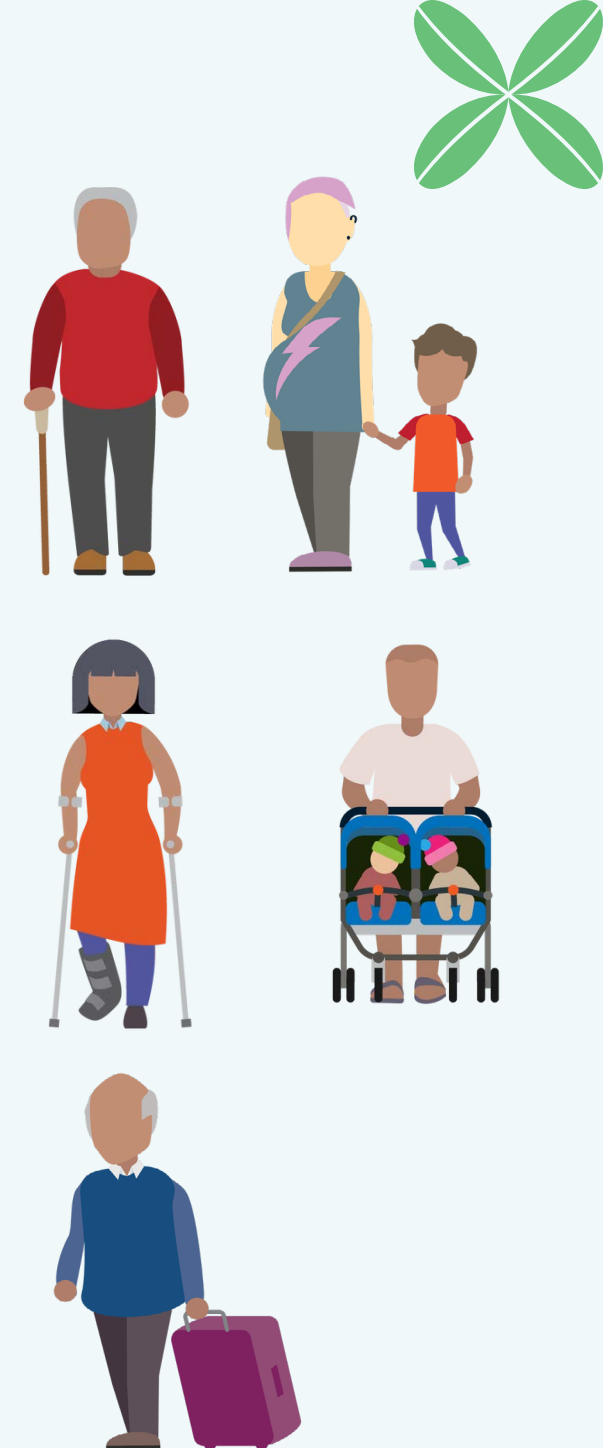
Being accessible means that, as far as can reasonably be accommodated, council ensures that transport facilities, vehicles, information and services are easy to find, understand, reach and use. This applies to people with accessibility requirements and therefore to everyone in their daily lives.

Accessibility, in short, means that anyone, regardless of age or ability, can go safely from A to B without inconvenience, discrimination or barriers, and with dignity.

The Auckland Design Manual³ includes design personas to assist designers to deliver accessible and inclusive places for people with accessibility requirements.

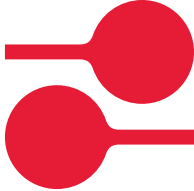
Improving accessibility will enable everyone to participate in the community and to be part of their world.

“The accessible journey is critical because it dictates whether disabled people are able to access other fundamental rights, such as the ability to work, obtain an education, participate in the community and socialise. Without a transport system that is not only accessible, but also available, affordable and acceptable to them, disabled people are prevented from living a full and inclusive life, in contravention of their human rights”. Quoted from The Accessible Journey: Report of the Inquiry into Accessible Public Land Transport, Human Rights Commission, September 2005.



² New Zealand Disability Strategy 2026-2030

³ aucklanddesignmanual.co.nz/en/design-guidance/universal-design.html



Why does Auckland need a Transport Accessibility Action Plan?

The New Zealand Disability Strategy 2026-2030 has a vision for an accessible and equitable society where disabled people thrive, lead and participate fully. Inherent in this is the need to provide a transport system which caters to all members of the community and delivers towards Vision Zero’s ultimate goal to eliminate all transport deaths and serious injuries on the network.

As our population ages, an accessible transport system becomes increasingly critical.



In 2023, there were around

220,000

Aucklanders aged 65 years and over,

13.3%

of the total Auckland population.

The proportion of Aucklanders 65 years and over grew significantly between **2013 and 2023** (+56,595, +34.7%).

1 in 6

people aged over 65 are disabled.

Our population is growing and our ageing population is growing faster.

This is significant for future transport and social infrastructure planning and service provision.

There are currently around

44,000

Total Mobility card holders in Auckland.

As the population ages, we can anticipate higher demand for Total Mobility services.⁴

⁴ Older Aucklanders: Results from the 2023 census July 2025
knowledgeauckland.org.nz/media/mkfpzfzo/older-aucklanders-results-from-the-2023-census-july-2025.pdf



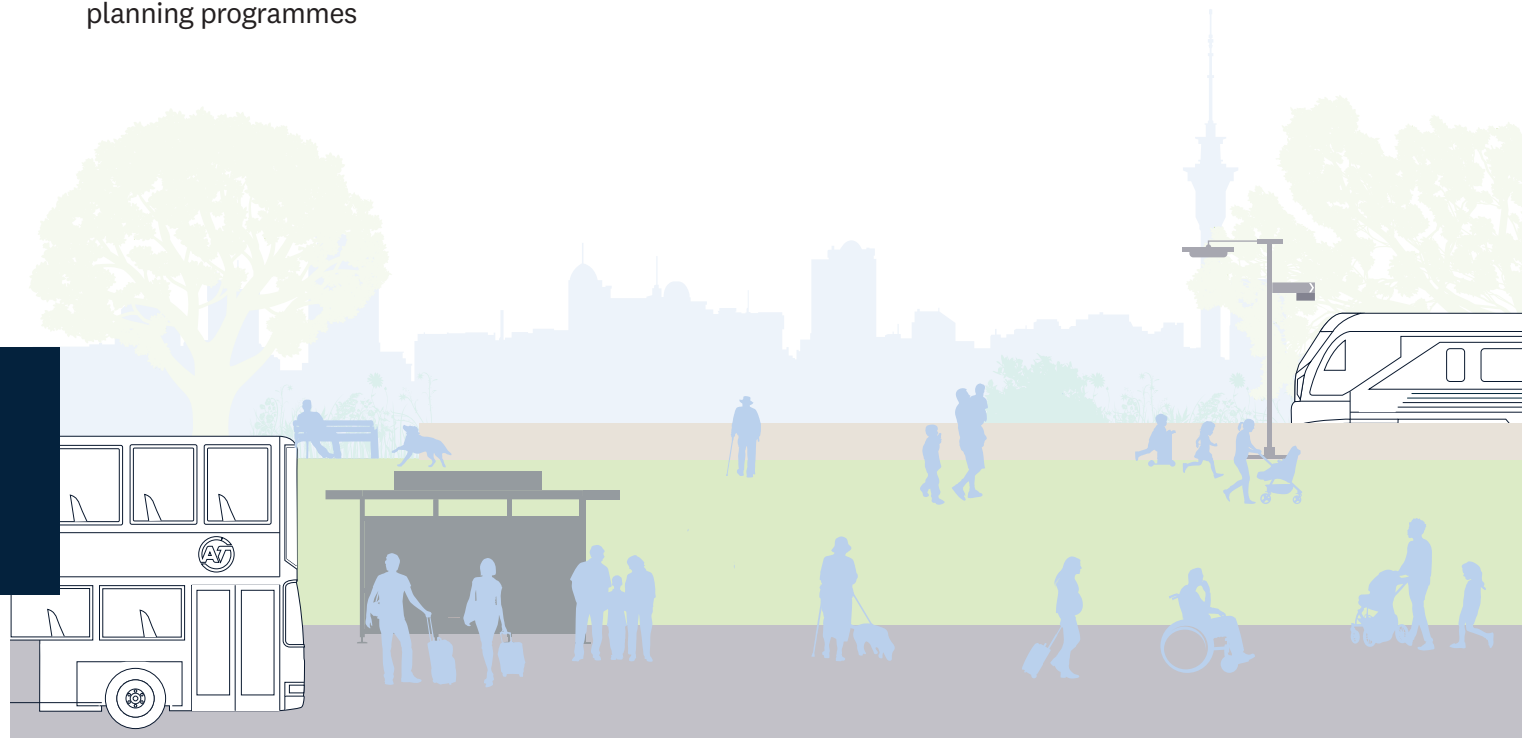
Council is responsible for local roads and for Auckland's transport system, and the NZ Transport Agency is responsible for state highways. Most transport funding is joint between these two organisations.

Aspects of the local transport system include:

- transport infrastructure planning, network delivery, management and maintenance
- public transport service planning, delivery and performance monitoring
- contracting services for buses, commuter rail and ferries
- managing the Total Mobility scheme, including contracting services
- ticketing and revenue collection and protection
- providing public transport concession fares for target groups
- exploring and testing new ways to deliver services, including better connections for the first and last part of a journey, new technologies and different service providers
- managing disruptions on the network – both planned and unplanned
- customer information, including wayfinding, customer contact calls and digital displays
- footpath and cycle lane and cycle path planning, design, delivery and maintenance
- cycle parking
- improved crossing facilities
- travel demand management, travel planning programmes
- road corridor planning, delivery, operation and management, monitoring and enforcement
- road marking and road signage delivery, street lighting and maintenance
- road safety design and delivery of safety programmes
- managing public car parking (on street and off-street), including providing mobility parking, monitoring and enforcement.

In short, we shape the customer experience across the entire journey, from door to door. By putting people first, we seek to understand and respond to the diverse needs of Aucklanders. This includes ensuring our services and facilities are accessible, inclusive and designed to minimise barriers to participation.

**When we plan for accessibility,
we plan for everyone**





Objectives for transport accessibility

By 2030, there are several key things that we wish to see as the 'business as usual' standard around accessibility:

- new transport infrastructure will be universally accessible
- all transport vehicles will have functioning accessibility features, wheelchair spaces and audio announcements
- public transport service operators will have appropriate accessibility training
- commitments to repair damaged footpaths and pedestrian facilities are met within a reasonable timeframe
- improved customer communication, such as service disruptions
- multi-channel (including digital) customer information is available in accessible formats

- new facilities and services are designed and constructed from concept to completion to ensure universal accessibility
- existing infrastructure is maintained as effectively as possible to improve accessibility, within available budgets
- improved monitoring and reporting for accessibility, including using new technology.

This plan focuses primarily on improving transport accessibility for our customers and communities. It also includes actions to ensure council has the resources, knowledge and capability needed to support accessibility outcomes both for customers and within the workplace. These actions will align with the council's diversity, equity and inclusion policies.

The plan includes actions that will:

- help everyone to use transport services and facilities to travel safely with ease and dignity across Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland
- reduce transport disadvantage and discrimination, across all aspects of operating the public transport system, services and infrastructure
- provide customer support and ensure that accessible information is available
- promote increased staff awareness and training to engage and consult disabled people, for example in project design for services and infrastructure, in safety programmes, in developing information and communications, and to take account of their feedback before plans are finalised
- show leadership to suppliers and external partners on accessibility and universal design principles.



2. Context

Horopaki





Policy overview

Universal accessibility is a basic human right as asserted in international and national documents including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) (ratified by the New Zealand Government in 2008), the New Zealand Human Rights Act (1993) and the New Zealand Disability Strategy 2026-2030. Key components relevant to council's accessibility work are outlined in the appendices:

Appendix 1: Global policy context

Appendix 2: New Zealand policy context

Appendix 3: Auckland regional policy context

Aotearoa New Zealand does not currently have accessibility standards for transport set out in law. While the Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination, councils and council-controlled organisations are responsible for determining accessibility priorities and implementation timeframes.

In contrast, Australia has legislated accessibility standards for public transport that define accessibility requirements and set compliance deadlines. The New Zealand Human Rights Commission has recommended that similar standards be introduced in New Zealand.

Taking action now will help Auckland build a more accessible and inclusive transport system and ensure the region is well prepared if national accessibility standards are introduced. Embedding universal design, accessible communications and clear expectations across planning, delivery and asset management will improve transport for everyone and reduce the need for costly changes in the future.

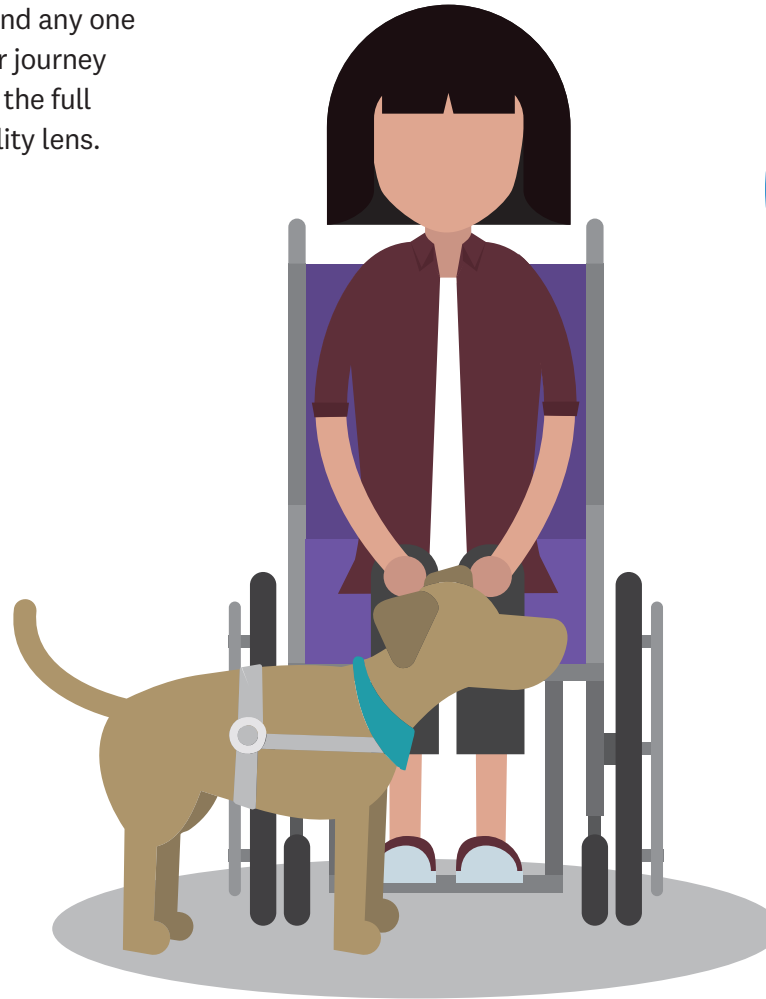
This action plan is guided by the **Auckland Transport Disability Policy (2013)** (see Appendix 3: Auckland regional policy context). It builds on the concept of an accessible journey and aligns with relevant human rights legislation and international conventions, and supports the requirements of the Building Act and the Land Transport Management Act.





What does accessibility look like?

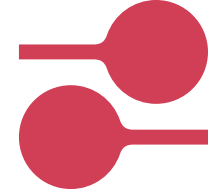
In any journey there are a number of steps and any one step that is not accessible could hinder their journey or prevent it entirely. It is important to treat the full end-to-end journey with the same accessibility lens. The following example demonstrates this.



This is Jane with her disability assist support dog, Tūi.

Jane uses a wheelchair. She is going to work in the city, which is just one of many trips she makes each week for a variety of purposes. Her full journey is described below. This shows the differences that the presence or absence of accessible components can make to her journey.

Jane's journey to work



The table is set out as a graphic that describes seven stages of Jane's journey with three sections for each stage. For each stage, the text in the first section is labelled Stage and describes the stage of her journey. The second section is labelled Accessible. This describes the accessible features of the environment she travels through for that stage. The third section is labelled Inaccessible. This describes the barriers and difficulties she faces where the route has not been made completely accessible.

Stage	Accessible	Inaccessible
Jane leaves her house and wheels down the footpath with Tūi.	The footpath is wide – at least 1.8m – enabling space for Tūi to walk alongside Jane in her wheelchair, or two wheelchairs to pass each other. The footpath gradients are within design parameters.	The footpath is narrow and full of holes. It is also cluttered, with advertising signs and rubbish bins along it so she must wheel around them frequently, making her commute potentially unsafe. Some spaces have very narrow gaps, so she must negotiate them carefully. This also makes it difficult for Tūi; she struggles to move with Jane as trained.
Jane crosses the road to get to the bus stop.	There are features such as kerb ramps, sound signals and textured surfaces to help people who are blind or low vision to identify and use the crossing safely. Tui reminds Jane she has reached the crossing point and to wait until safe to cross.	There is no kerb ramp at the other side of the crossing, so Jane must wheel along, risking traffic, until she reaches a driveway to get off the road and onto the footpath.
Jane and Tui reach the bus stop.	There is space in the shelter for her wheelchair and Tūi. Customer information is at her reading height. There are textured surfaces to indicate the boarding point for vision impaired customers. Audible information on bus arrival is available at the press of a button.	The bus stop shelter does not have a space for a wheelchair, so she must sit in the rain with Tūi at her side. The bus service information is set up high behind the seats of the shelter, so she cannot tell when her next bus is due. There are no textured surfaces to guide customers with vision impairments to the bus door.
The bus arrives and they board.	The bus driver pulls in alongside the 150mm kerb to allow for easy access and to deploy the ramp. The driver happily offers to assist Jane to enter the bus, but Jane is able to enter unaided. The ticket readers are at her seated height and there are wheelchair spaces inside the bus for her to lock in somewhere safe with Tūi at her side, clear of other passengers moving inside the bus.	The kerb is low and uneven at the side of the road. The bus has a ramp, but the driver struggles to deploy the ramp to the kerb because of the steeper angle. Jane needs the driver to help push her onto the bus, with Tūi following. She cannot reach the card reader, so the driver needs to assist again. There are no wheelchair spaces on the bus, and she effectively has to stay next to the door. It will be hard for anyone else to get on or off past her and Tūi.



Stage	Accessible	Inaccessible
The bus arrives at the destination stop.	Jane can reach the stop button easily. The driver ensures that the bus stops close to the kerb so there is minimal gap between the bus and the footpath, that the bus kneels and the ramp deploys so that Jane and Tūi can disembark easily.	Jane has to ask someone to press the stop button for her. The driver has to help her carefully down the ramp, which is very steep, due to the kerb not being at an adequate height. It's a bit of a jump for Tūi too. Jane gets the driver to tag her off. She is using her credit card, as her HOP card had insufficient funds. She is paying full fare for this trip because accessible concession fares are not available when paying by credit card.
Jane and Tūi travel along the footpath to Jane's work.	The footpath is at least 1.8m wide, enabling Tui and others to walk side-by-side, the gradients are within design parameters, and the surface is smooth and well-maintained.	The footpath is narrow, uneven and cluttered, with advertising signs and rubbish bins so Jane must wheel around them, supported by Tūi. Some gaps are very narrow, so she has to negotiate them carefully so that she doesn't tip. Jane considers that her return journey would be far easier (even though more expensive) if she called for a Total Mobility hoist van.
The end of her journey.	Jane had the same journey experience as able-bodied members of the community and is ready for a day of work.	Jane is tired and sore from the bumps she felt along the way. She also feels embarrassed and self-conscious about the impact she had on the progress of the bus. And now she must work and then go through the same thing again on the way home.

An accessible trip for Jane is one where the transport infrastructure and services, including customer information, are just as useable for her and her disability assist dog Tūi, as for anyone else. There are many examples like Jane', but they all have the same requirement: that council plan, design, deliver, operate and maintain public facilities and activities so that all customers can use them safely, and with ease and dignity.

Our growing and changing region presents distinct accessibility challenges as we see more intensive development and denser populations. As housing becomes more compact and vertically structured, access for the first and last legs of journeys takes on increased importance.

Intensification places greater pressure on public space, resulting in more crowded footpaths, bus stops and station environments, and introduces more complex evacuation requirements during emergencies or network disruptions.

To ensure travel remains safe and can be independent and dignified, the transport network will require continued considered and coordinated improvements so that accessible routes are continuous, legible and resilient, supporting seamless journeys from home to the wider transport network.





3. Action plan

Mahere Mahi



Action plan

In 2025, the Office of the Auditor General reviewed Auckland's public transport reliability and made five key recommendations, aimed to improve planning, communication and performance reporting. These recommendations, as well as others from central government reviews, have been incorporated into the action plan.

Over the past few years, we have made significant progress in some areas, such as increasing the number of accessible buses and trains and improving our digital communications. Despite this progress there is much more to do to make our transport system fully accessible.

The following tables outline:

- transport accessibility actions which have been completed in the past three years
- Areas of transport accessibility focus for the next period of the action plan – including some focus areas that are already planned and funded and will be covered as business as usual, and other focus areas that still need scoping and will need funding/resourcing confirmation.





Completed actions

Strategic planning and policy development	
Set direction and guide transport accessibility through strategy, policy and guidelines.	
Area of work	Description
Transport Accessibility Action Plan	Updated to reflect actions completed and planned. AT worked with Auckland Council towards integrating transport accessibility into our wider strategic framework.
NZ Sign Language Strategy	Strategic direction included in the Transport Accessibility Action Plan, with some NZSL pilots on the Auckland network.
Transport Equity Framework	The Transport Equity Framework focuses on addressing transport inequities, including addressing gaps in the transport system for universal access. It was developed and approved in 2024.

Monitoring	
Monitor progress on transport accessibility to help maintain consistency and momentum, understand progress and hold local government accountable for delivering an accessible transport system.	
Area of work	Description
Transport Accessibility Action Plan	Reports on progress on actions and completed transport accessibility actions.
Council reporting	AT contributed to Auckland Council’s Disability Action Plan reporting (June 2025).
Other areas of monitoring/reporting	AT’s six-monthly website survey includes a question around participants’ accessibility needs to better understand the range of accessibility needs among website customers and to keep them in focus when developing new website features or updating content.
	Standardised accessibility questions included in all recruitment for research participants to ensure appropriate support can be provided where needed and to enable accessible representation on projects where this is identified as a requirement.
	Total Mobility data and annual survey continue to provide insights into the Total Mobility scheme.
	AT uses customer responses/feedback to inform responses and ongoing improvements to services. Relating to accessibility, a new AI tool for analysing customer feedback prioritises safety and accessibility issues and enables the team to analyse any patterns in feedback/issues.



Communications

Ensure that customers receive timely information in appropriate format for planned and unplanned disruptions.

Area of work	Description
Public engagements	Continued focus on providing public engagement information in accessible formats (particularly summary documents, with long-form documents as screen-readable as per council practice). Other examples include support staff to assist in workshop participation – a 3D tactile model was used to help with community engagement to understand proposals for Homai Station level crossing removal.
Transport service information	Continuous improvements in bus service communications with recent examples including audio announcements on buses. New signage is also being installed with larger icons and fonts for those with visual impairments.
	Updated mobility parking maps are available online. ⁵
	The AT Park app continues to show mobility parking locations across the region.
Bilingual audio on trains	Te Reo Māori arrival and transfer messaging added to train audio announcements bringing bilingual messaging to 100% of all AT network buses, trains, train platforms and ferry terminals.
Promoting NZ sign language (NZSL)	NZSL recorded safety videos are in public view or planned for several locations on the public transport network including key locations such as Waitematā Station, Downtown Ferry Terminal and on 20 Fullers ferries. They will also be in operation at new CRL rail stations. This is also the first time anywhere in New Zealand for trilingual messaging in a public space.
Wayfinding/accessible maps	3D tactile model/maps are being piloted at Waitematā Station which will assist blind and low vision customers (as well as being of interest to the wider community).

⁵ [**auckland-transport-car-parks-and-mobility-parking.pdf**](#)



Public transport improvements

Ensure the public transport network and services are safe and accessible for everyone.

Area of work	Description
Total Mobility	AT continues to support the Total Mobility Scheme. The Ministry of Transport is progressing a review of the national scheme, including changes to fare and subsidy caps that will impact councils and customers. As this work is still underway at the time of this action plan update council will monitor national decisions and prepare for any required adjustments to service delivery, funding arrangements and customer information once final settings are confirmed. AT continues to publish and distribute monthly Total Mobility newsletters.⁶ Annual survey continues to provide valuable data and insights.
PlusOne concession	Concession is available on buses. AT are working on a technical solution to extend concession to rail and ferry.
Accessible Concession	AT continues to provide the accessible concession ⁷
Community Connect concession	AT continues to support a 50% concession for community services cardholders.
Assist dogs on public transport	Disability assistance/service dogs are allowed to travel on public transport at all times. Domestic pets are also allowed on public transport, though there are different rules for domestic pets than for assist dogs (e.g. pet dogs must wear muzzles, there are time restrictions for travel for pets). AT are working to ensure specific training for operators regarding assist/service dogs.
Public transport operator training	“Stop for me, speak to me” bus and ferry accessibility training videos developed, available online. AT have identified the need for appropriate and standardised bus operator training in accessibility and are working towards this.
Ticketing	As part of the ongoing National Ticketing Solution design, AT are investigating the ability to retain certain information such as fare and balance information for customers when they tag on and off, as well as introducing new notification types such as low balance.
Bus accessibility	All new buses meet accessibility requirements as set out in the RUB and VQS; new ferries offer step-free, barrier-free access. AT undertakes compliance checks of new buses before they enter service.
New buses	Inspections of all new buses into Auckland to check compliance with NZ Transport Agency’s requirements for urban buses and AT’s vehicle quality standards, including accessibility features.

⁶ **Total Mobility newsletters**

⁷ **Accessible concession**



Accessible ferry fleet	Accessibility Advisory Group input has strengthened design standards and improved ferry accessibility. New electric ferries now provide step-free, barrier-free access, with the potential to lift national standards and influence Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) and the wider industry. Engagement already with MNZ on this is already underway.
New/improved bus stops and interchanges and improved services	New bus stops for service improvements for example the neighbourhood bus interchanges at Mount Eden, Balmoral, Manukau and Greenlane. Improvements include improved crossings, signage, tactile pavements, seating, shelter etc.
	Numerous bus service and interchange improvements. Examples include Pukekohe, Park Estate, evening services around the Auckland isthmus and in the south, and changes to better interchange with ferry services, Western Express and western services.
	Significant improvements to bus stops, including shelters, through the Climate Action Transport Targeted Rate (CATTR).
	Ongoing review and improvement of infrastructure to ensure that it meets accessibility standards.
City Rail Link stations	Significant input from the Accessibility Advisory Group is informing improvements to accessibility to Waitemātā, Te Waihorotiu, Karanga-a-hape and Maungawhau stations such as accessible ramps, bridges, carparking, wayfinding, seating, toilets and emergency help points. Full barrier-free audits have been conducted by the barrier-free division of CCS Disability Action.
Improved rail interchanges	Significant improvements to rail network, including to new and upgraded southern stations.
Level crossing removal and station access	Installation of accessible bridges at key stations to improve access for all users. Work includes lifts, tactile paving, signage, etc.
Supporting wheelchair accessible vehicles	AT continues to administrate a grant to help support more wheelchair accessible vehicles in the Total Mobility fleet.
Safety on public transport	Targeted safety programme that includes interventions like live CCTV onboard buses, improved lighting around stops and stations, enhanced Crime Stoppers reporting via text, the deployment of bus safety ambassadors and more. etc
	Insights looking at how women interact with the public transport network. This focus on issues such as personal safety enables better outcomes for everyone using the transport system.
Access to events	Initiative underway to identify needs and pain-points for customers who may have specific accessibility needs when attending events at Eden Park, GoMedia Stadium or Spark Arena.



New and improvements to infrastructure

Ensure that new infrastructure is accessible for everyone and that improvements to the transport network result in it being increasingly accessible.

Area of work	Description
Walking network improvements	New/improved footpaths, tactile pavements, crossings and pedestrian amenity (such as seating in some places) installed across Auckland. These were delivered by AT and by developers and will improve walking accessibility and safety, particularly in rural areas (e.g. Rodney, Franklin) that are transitioning to higher density. An example of targeted access improvements is detailed in the Manurewa Active Modes Action Plan.⁸ Significant improvements planned/delivered through the First and Final Leg, Safe Streets for people/ Safe School Streets programmes.
Road network improvements	New/improved roads, intersections and cycle infrastructure to enable safer journeys. Safer pedestrian crossings. Slower speed limits in town centres. A solution is being developed to provide easier access for Total Mobility passengers around the Midtown 'Authorised Vehicles Only' area.
Mobility parking	Public parking continues to provide for mobility parking. Further mobility parking and pick-up/drop-off provided near City Rail Link (CRL) stations and identified as needed through the First and Final Leg programme. This is also specifically considered through comprehensive parking management plans.
Wayfinding	Wayfinding promoting accessible pathways. Significant improvements planned/delivered through the First and Final Leg programme.
E-scooters	Successful trial of e-scooter parking on Queen Street. To be extended to CRL stations (and further) by providing scooter parking in order to enable mandatory parking zones around the CRL stations.
Transport standards and design	We continue to iterate and improve design standards to reflect aspirations for universal access, for example wayfinding content updated.

⁸ AT001176 Manurewa Active Modes Action Plan V2.indd



Transport system management

Ensure accessibility is embedded into transport system operations.

Area of work	Description
Transport accessibility training	'Street design for people' training offered to local government staff and contractors.
Mobility parking	Developing a new e-permit that allows mobility card holders to replicate it in AT's e-permit application. This will allow AT's license plate recognition vehicles (compliance monitoring) to identify vehicles that may have a mobility card in use while parked on the street.
Using technology to assist with challenges to accessibility	Developed an AI tool to analyse customer feedback. This improves visibility and responses to accessibility issues.
	Exploring and developing accessibility solutions for network and public transport services disruptions, both temporary/planned and for during emergencies, for example AI recognition of sign language through CCTV.
Community events and activations	Delivering and often partnering with transport support groups such as Bike Auckland to deliver community events. Examples include opening new infrastructure, bike hubs and an inclusive cycling project.

Working with others

Collaborate with others including central and local government agencies and those with lived experience such as accessibility representatives to help build and learn from best practice.

Area of work	Description
Collaborating with others to improve accessibility outcomes	Working with central and local government and community groups to help build and learn from national best practice. Examples include NZ Transport Agency; Ministry of Transport; Ministry of Disabled People - Whaikaha; Department of Internal Affairs; Maritime NZ; National Emergency Management Agency; and the Auckland Emergency Management teams; Auckland Council Disability Advisory Panel; and the communities they represent.
	Continued to work with our Public Transport and Capital Projects Accessibility Groups (PTAG and CPAG) and Auckland Council Disability Advisory Panel to leverage their subject matter expertise.
	In partnership with Kiwi Property and IKEA, identified a number of accessibility challenges related to wayfinding around Sylvia Park precinct (location of first IKEA store in NZ).



Our people and workplace

Upholding an internal culture where delivering a transport system that works for customers with accessible needs is at the heart of our work.

Area of work	Description
Accessibility training and awareness	Review of and adherence to AT’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy and Policy.
	Continued to promote the ‘easy journeys for everyone’ accessibility training module with all staff to support understanding of how customers with accessible needs travel on our network.
	AT is a hearing accredited workplace via The National Foundation for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NZFDHH). This process is intended to identify businesses that “recognise and value deaf and hard of hearing employees and customers.”
Resourcing	AT has maintained staff resourcing focused on accessibility issues. Auckland Council staff also support and contribute to transport accessibility initiatives.
	AT continues to support and resource the Public Transport and Capital Projects Accessibility Groups (PTAG and CPAG). Youth representation will be increased following advocacy to the AT Board.
Our workplace	New bilingual signs installed as part of our recent office refresh at key locations and shared areas in our workplace.





Future Actions – the 2026-29 Plan

The list below includes focus areas for the next period of the Transport Accessibility Action Plan.

Note that some focus areas below are already planned and funded and will be covered as business as usual, while others still need scoping and will need funding/resourcing confirmation in light of local government reform (and may include funding from external partnerships). Some actions stretch beyond the timeframe of this plan and are recorded because we intend to make a start on them or practise continuous improvements.

Planned programme from 2026

Strategic planning and policy development

Set direction and guide transport accessibility through strategy, policy and guidelines.

Area of work	Outline scope
Strategic, policy and guideline development	Include accessibility when developing strategic transport documents, plans, policies and frameworks. Ensure these and other guiding documents meet accessibility needs (website review). Review Auckland Transport Disability Policy (2013) to update and strengthen local government commitment to transport accessibility.
Transport Accessibility Action Plan (this document)	Ongoing source of transport accessibility projects (existing and planned) across Auckland, to be updated every 2-3 years to ensure accountability and continuity of this plan and its actions. Because this 2026 revision intersects with a local government reform, an earlier revision will be needed to allocate roles and responsibilities.
NZ Sign Language Strategy	NZSL is an official language of Aotearoa. Ensuring NZSL access across Auckland local government services strengthens communication, safety, and participation for Deaf Aucklanders. The new national NZSL Strategy directs central government departments to develop guidance for local government regarding NZSL promotion. This guidance will focus local government on how to integrate NZSL into local transport planning and operations. Consider the need to develop a local NZSL Strategy (or at the least, integrate into the Transport Accessibility Action Plan), communications strategies and guidelines and other council plans (NZSL translation of Te Reo Māori is specifically identified as a gap).
NZ Accessibility Charter	Investigate committing to the Accessibility Charter for accessible information. ⁹

⁹ The Accessibility Charter: A commitment to accessible information. - Ministry of Social Development



Monitoring

Monitor progress on transport accessibility to help maintain consistency and momentum, understand progress and hold local government accountable for delivering an accessible transport system.

Area of work	Outline scope
Monitoring framework	Develop a framework to monitor progress on outcomes, compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements, and track delivery of accessibility actions. – Build strong baseline data and collect targeted information to measure progress over time. This could include contract monitoring and reporting, and accessibility audits and assessments focused on disabled and mobility device users, such as the Total Mobility annual survey. – Check that public engagement materials meet accessibility requirements. – Monitor staff awareness and understanding of accessibility requirements and processes. – Embed representation of disabled people throughout planning and design processes. – Gather and use customer feedback and insights are captured to identify improvements across the transport system. – Make this information publicly available in accessible formats. – Develop agreed measures to track accessibility performance, and investigate how we can understand our disabled customers and their travel and access needs better.

Communications

Ensure that customers receive timely information in appropriate format, for planned and unplanned disruptions.

Area of work	Outline scope
Online information	Maintain and update the travel information on the whaikaha accessibility webpage. Pursue other customer communication and interaction tools for example, test digital assistants for accessible journey planning and information.
Public engagements	Ensure that all public engagement materials are provided in accessible formats to enable disabled people to participate fully (website review). Align communications and engagement practice with council accessible communications policy.



Transport service information	Ensure that transport service information is up-to-date, accessible and widely available by using appropriate formats and media including both visual and audio channels.
	Use customer responses/feedback to inform ongoing improvements to service disruption events.
	Continue to develop innovative methods to communicate transport system information – learn from the tactile mapping pilots, continue to utilise and develop our AI tools and learn from overseas examples.
NZ Sign Language	Appropriately respond to central government direction on NZSL (from the NZSL Strategy), as this becomes clearer. Consider the need to develop a local NZSL Strategy.
	Research and pilot NZSL messaging to understand and learn from practical applications. Examples include: safety messaging on rail network – real-time information on AT Mobile app, website and passenger information displays (PIDs) – smart screens with NZSL capability at key facilities to provide accessible real-time information for deaf and hard of hearing customers – explore NZ Relay partnership for NZSL supported calls – explore/research AI-driven voice assistants for multilingual and NZSL support – develop emergency disruptions messaging – NZSL awareness and training for frontline staff.
	Provide the whaikaha accessibility travel information online in NZSL.
Wayfinding/accessible maps	Research latest technology solutions to enable blind/low vision and other customers to successfully navigate around public transport stations and interchanges.
	Pilot 3D tactile mapping for blind/low vision and other customers in key locations. Ensure other important accessibility features such as braille in public lifts.
	Te Reo Māori and NZSL translations in support of wayfinding e.g. tactile map for Waitematā station, noting that this is the first of our wayfinding signs to include Braille Māori alongside the English Braille, and English and Te Reo Māori text.
Emergency management	Disruptions and emergencies disproportionately affect disabled people and require accessible readiness. Climate related events, infrastructure failures and unplanned network changes can remove step free access, disrupt lift availability, and reduce access to information and support – especially for people who rely on mobility devices, support/service dogs and accessible communication formats. Appropriately responding to pending emergency management legislation to ensure that we have a plan, including appropriate capability and facilities, staff training, communication channels and messaging to respond for events such as emergency evacuations so that transport network that remains safe, predictable and usable for everyone, even when the system is under pressure.



Public transport improvements

Ensure the public transport network and services are safe and accessible for everyone.

Area of work	Outline scope
Public transport infrastructure and services	Continue to expand and improve public transport infrastructure and services, as set out in the Regional Public Transport Plan, to deliver safe and accessible transport for everyone. Some upcoming focus areas are: – East Auckland and the Eastern Busway, – network changes because of the city rail link – South Auckland bus networks, as well as other more minor works across the rest of the region – a programme to identify improvements to bus stops near retirement villages. Continue to improve and roll-out accessibility audits (noting this has been an uncompleted action of this plan), aiming to improve end-to-end journeys. Ensure that public transport services meet required standards for accessibility access (as outlined through national requirements and those set out in the Regional Public Transport Plan).
Public transport vehicle and vessel fleet	Continue to explore and develop accessibility enhancements. Continue to rollout new buses with improved accessibility features and retire older buses. All new buses will be compliant with NZTA's Requirements for Urban Buses, and AT's Vehicle Quality Standards. Continue to update the ferry fleet with modern vessels. Maintain de-carbonisation focus and ensure future designs have more flexibility and capability to accommodate commuters with accessibility challenges.
Accessibility representation for public transport improvements	Continue to support engagement with, and accessibility representation through, the Public Transport Accessibility Group (PTAG) and Capital Projects Accessibility Group (CPAG) ensure that disabled people and / or disability agencies are engaged when planning public transport infrastructure and services.



Customer service and public transport operator accessibility training	Work with public transport operators and facilities managers to review and improve accessibility training for drivers, crew and customer-facing staff, including appropriate accessibility assistance, for example training for assist/service dogs and handlers. Continue to require such training in service contracts.
	Continue research into accessible emergency help points, aiming to improve access for everyone.
	Investigate developing initiatives to improve bus accessibility for blind/low vision customers (e.g. 'Catch the Right Bus').
	Continue to include CRM AI analytics for monitoring accessibility issues with the aim of early identification and resolution.
Bus information	Maintain and continue to develop improvements to our bus services such as more braille signage across the network and investigating ways to include NZ Sign Language onboard buses.
Total Mobility	Continue to support the Total Mobility scheme and provide concession fares on public transport services for card holders. The Ministry of Transport is progressing a review of the national scheme, including changes to fare and subsidy caps that will impact councils and customers. Local government will monitor national decisions and prepare for any required adjustments to service delivery, funding arrangements and customer information once final settings are confirmed.
	Work towards ensuring that all drivers of Total Mobility services can provide adequate and appropriate assistance to disabled people.
	Conduct and report on the annual survey of Total Mobility users.
Ticketing and concessions	Ongoing review of fares, concessions and eligibility for accessible concession for equity and accessibility.
	Improve concessions process to support accessibility
	Ensure that the National Ticketing Scheme integrates concessions for seniors, disabled passengers and caregivers.
PlusOne concession	Continue to support PlusOne concessions on the bus network. Develop a technical solution to extend concession to rail and ferry.



New and improvements to infrastructure

Ensure that new infrastructure is accessible for everyone and that improvements to the transport network result in it being increasingly accessible.

Area of work	Outline scope
Design standards and guidelines	Continue to review and refine transport accessibility in transport design including working towards nationally consistent standards i.e. infrastructure, vehicles and vessels. Investigate international examples of inclusive transport technology, such as smart screens, with a view to developing and adopting these.
Design and delivery	Continue to support engagement with and accessibility representation through the Capital Projects Accessibility Group (CPAG) and ensure that disabled people and/or disability agencies are consulted when planning infrastructure improvements. Develop whole of journey, or 'door-to-door' accessibility audits, for all modes over time. Establish ongoing resourcing for a prioritised network-wide programme. Embed accessibility needs in work programmes, for example safety and engineering improvements, maintenance and renewals, and comprehensive parking management plans.
Mobility parking	Continue to design and provide for mobility parking as part of public carparking, as set out in the Building Code and NZS 4121. Develop guidance for providing on-street mobility parking. Continue reviewing mobility parking provision through localised comprehensive parking management plans and as part of operational reviews. Investigate standard use of blue paint to signal mobility parking.



Transport system management

Ensure accessibility is embedded into transport system operations.

Area of work	Outline scope
Public transport operations	Review existing public transport operators' contract requirements and current approaches to monitoring accessibility obligations, particularly for assist service dogs and handlers and customers with accessibility needs to identify and address gaps or areas for improvement.
Transport accessibility training	Assess current specialist training for staff involved in transport accessibility planning, design and operations. Take action to address identified capability gaps, including for transport service operators and frontline staff.
Planned public transport network disruptions	Continuously improve accessible alternatives during planned rail closures, bus and ferry disruptions.
Internet and Wi-Fi Access	Investigate Wi-Fi and internet access at public transport facilities to enable accessibility apps.
Harness evolving technology	Utilise evolving technology and data to assist with challenges to accessibility. Develop systems and solutions such as accessible apps for customer interface.
	Utilised evolving technology e.g. continuing to develop AI tool for analysis of customer feedback, potential to use technology to analyse infrastructure for preventative maintenance and for accessibility and safety improvements.
	Continue to explore and deploy accessibility use cases for CCTV/computer vision technology, for example detecting mobility aids to trigger the need for accessibility support and identifying near misses between people with mobility aids/elderly and electric scooters/cars to inform safety interventions/advocacy.
Network safety focus on e-scooters	Pursue better regulation of e-scooter rideshare operations, specifically to address inconvenient footpath parking.



Response to pending emergency management legislation	Appropriately respond to pending emergency management legislation by providing accessibility solutions for emergency events such as communication and evacuation plans. This will require planning and operational input as well as supporting initiatives. Actions will range from high-level emergency planning to operational measures such as staff training on how to assist during emergencies, and trials such as stair-climbing chairs and portable evacuation sled for multi-level stations. Take lessons from international experience, particularly Australia's disability-inclusive emergency management framework. Investigate other innovations and improvements to assist with developing accessible transport needs in cases where public transport is not an option (noting that we aim to make public transport accessible for everyone). For example, ways to mobilise Total Mobility services in emergency situations.
Supporting wheelchair accessible vehicles	Investigating solutions to overcome limited fleet capability for larger mobility devices. This is important for day-to-day accessibility and to ensure that local government is prepared to respond to evacuations during emergency situations (as likely to be required through pending legislation). Continue to administrate a grant to help support increased provision of wheelchair accessible vehicles.
Procurement	Embed accessibility, as appropriate, into procurement requirements and contract clauses for suppliers, operators and contractors.

Working with others

Collaborate with others including central and local government agencies and those with lived experience such as accessibility representatives to improve regulations and to help build and learn from best practise.

Area of work	Outline scope
Collaborating with others to improve accessibility outcomes	Harness value and efficiencies in collaboration on projects, for example projects that deliver wellbeing outcomes across multiple areas such as access, improved wellbeing for Māori and older people, learning from NZSL-supported travel pilots, and emergency planning. Collaborate with central government, local government and disability agencies to develop disability support/service dogs training materials and dog handler identification. Continue to support accessibility representation through the Public Transport and Capital Projects Accessibility Groups (PTAG and CPAG).



Our people and workplace

Upholding an internal culture where delivering a transport system that works for customers with accessible needs is at the heart of our work.

Area of work	Outline scope
Accessibility training and awareness	Continue to promote accessible ways of working and communicating (e.g. accessible documents), our disability policies and the “easy journeys for everyone” accessibility training module with all staff. Continue to develop and promote awareness and training for our people in providing for transport accessibility. Adhere to our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy and Policy, ensure it remains up-to-date. Investigate the Accessibility Tick programme to help local government become more accessible and inclusive of disabled and neurodivergent people. Explore staff training for basic NZSL.
Resourcing	Ensure adequate resourcing for transport accessibility planning, design, delivery and operations. Ensure resource for continued research and innovation for accessibility pilot and trials. Include partnering supports and collaboration with external stakeholders. Maintain a network of accessibility champions and ensure that these roles are recognised through key mechanisms such as the Enterprise Business Plan. Continue to support the Public Transport Accessibility Group (PTAG) and Capital Projects Accessibility Groups (CPAG). Increase youth representation.
Our workplace	Ensure best practice in providing an accessible workplace environment.



Where will we be in three years?

This action plan will not deliver a fully accessible transport system for every customer across Auckland. However, the work already undertaken alongside the actions in this plan will contribute to a more accessible network and support safe, seamless journeys for everyone.

By implementing the action plan, we will continue to work towards:

- achieving accessibility targets across 99 percent of the public transport fleet
- increasing options for access to public transport, for example the first and last part of a journey, with increased consideration for accessibility
- major interchanges, ferry terminals and train stations are constructed to incorporate full accessibility
- audits of the transport system identify the gaps in accessibility on the network

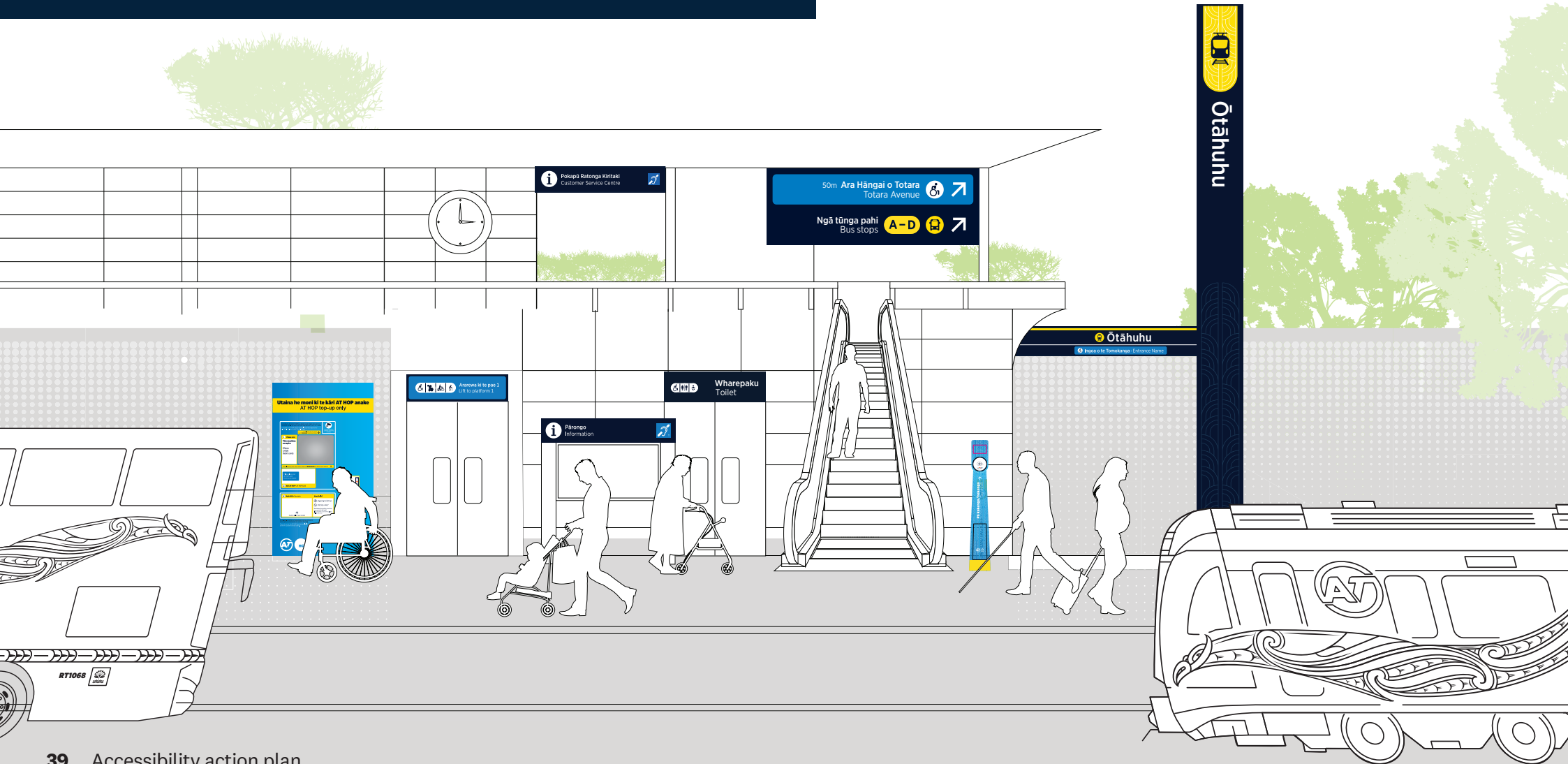
- continued engagement with accessibility advocacy groups ensures that accessibility concerns are identified early and built into the transport system
- delivering a transport system that works for customers with accessible needs is at the heart of our work
- customer information is more accessible to the full community, such as the roll-out of more audio announcements on buses
- resilience planning for transport network and systems operations, particularly for disruptions to services.

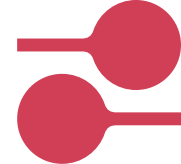
Beyond these improvements, the challenge will be to ensure that local government staff remain aware and responsive (in their work) to the fact that each journey is accessible only when all component parts are accessible.





While Auckland Council intends to continue to progress and implement improved accessibility for all customers across all modes and infrastructure touchpoints towards a vision of full accessibility, this is dependent on funding. We will continue to work with our funding agencies, so that we can incorporate these accessibility goals across all projects.





Appendix 1 – Global Policy Context

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)

Article 9 – Accessibility

1. To enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas. These measures, which shall include the identification and elimination of obstacles and barriers to accessibility, shall apply to, inter alia:

- (a) Buildings, roads, transportation and other indoor and outdoor facilities, including schools, housing, medical facilities, and workplaces
- (b) Information, communications and other services, including electronic services and emergency services.

2. States Parties shall also take appropriate measures:

- (a) To develop, promulgate and monitor the implementation of minimum standards and guidelines for the accessibility of facilities and services open or provided to the public
- (b) To ensure that private entities that offer facilities and services which are open or provided to the public take into account all aspects of accessibility for persons with disabilities
- (c) To provide training for stakeholders on accessibility issues facing persons with disabilities
- (d) To provide in buildings and other facilities open to the public signage in Braille and in easy to read and understand forms
- (e) To provide forms of live assistance and intermediaries, including guides, readers, and professional sign language interpreters, to facilitate accessibility to buildings and other facilities open to the public

- (f) To promote other appropriate forms of assistance and support to persons with disabilities to ensure their access to information
- (g) To promote access for persons with disabilities to new information and communications technologies and systems, including the Internet
- (h) To promote the design, development, production and distribution of accessible information and communications technologies and systems at an early stage, so that these technologies and systems become accessible at minimum cost.

Appendix 2 – Aotearoa New Zealand Policy Context

New Zealand Human Rights Act (1993)

Section 42 – Access by the public to places, vehicles, and facilities

(1) It shall be unlawful for any person —

- (a) to refuse to allow any other person access to or use of any place or vehicle which members of the public are entitled or allowed to enter or use; or
- (b) to refuse any other person the use of any facilities in that place or vehicle which are available to members of the public; or
- (c) to require any other person to leave or cease to use that place or vehicle or those facilities — by reason of any of the prohibited grounds of discrimination.

(2) In this section, the term vehicle includes a vessel, an aircraft, or a hovercraft.

Human Rights Commission (2005)

While this inquiry is from over 20 years ago, it is still relevant, in that the issues identified have not all been addressed. The Human Rights Commission (HRC) had six major findings about transport accessibility in Aotearoa New Zealand ¹⁰:

1. The transport system is systematically inaccessible

Disabled people face barriers across the entire journey—from home and footpaths to stops, vehicles, and interchanges. Failure at any one point can prevent travel altogether, leading to exclusion from everyday activities.

2. Inaccessibility breaches human rights and causes harm

Inaccessible transport restricts freedom of movement, contributes to social isolation, and limits access to work, education, healthcare, and community life, resulting in clear human rights impacts.

3. Responsibilities are unclear and fragmented

Multiple agencies share transport roles, but no single body is accountable for accessibility outcomes. This fragmentation prolonged inaccessibility and limited effective avenues for redress.

4. There were no national accessibility standards

New Zealand lacked mandatory national standards for accessible infrastructure, vehicles, staff training, and key design elements, leading to inconsistent practice and reliance on overseas standards.

5. Regulatory enforcement was weak

Regulatory and oversight arrangements did not consistently require, monitor, or enforce accessibility, despite obligations under the Human Rights Act.

6. The Total Mobility Scheme required major improvement

While essential, the scheme suffered from inconsistent service quality, training gaps, affordability issues, wheelchair limitations, and regional variation, and was not meeting user needs.

Overall conclusion

The HRC found New Zealand's transport system was not accessible, equitable, or human-rights-compliant, and that systemic reform—covering standards, funding, accountability, and training—was necessary.

¹⁰ tikatangata.org.nz/our-work/inquiry-into-accessible-transport



The New Zealand Disability Strategy 2026-2030

Our national Disability Strategy has a vision for New Zealand to be an equitable and accessible place for all disabled people and their whānau – where disabled people thrive, contribute, and choose the lives they want to lead.

It sets out principles or key values that make sure the strategy reflects the things that are important to disabled people:

- Accessibility
- Self-determination
- Upholding equity, culture and identity
- Participation and inclusion
- Respect and dignity

The vision and principles are designed to guide all work by government agencies.

Accessibility is considered to be a ‘common thread’. Accessible transport is essential for participation in all aspects of society, particularly housing, employment, education and health. Access to transport information and advice is an important aspect of accessibility.

The New Zealand Disability Action Plan

This Action Plan is the delivery mechanism for the Strategy. It contributes to the Auckland Plan 2050 Transport and Access outcome: For Auckland to be a truly accessible city we also need to make sure that people of all ages and abilities, including people with reduced mobility levels, can go about their daily lives and get from one place to another easily, affordably and safely. This means tailoring the way infrastructure and services are provided so they meet the wide range of Aucklanders’ needs.

New Zealand Sign Language Strategy (2026-2036)

New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) is one of New Zealand’s official languages. This strategy outlines the changes needed to ensure that Deaf people and others can learn, access, and use NZSL. Learning and using NZSL is important if Deaf people and NZSL users are to have equal opportunities in areas like health, education, and employment. It is also important for supporting Deaf people to foster Deaf identity.

The NZSL Strategy directs central government departments to develop guidance for local government regarding NZSL promotion. This guidance will focus local government on how to integrate NZSL into local transport planning and operations.

Local government is encouraged to improve NZSL access through principles of the New Zealand Sign Language Act (2006):

- NZSL should be used in the promotion of government services, and in the provision of information, to the public
- Government services and information should be made accessible to the Deaf community using appropriate means, such as NZSL.



Appendix 3 – Auckland Regional Policy Context

Auckland Transport Disability Policy (2013)

Auckland Transport recognises the need to take specific actions to ensure that the transport system provides for the needs of people with disabilities.

Actions

In undertaking its functions and duties, Auckland Transport will:

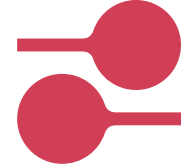
- Endorse the concept of the accessible journey as key to integrated planning for transport infrastructure and public transport services.
- In accordance with the principles set out in the Transport Design Manual take steps to ensure the transport network is safe and accessible for all users by designing, building, and maintaining infrastructure (including roads, footpaths, stations, interchanges and buildings) to ensure that all transport users have equal opportunities to travel.
- Continue to support consultation through the Public Transport Accessibility Group (PTAG) and Capital Projects Accessibility Group (CPAG) and ensure that disabled people and / or disability agencies are consulted either through these groups or directly when planning public transport infrastructure and services, and work with them to identify and resolve accessibility and safety issues.
- Ensure that all public consultation documents are provided in accessible formats to enable disabled people to participate fully.
- Identify target groups and areas where service and infrastructure planning can help people with disabilities and specify services (or specific elements of services) that must be operated by accessible vehicles, as stated in the Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP).
- Conduct an accessibility audit when public transport routes are reviewed or redesigned, to include infrastructure and walking access, to identify any accessibility shortfall and recommend areas for improvement as part of overall network design, and to ensure that information is provided before changes are implemented.
- As set out in the RPTP, ensure that public transport vehicles and vessels meet required standards for disability access in compliance with Transport Agency Requirements for Urban Buses, AT standards for ferries and AT's train – Technical Specifications.
- Ensure that service information is accessible and widely available by using appropriate formats and media including both visual and audio channels.
- Specifically consider the information needs of disabled people when network changes are proposed and implemented and when new infrastructure is provided or when improvements or changes to existing infrastructure are proposed.
- Continue to support the Total Mobility scheme and ensure that all drivers on Total Mobility services have specialist training in order to provide adequate and appropriate assistance to disabled people.
- Provide concession fares on public transport services for Total Mobility card holders.

As stated in the Regional Public Transport Plan, work with operators and Auckland Transport facilities managers to ensure that training for drivers, crew, and other staff in contact with the public includes appropriate assistance for disabled people and continue to require such training as a condition of contract.

Auckland Plan 2050

This is Auckland's 30-year spatial plan and the primary strategic framework guiding transport accessibility responsibilities.

It commits to ensuring that all Aucklanders—particularly disabled people and older adults—can participate fully in society by removing physical, sensory, communication and cultural barriers across the region.



Through its Belonging and Participation, Homes and Places, and Transport and Access outcomes, the plan requires an inclusive, safe and sustainable transport system that enables independent mobility, embeds universal design in all public spaces and infrastructure, and ensures community facilities and services are accessible and responsive to diverse needs.

The plan also emphasises preparing for Auckland's ageing and increasingly diverse population, requiring proactive planning for accessible journeys and supportive environments across new growth areas.

Auckland Council's Ngā Hapori Momoho: Thriving Communities Strategy 2022-2032

Ngā Hapori Momoho | Thriving Communities Strategy is Auckland Council's community wellbeing strategy to support all communities to thrive. Its vision is for "a fairer, more sustainable Tāmaki Makaurau where every Aucklanders belongs".

The strategy responds to the three most significant challenges facing Auckland's community.

These are:

- growing wealth and income inequality, which makes it difficult for some whānau to thrive
- the speed and amount of growth and social change, which could make our community feel disconnected
- our changing climate, which will make outcomes worse for those communities already struggling.

The strategy sets out the things we need to focus on over the next 10 years, to ensure all our communities can thrive, now and into the future.

It recognises that Tāmaki Makaurau cannot thrive unless all Aucklanders can meaningfully participate. Being able to participate in community and civic life promotes a sense of belonging and improves health and wellbeing. The strategy identifies that creating an inclusive and accessible public transport system is a key enabler of participation, ensuring people can get to where they need to go easily and safely.

Nested within or aligned to Ngā Hapori Momoho: Thriving Communities Strategy are Auckland's Disability Action Plan and the Age-friendly Auckland Action Plan.

Auckland's Disability Action Plan

Auckland Council's Disability Action Plan aims to improve outcomes from disabled people in Auckland, as well as families, older people and visitors.

This plan outlines practical, achievable actions that the council whānau can deliver to create a more inclusive and accessible Tāmaki Makaurau, including a domain focussed on transport accessibility.

Age-friendly Auckland Action Plan

The Age-friendly Auckland Action Plan was created to respond to the needs of our growing and increasingly diverse population of older Aucklanders.

This plan supports the collaboration between the Auckland Council, aged-sector organisations, and our communities to ensure Tāmaki Makaurau is age-friendly and inclusive.

With respect to transport, it promotes accessible and affordable transport as being key to ensuring Auckland's older population can age actively and remain engaged with the community, with access to health and social facilities.

Auckland Transport Equity Framework (2024)

The Equity Framework focuses on addressing transport inequities, including addressing gaps in the transport system for universal access. It includes an objective to "Work towards a network where anyone, regardless of age or ability, can go safely from A to B without inconvenience or barriers, and with dignity." It sets out interventions and specifies indicators for accessibility monitoring.

Auckland's Local Government Support of Disability Assist Dogs and Their Handlers

Under the Dog Control Act, Disability Assist Dogs are legally entitled to enter all public places and public transport when supporting a disabled person. These dogs are certified by approved organisations. Councils and transport providers must ensure policies and practices protect their access rights and enable safe, barrier-free travel at all times¹¹.

¹¹ dia.govt.nz/Dog-Control-Disability-Assists-Dogs

