

Future Connect

Frequently Asked Questions

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Answers

1. What is Future Connect?

Future Connect contributes to planning and investment decisions by looking at the problems and opportunities facing the transport system in Auckland. Future Connect has the following main outputs:

- a) **A network plan.** Future Connect is a 10-year network plan (building towards a 30-year outlook) for Auckland's integrated transport system, which sets out:
 - Strategic Networks – the most critical links for the movement of goods and people for all modes of transport.
 - Transport System Analysis – key issues for all modes and three overarching problems (safety, environment and equity). Future Connect uses current and forecast indicators to find out what's deficient now and where things might get worse.

- Focus Areas – a summarised map showing Auckland’s key challenges over the next 10 years at a whole-of-region level.
- b) **An Auckland Regional Transport Strategic Case.** A strategic assessment of ‘big picture’ problems facing Auckland’s transport system and setting out the context and investment story to inform future business cases.

2. What’s new in Future Connect 2026?

Future Connect was first published in 2021 and is updated every three years to keep pace with changes across Auckland’s transport network. This latest update covers the period 2026-2037.

- **Strategic Networks** have been updated to reflect recently delivered projects, refinements of plans (e.g. business case development), and new plans. They show an increasingly complex network, with a small number of roads being important for a wide range of modes.

Transport System Analysis has been updated with new data and improved indicators to understand where transport challenges currently exist and where they may emerge in the future. The environmental analysis has been strengthened in this update, with new indicators covering flooding, coastal hazards and heat stress.

- **Focus Areas** have been restructured away from a GIS-generated summary of the Transport System Analysis and offer a higher-level summary of four key challenges that need some form of intervention. These include growth pressures on key travel corridors, streets that need to balance multiple transport modes, major destinations with complex travel demands, and areas experiencing transport disadvantage. Outputs remain similar to those included in the previous 2023 version of Future Connect.

3. How will it guide what Auckland Council does? How do I use it?

Future Connect has been developed to provide strategic guidance for Auckland Council (AC) as well as partners and stakeholders. It is the core planning reference for our Strategic Networks and provides evidence-based analysis of the problems facing the transport system.

Future Connect maps deficiencies on the Strategic Networks to support strategic decision-making and help coordinate multi-modal service delivery. This system planning tool is used in various contexts, including supporting investment planning, investigations, design, operations, maintenance, land use integration and spatial planning.

Future Connect's use is encouraged for all those involved in the development of Auckland, including the wider Auckland Council family, Central Government agencies, private developers and industry. The Mapping Portal provides an interactive mapping system to view the key outputs. This core planning reference will be useful when planning and prioritising projects, plans, and strategies, to understand where each mode is important and where the most critical problems are. For example, the Mapping Portal will be useful for property developers as an input to plans for new developments, or for freight companies to understand where the Freight Strategic Network and overweight/over dimension routes are.

4. What does Future Connect mean for the RLTP and business cases?

The Auckland Regional Transport Strategic Case sets out the context for the [Regional Land Transport Plan 2024-2034 \(RLTP\)](#), our 10-year investment programme. It has not been updated as part of Future Connect 2026, but still provides a good strategic assessment of problems facing Auckland's transport system, and the rationale for future transport investment. The Strategic Case will better guide investment and delivery decisions and streamline future business cases by minimising the foundation work required for new projects that come out of the RLTP programme. For example, the Investment Logic Map, context and strategic assessment should be carried through to subsequent business cases where applicable.

5. How will it contribute to our climate change and safety objectives?

Future Connect looks at the problems on our Strategic Networks and has highlighted climate change as a key problem, as transport contributes to harmful emissions and is itself increasingly susceptible to the impacts of climate change. Improving resilience and sustainability of the transport system is therefore a Future Connect objective to guide us toward success.

This is supported by the Deficiency Mapping, which outlines the main locations expected to be impacted by climate change in the next decade. This information provides a good understanding of the problem, which will help prioritise areas for targeted action and provide supporting evidence for future planning and investigation.

Future Connect also supports decarbonisation by identifying and mapping the barriers to competitive travel options across the transport system (i.e. parts of the Walking, Cycle & Micromobility and Public Transport Strategic Networks that are insufficient or underperforming and therefore hindering mode shift). ‘Safety’ is another key problem as the transport system is becoming increasingly harmful.

This, too, is supported by the Deficiency Mapping, which includes safety data on our transport networks. Eliminating harm to people is also a Future Connect objective, which supports [Vision Zero](#).

6. What is the Transport Equity Analysis?

The Transport Equity Analysis measures how transport outcomes are distributed across the region. It is aligned with the [Transport Equity Framework \(TEF\)](#), which defines Auckland’s transport equity problems and outcomes. Future Connect measures equity outcomes across three domains:

- **Local Access** – measures the quality of local infrastructure and the distance to key destinations (PT Stops, schools, shops, etc.),
- **Regional Access** – measures access to employment and population across the region,
- **Transport System Disbenefits** – measures negative transport impacts such as safety, noise and severance.

The analysis identifies communities of high socioeconomic deprivation with comparatively poor outcomes across those domains. People in these areas face significant transport barriers that they may be unable to overcome. However, not all areas of high deprivation have poor transport outcomes, and poor transport outcomes do not only occur in areas of high deprivation.

7. How has Auckland’s growth been incorporated / examined?

The First Decade Strategic Networks include changes required to support growth, and approved or funded infrastructure to be implemented over the next 10 years (to

2034). Ultimately, Future Connect will provide a 30-year view and incorporate future growth in Auckland in each decade. To understand where there may be issues impacting the transport system in the future, we used modelled data from the Auckland Forecasting Centre to predict future trip changes, based on assumptions for transport (i.e. RLTP 2034). Future Connect also aligns with the emerging networks being developed by [Te Tupu Ngātahi \(Supporting Growth\)](#).

8. How does it deal with future uncertainties?

Future Connect provides a snapshot of the current network and the planned future state. None of these are ever fixed. New infrastructure gets delivered, and future plans can change for a wide range of reasons. Ever changing circumstances, require us to be agile in the way we plan for the future. Future Connect therefore has a change management process to keep networks up to date, and AC will continuously work with partners and stakeholders to adapt to the changing transport landscape.

9. How are modes prioritised? Are modes prioritised in Future Connect?

All modes have a role in the movement of people and goods in Auckland, and no one mode is more important than any other at a regional network level, although shifting towards sustainable modes is a key priority. Future Connect identifies the Strategic Networks for each mode across the entire transport system, which provides the context for further decisions about modal priorities.

The [Roads and Streets Framework \(RASf\)](#) identifies the modal priorities for individual roads and streets and is guided by the Strategic Networks. Some corridors may have multiple Strategic Networks but limited space to provide for all modes. Modal priority assessments (part of the RASf assessment) help guide street design and allow designers to understand how and where trade-offs between modes are acceptable (if needed). Conflicts between modes may also need to be resolved through changes to the overall integrated transport network.

10. How do the Strategic Networks translate to infrastructure?

The Strategic Networks outline our most important links for each mode and where higher levels of service for a mode are needed. However, the Strategic Networks do not necessarily indicate the delivery of dedicated infrastructure. The funding and programming of project infrastructure is determined through the RLTP and delivery

programmes. There are other tools we use to guide decisions that translate strategy into infrastructure on our roads and streets, including:

- The [Roads and Streets Framework \(RASF\)](#), which determines the modal priorities on a street that informs the design process.
- The [Transport Design Manual \(TDM\)](#), which provides advice, design standards and a process for approving designs. The outputs from Future Connect, RASF and TDM guide project teams throughout project development; however, none of these documents predetermine the design of infrastructure.

In many situations, dedicated infrastructure is not required to provide for the needs of the Strategic Networks. For example, kerbside lanes can be used for parking and public transport priority at different times of day.

11. How will improvements in transport be funded and prioritised for delivery?

The key outputs of Future Connect help guide funding and implementation decisions, but it is not an investment plan – that is the role of the [RLTP](#). Future Connect has analysed the transport system to find the most critical spots on the network. This helps guide investment prioritisation, but does not indicate the order of project implementation. The RLTP process, including public consultation, makes the decisions around funding and when projects will be delivered.

12. When will the public be able to have their say on planned infrastructure that may result from the Future Connect Strategic Networks?

The public has an opportunity to have their say on infrastructure as projects reach design stage and go to public consultation. Consultation is also conducted for business cases related to the Strategic Networks or infrastructure.

13. What does Future Connect not do?

- Provide a full ‘answer’ to all our transport planning issues – it does not replace further thinking
- Prioritise projects or allocate funding (this is the role of the RLTP)
- Prioritise modes or reallocate road space (that is the role of the RASF and the TDM)

- Propose solutions to problems
- Identify problems or opportunities on supporting network links (e.g. Connector services that connect to the Rapid Transit Network/Frequent Transit Network, over dimension freight routes, or park pathways)
- Plan journeys
- Provide an implementation plan