

Future Connect 2026 Plan

Main Report



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About this report

He kōrero mō tēnei pūrongo

This report summarises the key outputs of Future Connect 2026.

Future Connect was first published in 2021 and receives a major update every three years.

These updates involve a full refresh of Future Connect's three main outputs: the Strategic Networks, System Analysis and Focus Areas.

We've incorporated newer, better data, as well as feedback from our users, which has allowed us to make big improvements to the platform.

This version now covers the period from 2026-2037, and will provide strategic guidance in the development of the upcoming Regional Land Transport Plan 2027-2037.



Our approach to integrated network planning

Te ara ka whāia e mātou ki te whakamahere i te whatunga tōpū

Aucklanders travel around the region in increasingly diverse ways. They walk, cycle, scoot, take public transport, drive their cars, or move around goods. This means our road space is in demand, and a lot could be happening within a limited space.

With Auckland expected to grow by another 200,000 people over the next decade, the competing demand for road space is likely to intensify.

We therefore need to ensure that all travel choices are available and work together, so people can make safe and easy journeys; no matter how they choose to travel.

Future Connect is our plan to make this happen. Developed in partnership with Auckland Transport and New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi, it provides direction for how we plan, fund, deliver and operate our network.

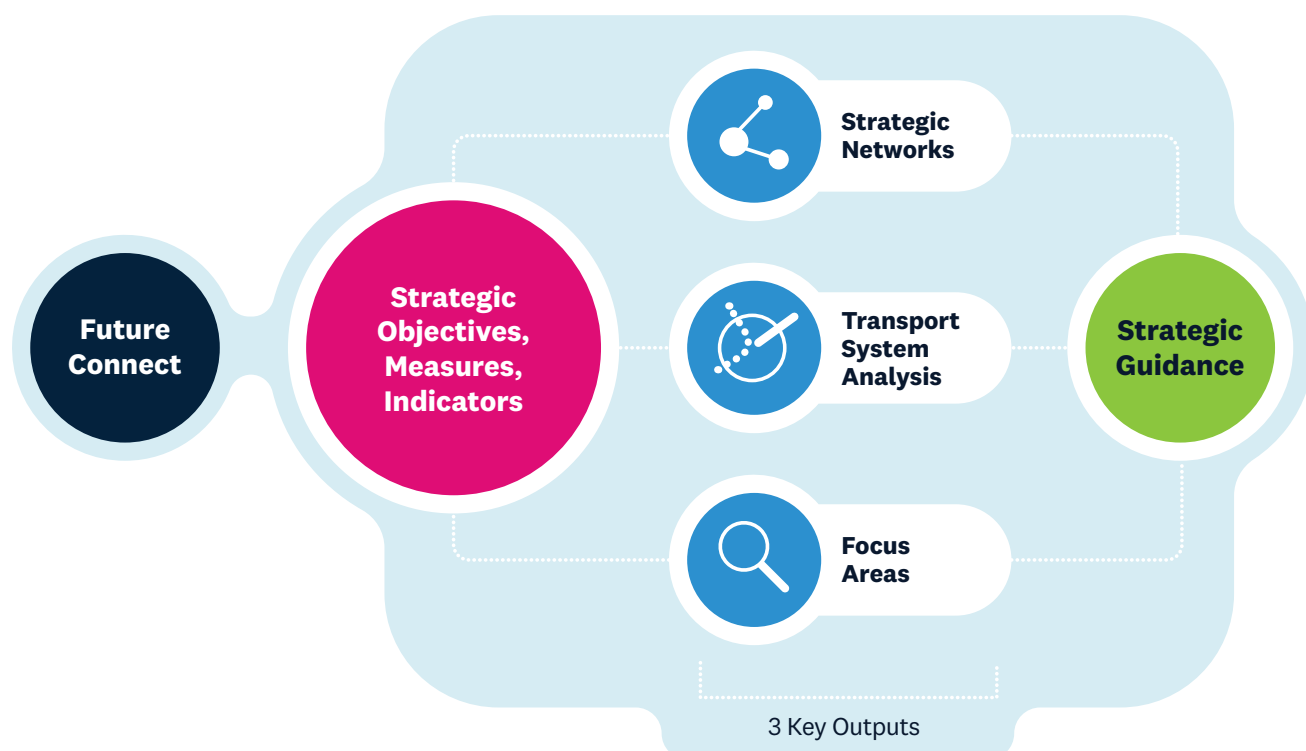
What is the purpose of Future Connect?

Future Connect is a 10-year system planning tool for Auckland's transport network. It brings all travel choices (called transport modes) together into an integrated system. Planning for all modes allows us to make better use of existing infrastructure, plan

integrated solutions and ensure we take a 'dig-once' approach.

What does Future Connect include?

Future Connect has three key outputs. It maps the most important links for all transport modes: our Strategic Networks. These are the network links that are most critical to the movement of people, goods and services across the region. The Strategic Networks include two time periods (Current and First Decade) and provide a core planning reference for everyone working to improve Auckland's transport network.



Future Connect then uses a data-driven **Transport System Analysis**, to find deficiencies and opportunities expected on our Strategic Networks in the next decade. The most critical locations, where multiple deficiencies overlap, inform our map of **Transport Focus Areas**. These are Auckland's key challenges that require further investigation and investment.

These three key outputs provide strategic guidance for the development of our investment plan, the Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP), and form a shared evidence base for programmes and projects developed and delivered by Council, our partners and stakeholders.

The three key outputs can be accessed through the **Future Connect Mapping Portal**

For more information visit:
AT.govt.nz/futureconnect



Where does Future Connect fit in?

Ki hea a Future Connect noho ai?

Future Connect builds on, and adds more detail to The Auckland Plan: Auckland Council's united vision for Auckland. It seeks integrated outcomes for the region over the long term, including strategic directions for transport. These are incorporated in Future Connect.

Future Connect and the RLTP

Future Connect is developed together with the Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP) and Future Development Strategy (FDS) with mode or issue-specific strategies such as the Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP).

Future Connect and the RLTP work together as a single plan. Future Connect is the network plan, which provides a vision and overview of Auckland's transport challenges. However, Future Connect does not propose solutions. That is the role of the RLTP, our 10-year investment

plan. It takes the system needs and evidence surfaced by Future Connect and proposes solutions where funding allows.

The FDS sets out how and where Auckland will grow over the next 30 years, providing the spatial framework that the RLTP uses to align transport investment with future demand. The RPTP supports this by setting out the public transport network and service approach needed in these areas.

Future Connect, the FDS, RPTP and RLTP all interface with each other, to ensure we're all working towards the same future vision.

Other plans and strategies

A range of plans and strategies support the planning, funding, delivery and operation of Auckland's transport system. Future Connect works hand in hand with a number of these,

most notably the Roads and Streets Framework (RASf) and the Auckland Network Operating Plan (ANOP).

Future Connect and the RASf are two system planning tools and each tool guides the other. The RASf provides bottom-up guidance for the development of individual roads and streets. It decides on modal priorities based on Future Connect, and also ensures the importance of 'Place' is considered by projects.

Future Connect follows a top-down approach and sets a vision for the full transport network, not just individual streets.

The ANOP is our plan for operating the network at different times of day for different modes. It builds on Future Connect and the RASf, ensuring strategy guides how we operate the network today.





What it means that this document has been approved for retention by Auckland Council

Status of this document

On 6 May 2026, the New Zealand Government passed the Local Government (Auckland Council) (Transport Governance) Amendment Act. This legislation changed transport decision-making and responsibility for Auckland.

As part of this legislation, Auckland Council was required to review all transport-related and in-force Auckland Transport policies and plans to decide whether to retain, amend or revoke the policy or plan.

On 21 September 2026, Auckland Council approved the retention and transfer of this document to the council. In accordance with the Act, the document continues in effect until it is reviewed, replaced, or revoked.

This document remains in effect but should be considered alongside Auckland Council's current strategic direction and statutory transport planning requirements.

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 now 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. The Asset Class Management Plan – Bus was prepared under previous governance arrangements. While it remains in effect, the way it should be interpreted and applied, and its relationship with the broader framework today may differ from how it was originally intended. To ensure accurate interpretation, advice should be sought jointly from Auckland Council's Group Strategy and Transport Policy functions.

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.

By retaining this document, the Governing Body confirmed that it remains 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.

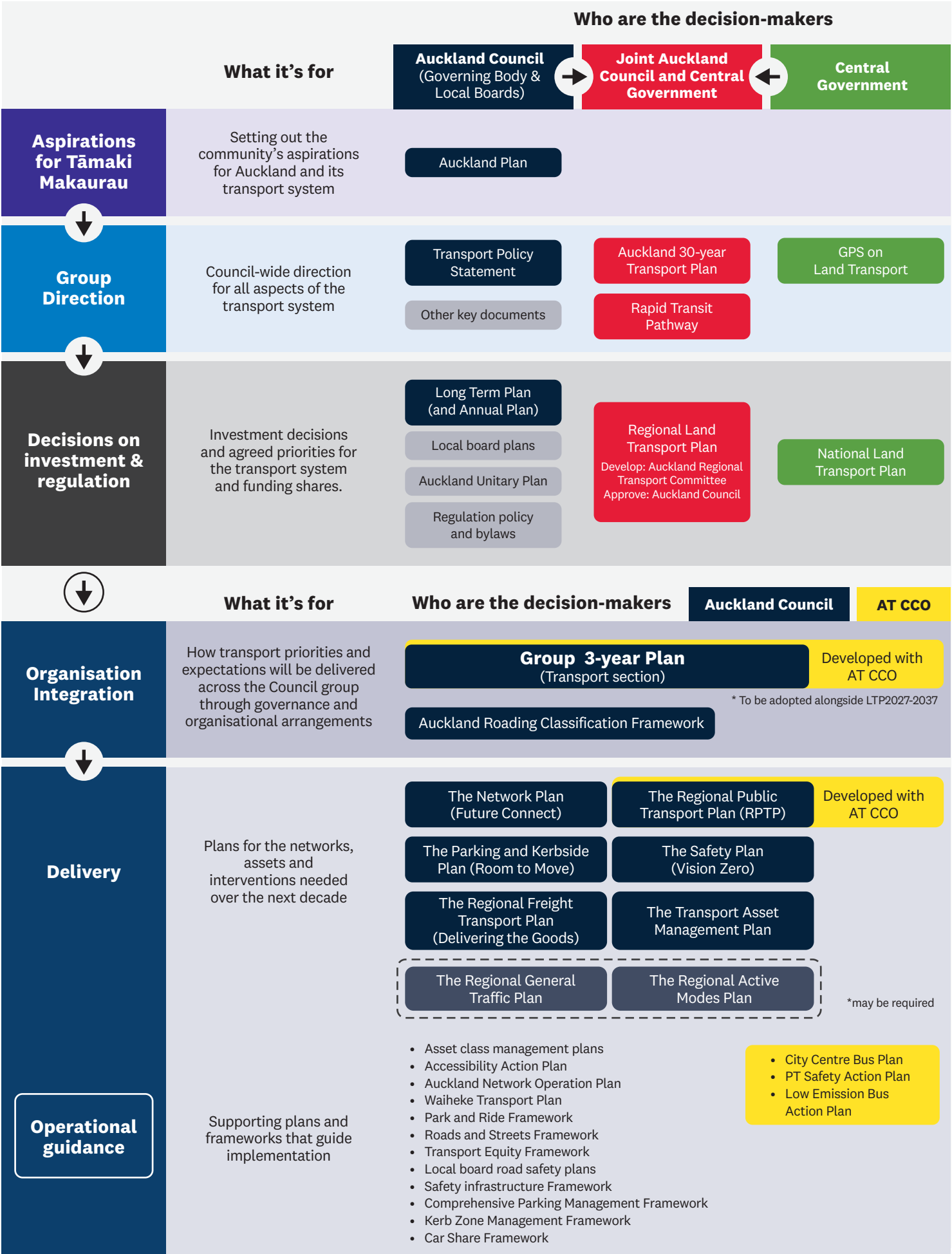
Where local boards are responsible for decisions covered by this document, they should take it into account when making those decisions. The document does not change or limit local board decision-making powers.



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.



Who is it for and how will it affect me?

Mā wai tēnei, ā, ka pēhea tana pā mai ki a au?

Future Connect is a core planning resource for people working on, or interested in, Auckland's transport system. It is used extensively within Council and Auckland Transport, but the Mapping Portal and supporting documentation is also available to the public.

Its 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.

Future Connect does not affect Aucklanders immediately as it is a tool to guide planning and investment. It sets direction for Auckland's integrated transport system. However, no new projects are proposed as part of Future Connect.

The plan is owned by the Integrated Network Planning Team at Auckland Council, and will be updated regularly.

Networks are updated every six months, and the full suite of outputs are updated every three years ahead of the development of the RLTP.

More Information about Future Connect, including access to the Mapping Portal, can be found at **AT.govt.nz/FutureConnect**



Auckland's Strategic Networks

Ngā whatunga rautaki o Tāmaki Makaurau

All modes have a role to play in the movement of people, goods and services around Auckland. In order to unlock their full potential, it is essential that each modal network does not just work on its own, but is integrated with the other networks to develop a coherent system.

Future Connect is the tool that allows us to plan that system. It identifies the most important links for each mode. We call these our Strategic Networks.

One system integrated

Public Transport

General Traffic

Freight

Cycle & Micromobility

Walking

Land use/Place



The Strategic Networks are:

- The **most critical links** for movement of people, goods and services, that are to be managed as part of an integrated multi-modal network
- Key connections with **important regional activity** and a **high volume of users** linking sub regions and key centres with other parts of New Zealand
- The **backbone** of the transport system, providing safe, efficient and reliable movement of people, goods and services across the region

Providers of easy **whole-of-trip** journeys for customers.

The Strategic Networks guide potential solutions for a corridor, but do not always indicate dedicated infrastructure is currently present, or required in the future. If strategic issues are flagged by Future Connect's Transport System Analysis, infrastructure solutions to problems may be proposed by the RLTP.

Development of the networks

Te whanaketanga o ngā whatunga

The Strategic Networks were developed by bringing together various mode-specific network plans.

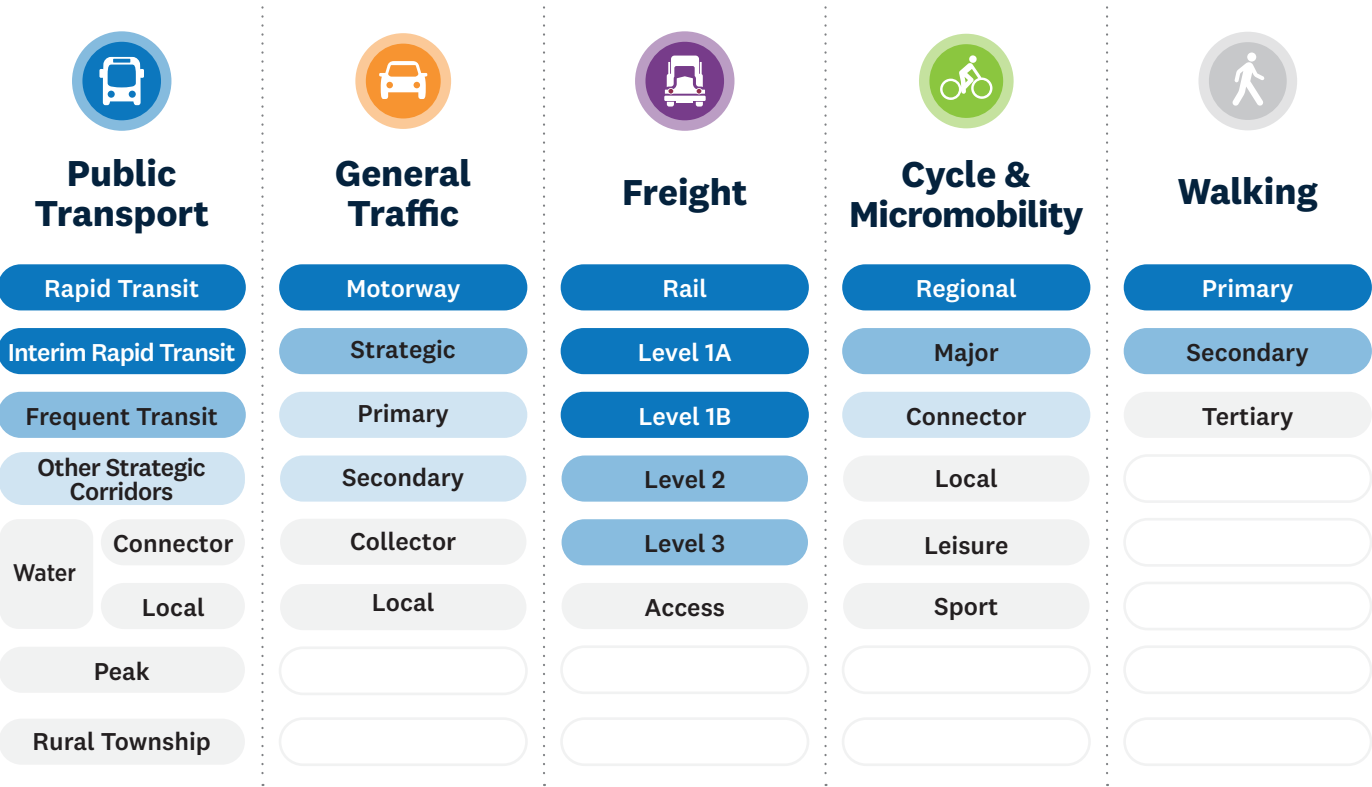
For this 2026 update, all networks have been updated to reflect the latest projects, plans and strategies. The current and first-decade networks cover the 2026 and 2037 time period respectively.

Each of the modal networks has its own hierarchy to indicate the relative importance of each link.

To provide alignment between these modes, Future Connect developed a three-level hierarchy for each of the Strategic Networks. This makes it easier to make comparisons between the different modal networks, and integrate them as part of the overall system.

Each network also has a set of principles and definitions, to guide the ongoing development of the Strategic Networks.

The illustration below indicates which parts of each network are Primary, Secondary, Tertiary Strategic Network links, or lower order Supporting Network links.



Strategic Networks

Primary Secondary Tertiary

Supporting Networks

Other

The current and future Strategic Networks

Ngā whatunga rautaki

The Current Strategic Network describes the network as we would like it to operate today. The First Decade Strategic Network builds on the current network, but adds important connections needed to support Auckland's expected growth.

The First Decade Strategic Network will better connect metropolitan centres around the region, as these will play an increasingly important role in the future. Providing these connections unlocks the multi-nodal model aspired to by the Auckland Plan.

The First Decade network also takes into account planned land use changes, including brownfield and greenfield growth areas.



Future multi-nodal city served by an efficient transport system (based on Auckland Plan 2050)



Strategic Networks

First Decade (2037)
Primary Links only

Key

- Public transport
- General traffic
- Freight
- Cycle and micromobility
- Lower order Strategic Network links
- City and metropolitan centres

To see the full region and most up to date version, visit [AT.govt.nz/futureconnect](https://at.govt.nz/futureconnect)

Transport System Analysis

Te tātari i te pūnaha tūnuku

Future Connect uses a data-driven, repeatable process to understand the most critical needs across the regional transport system. The Transport System Analysis has four key elements, explained further below.

Deficiencies highlight corridors where customers or the environment experiences outcomes that fall short of our strategic objectives. This part of the analysis investigates the Current and First

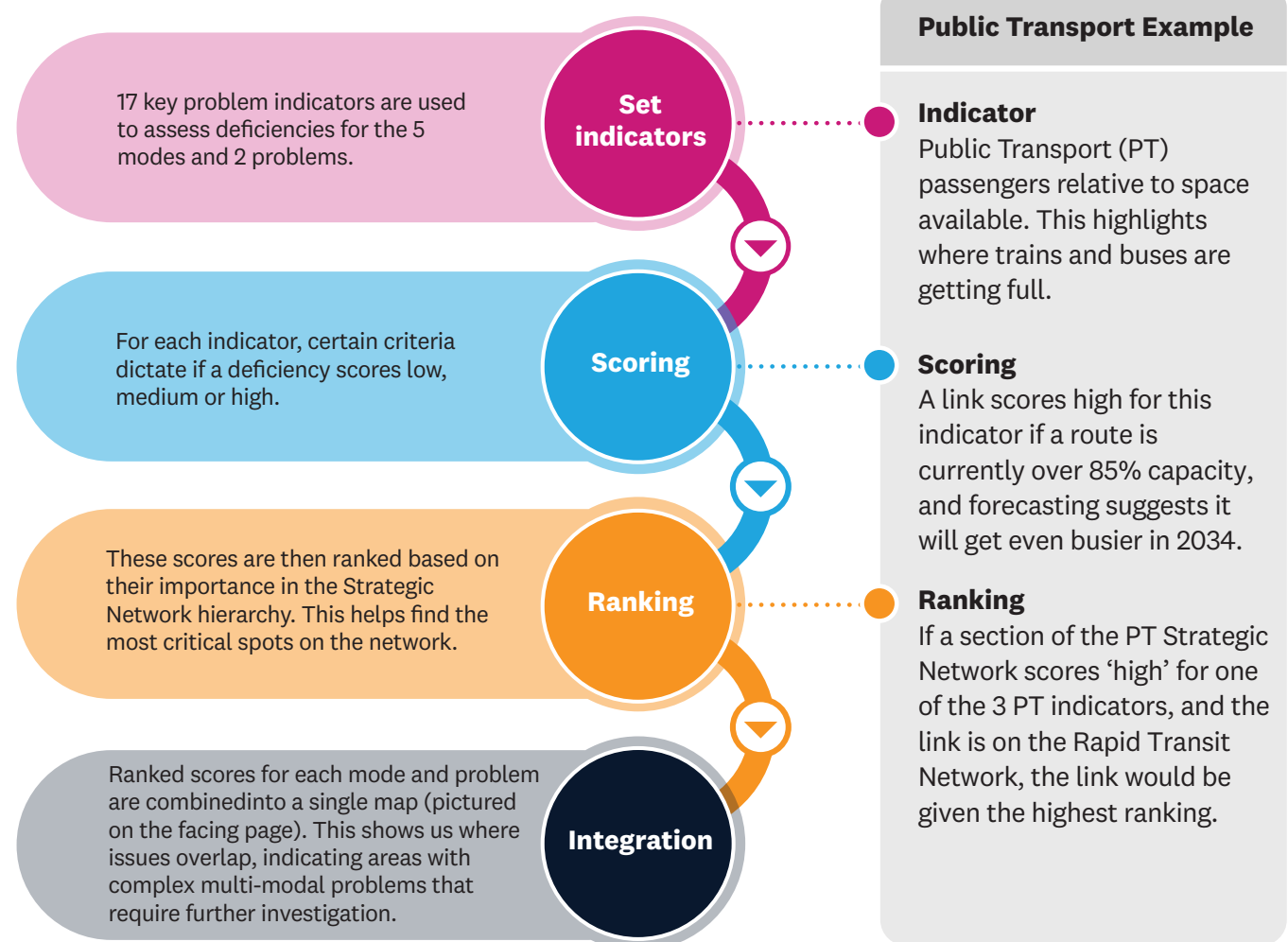
Decade Strategic Networks, using both current and forecast data. It shows us where things may get worse without further investment. The deficiency analysis looks at each mode of transport, as well as two intermodal problems affecting all networks: **safety** and the **environment**.

For each mode and problem, the severity of the deficiency is ranked using the hierarchy in the network, so deficiencies on the

most critical links come out as most important. The result of this analysis is displayed here.

The Transport System Analysis also includes a transport equity analysis which is detailed later in this report.

Future Connect 2026 incorporates new and better data to analyse the networks, enabling a more robust and reliable assessment of where issues exist.



Note

The forecast indicators used for the Deficiency Mapping take into account the full impact of the 2024-2034 RLTP.

Top Ranked Deficiencies

First Decade (2037)

Key

- Severe multimodal deficiencies
- High multimodal deficiencies
- Strategic networks
- City and metropolitan centres
- Auckland Plan Greenfields – First Decade*
- Auckland Plan Brownfields – First Decade*

* Future Development Strategy 2023-2053 areas.

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Transport Equity

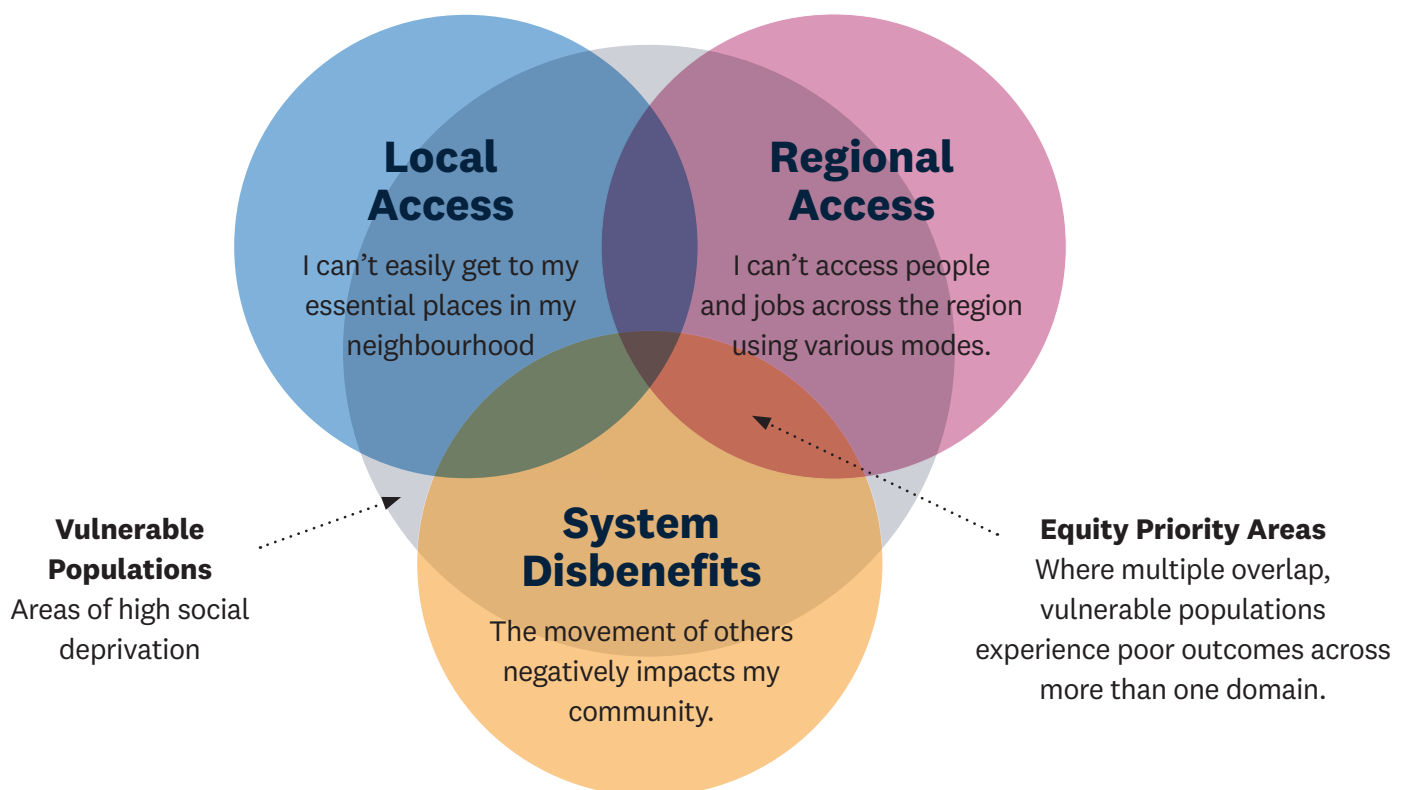
Te tautika ā-taunuku

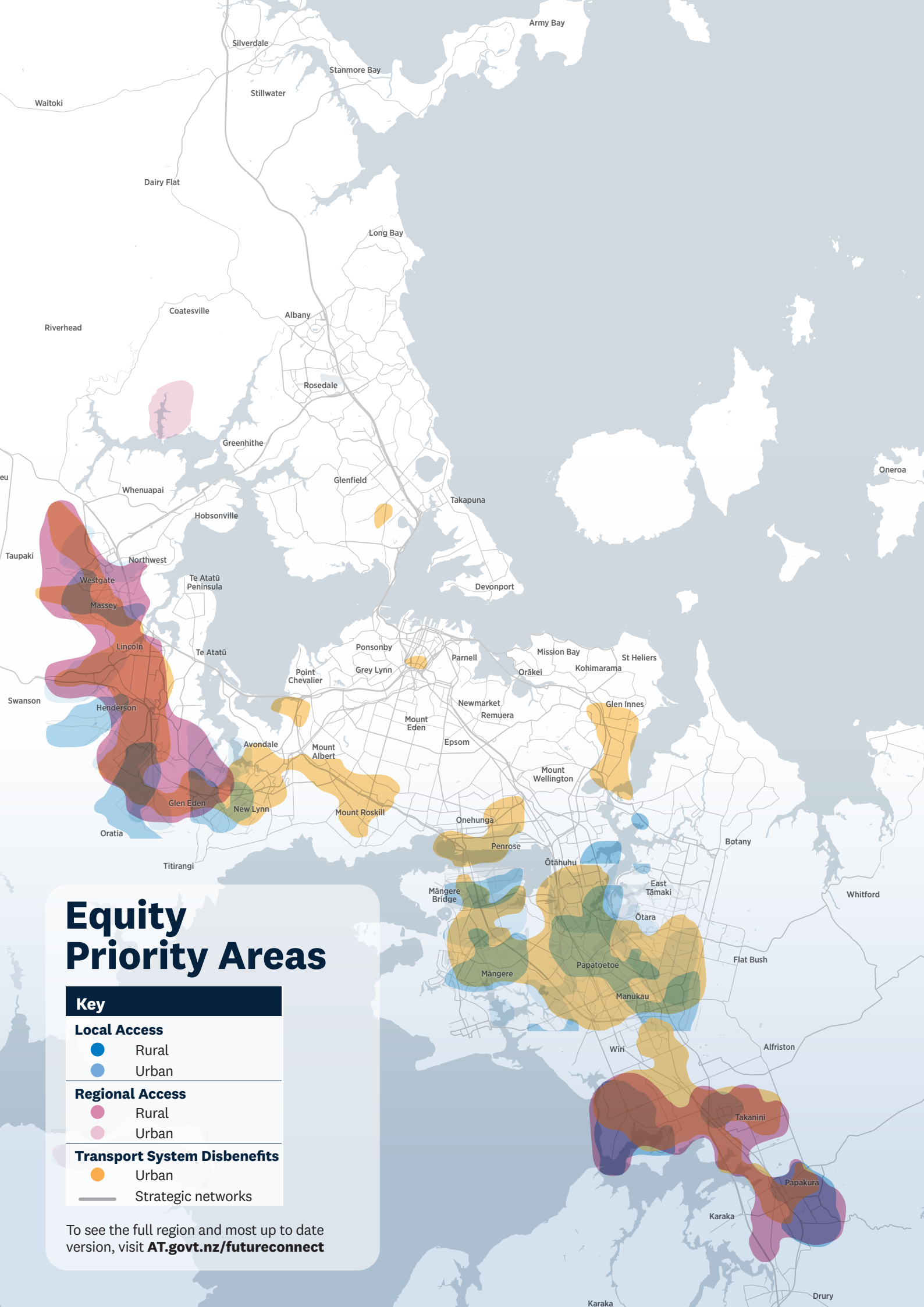
The Transport Equity Analysis was added to Future Connect in 2023 as a third intermodal problem, marking a shift towards incorporating community and equity considerations alongside network performance. This analysis does not investigate corridors, but instead looks at the transport outcomes experienced by different communities in Auckland. To do so, we've looked at three domains of transport equity:

- **Local Access:** the ability to get to local destinations within a reasonable distance, using safe and appropriate infrastructure.
- **Regional Access:** the ability to get to work and visit people from where you live, using various modes of transport.
- **Transport system disbenefits:** the negative impacts of the transport system that people experience, like noise, road safety hazards and severance.

In the map to the right, we've highlighted areas with high social deprivation which experience transport outcomes that are worse than the average Aucklander. People in these areas may not have the means to overcome the barriers put up by the transport system, which should be considered when prioritising projects.

However, not all high deprivation areas experience poor outcomes, and areas without high deprivation can also experience poor outcomes.





Equity Priority Areas

Key

Local Access

- Rural
- Urban

Regional Access

- Rural
- Urban

Transport System Disbenefits

- Urban
- Strategic networks

To see the full region and most up to date version, visit [AT.govt.nz/futureconnect](https://at.govt.nz/futureconnect)

Auckland's Transport Focus Areas

Ngā wāhanga arotahi mō te tūnuku o Tāmaki Makaurau

The Transport System Analysis follows a quantitative, data-driven process which uses and creates a lot of data. Our Focus Areas apply a more qualitative layer of thinking, summarising this data into a few key challenges for the Auckland region. We've identified four categories of Focus Areas:

Regional Movement Patterns Experiencing Growth Pressures

- Network deficiencies are impacting major regional commuting flows.
- People are reliant on congested and worsening general traffic networks with high safety/environmental risks and limited competitive alternatives.
- Likely to require significant central government investment.

Multimodal Streets with Space and Safety Constraints

- Local Roads that users of many modes rely on, with high deficiencies for most of those modes.
- Often historically developed corridors with complex land-use interactions that further impact movement function.

Major Destinations with Complex Transport Interconnections

- Key hubs around the city where people work, study and live.
- Hubs coincide with major transport interchanges where multiple modes and regional and local networks interact with each other.
- Complex web of transport and land-use interaction.

Transport Deprivation Priority Areas

- Areas with high social deprivation experiencing poor outcomes across at least two of the three equity domains.

How the Focus Areas will be used

We want to ensure that we address deficiencies surfaced by Future Connect in Council's projects and programmes.

When development of the Regional Land Transport Plan 2027-2037 begins, Future Connect's Focus Areas and deficiencies will help inform which projects we prioritise. If no projects are investigating these areas yet, further plans will be developed.

The Focus Areas, and the extensive evidence behind them, are all made available in the Future Connect Mapping Portal. This means everyone can use this data in their work.

Transport Focus Areas

Key

Regional Movement Patterns Experiencing Growth Pressures

- High Deficiencies
- Moderate Deficiencies

Multimodal Streets with Space and Safety Constraints

- Urban Streets
- Industrial roads
- Urbanising roads

Major Destinations with Complex Transport Interconnections

- High Deficiencies
- Moderate Deficiencies

Transport Deprivation Priority Areas

- Poor outcomes across three equity domains
- Poor outcomes across two equity domains
- Strategic networks

To see the full region and most up to date version, visit AT.govt.nz/futureconnect

Next steps

Ngā mahi e whai ake nei

A living plan

Future Connect provides a snapshot of the current network, and a desired future state. None of these are ever fixed. The system is always evolving as new infrastructure gets delivered, and future plans can change for a wide range of reasons.

Future Connect will be updated as these changes occur. Major updates are scheduled every three years, to coincide with our three-yearly RLTP planning cycle.

Between these major updates, the Strategic Networks will always be kept up to date in our online Mapping Portal.

More Information about Future Connect, including the Mapping Portal, can be found at **AT.govt.nz/FutureConnect**



