

Strategic Context

Northwest Auckland (broadly defined as the SH16 corridor and its catchments) is a rapidly growing part of Auckland that faces some of the most severe transport challenges.

Key transport issues in this part of Auckland are:

Relatively poor access to opportunities, especially by public transport. This is caused by relatively low employment opportunities in the west of Auckland (creating the need for long commutes), a lack of fast and reliable public transport services, and a reliance on the heavily congested SH16.

A high level of car dependency relative to other parts of Auckland, and low levels of public transport use.

A transport network highly dependent on a single corridor (SH16) = disruptions have significant impacts with few/poor quality alternative routes for many trips.



Fast ongoing growth, combined with a lack of quality public transport, relatively few local employment opportunities and over-reliance on the congested SH16 corridor means the northwest faces some of the most severe access & travel choice deficiencies in Auckland.

Progressing Northwest Rapid Transit

Interim bus improvements are being constructed to improve journey times and bus reliability. The NWRT team is about to commence the detailed business case to confirm a preferred mode and alignment for a rapid transit corridor to the northwest. This will build on previous work (most recently a 2017 Indicative Business Case by Auckland Transport) to confirm:

- Mode choice for the corridor (i.e. light-rail, bus rapid transit, light-metro etc.)
- City centre integration with other rapid transit corridors (WHC and CC2M projects)
- Integration with 'Upper Harbour' rapid transit (connects West Auckland and North Shore)
- How the corridor should be sequenced over time

The DBC will take around 18 months to complete. After this, the project can move into detailed design, consenting and land acquisition, which is likely to take a further 4-5 years. Work on the Auckland Rapid Transit Plan has highlighted the critical urgency of progressing this corridor over the next decade.

At least \$2 billion is likely to be needed over the next decade to progress a meaningful section of this rapid transit corridor. If its mode is confirmed as light-rail, then it would be necessary to progress the corridor from the city centre outwards. A bus-based mode is more flexible in staging and sequencing than light rail. However, without unlocking the current city centre capacity constraint, the full potential of a bus-based mode cannot be realised.



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State Highway 16 (SH16) between Brigham Creek and Waimauku

State Highway 16 (SH16) between Brigham Creek and Waimauku is one of the highest-risk roads in the country and also experiences regular severe congestion. This project will improve safety for all users of the corridor, as well as add capacity to the existing alignment ahead of a longer term plan to bypass Kumeu/Huapai. This project has two stages:

Stage 1 – introduces flexible safety barriers, improves bridge safety and widens the shoulder for cycles (Starts work mid 2023)

Stage 2 – adds capacity to the corridor and introduces flexible safety barriers, safe crossing locations, a dedicated shared path, and adds a roundabout at the SH16/Coatesville Riverhead Highway intersection to address safety and congestion at this location. Stage 2 provides the most benefits for the project but there are some critical points of the network in Stage 1 from a safety perspective. The community has been engaged on this project for a number of years and there is significant interest and support for it. Some of the recent growth in the area assumed this project was imminent from a safe access and multimodal network perspective. Existing funding levels are likely to be insufficient to progress Stage 2 within the next three years.