

Auckland Regional Update

August 2020

Overview

The size and scale of Auckland's growth means it's essential to make good, well supported planning decisions, so benefits are unlocked for the region and the whole of New Zealand. The transport system needs to provide improved travel choices, support economic growth and ensure Auckland remains a great city to live, work and play in.

Auckland is one of the fastest growing cities in Australasia and is now home to almost 1.7 million people. The recent COVID-19 implications forecast that Auckland will experience slower population growth and a sluggish economy in the short to medium term. It is expected that there will be an easing of growth in passenger transport demand over the short term because of slower population growth, and reduced employment and discretionary trips. No significant changes are expected in the nature, scale and location of transport demand over the medium to long term. The 10-year outlook remains largely unchanged. There will be an on-going need for transport services to support COVID-19 recovery by improving access to employment and essential services for vulnerable communities.

In 2018 the Government and Auckland Council agreed through the Auckland Transport Alignment Project (ATAP) on a \$28 billion 10-year investment package to improve Auckland's transport system. ATAP is currently being updated to inform 2021 funding plans and incorporate recent changes, like the NZ Upgrade Programme and implications from COVID-19. The update also aims to deliver better results against the key priorities of mode shift, climate change action and supporting priority growth areas.

The New Zealand Upgrade Programme is a \$6.8 billion investment to get our cities moving, save lives and boost productivity. More than half the programme, \$3.48 billion, will be spent in Auckland providing for more frequent and better public transport, building safe, new walking and cycling paths, vital new roads to speed up travel times and unlock housing developments and investment in rail to make our roads safer by taking trucks off them.

SH1 is crucial to the future of Auckland and \$700 million is being invested in the Northern Motorway as part of the Northern Corridor Improvements project, providing better links and improving transport options on the North Shore for cars, buses, pedestrians, cyclists and freight. The Northern Busway will be extended from Constellation to Albany and a new bus station will also be built in Rosedale to provide more public transport options for commuters in this busy area. Despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Northern Corridor Improvements project is on schedule to be completed in 2022, with just a four-month delay because of the impact of COVID-19 on infrastructure projects. The expected completion date is now September 2022.

Over \$250 million has been invested in the Southern Motorway as part of the SH1 Southern Corridor Improvements, to provide more reliable and safer trips for all road users by adding more lanes, building new walking and cycling paths, installing safety barriers, improving and adding new noise walls and upgrading the Takanini interchange. Further south, planning work is continuing as part of the NZ Upgrade Programme to invest \$423 million to make further transport improvements between Papakura and Drury South.

Having a city where families can get around safely is important, which is why we're investing in even more walking and cycling infrastructure. A key project includes a \$360 million investment as part of the NZ Upgrade Programme in the first section of the Northern Pathway, a shared walking and cycling path over the Auckland Harbour Bridge. Construction is expected to start next year (2021). This will connect the North Shore to the city's growing cycle network and provide a healthy and active transport choice for commuters and recreational purposes.

As outlined in ATAP 2018, to unlock the benefits of growth, Auckland needs a transport system that provides safe, reliable and sustainable access. This means transport that:

- Easily connects people, goods and services to where they need to go;
- Provides high quality and affordable travel choices for people of all ages and abilities;
- Seeks to eliminate harm to people and the environment;

- Supports and shapes Auckland's growth;
- Creates a prosperous, vibrant and inclusive city.

Safety

The number of deaths and serious injuries on Auckland's transport network has been increasing in recent years, however the recorded deaths and serious injuries toll on local roads and State highways has been decreasing because of investment in key safety initiatives for people walking, cycling, driving or using public transport.

The Safe Network Programme is a collaborative initiative that aims to save up to 160 deaths and serious injuries every year across New Zealand's highest risk State highways and local roads. The \$1.3 to \$1.5 billion nationwide investment over three years, signals Waka Kotahi's commitment to making our roads safer, working in partnership with Auckland Transport and the wider safety sector to find the right safety solutions for Auckland.

The Safe Network Programme and Speed Management Programme will address safety and operational issues and implement a strategic speed management approach across Auckland's road network. Following a consultation with stakeholders and the community, new speed limits on State Highway 22 between Drury interchange and Paerata took effect at the end of June 2020. We have been working collaboratively with AT to implement speed limit changes to improve safety as areas continues to grow and traffic increases. New and safer speed limits on more than 600 roads across Auckland, including the central city, also came into effect as part of AT's Safe Speeds programme.

Speed reviews are also underway on SH1 L Phillips Road (near Sheepworld) to Pūhoi, SH16 Waimauku to Brigham Creek, and SH16 outside Kaukapakapa School. We expect to announce the outcome of both SH16 speed reviews this month.

Infrastructure upgrades to improve safety are also being progressed on several high-risk roads in the region SH1 Dome Valley, SH16 Brigham Creek to Waimauku and SH22 Drury to Paerata.

Waka Kotahi is working with local government on the introduction of new road safety education and awareness programmes. Key to the success of these programmes is its partnership with NZ Police to reduce road deaths and ensure everyone gets to their destination safely.

Rapid transit network

Expanding and upgrading Auckland's rapid transit network of rail, busways, and in the future light rail, to play a growing role in meeting Aucklanders' travel needs is central to the ATAP programme. Rapid transit is well suited to shifting large numbers of people quickly, efficiently and reliably, unlocking critical housing and urban development opportunities and giving communities better access to jobs, health, education and recreation.

In June 2020, Cabinet decided to end the twin track Auckland Light Rail selection process, asking the Ministry of Transport to do further work on this project. The Ministry of Transport and the Treasury will report to the government on the best option for this project to be delivered by the public sector. The work done by Waka Kotahi as part of this process will continue to inform the options the government receives on this project. Auckland Light Rail remains a project in ATAP.

The NLTP 2018-21 will invest in expanding Auckland's rapid transit network and includes:

- Delivering the Northern Corridor Improvements project to construct an extension of the successful Northern Busway to Albany, running in both directions along the eastern side of the Northern Motorway. A new bus station will also be added at Rosedale.
- Improvements to the SH20B road corridor (part of the Southwest Gateway project) that will benefit people using public transport to get to Auckland airport and the surrounding area. The \$70 million SH20B early improvements project will provide additional bus and high occupancy vehicle lanes and new walking and cycling facilities between Pukaki Creek Bridge and SH20. Work to upgrade the Puhinui rail and bus interchange is already underway in a separate project led by Auckland Transport.
- Progressing the Auckland Manukau Eastern Transport Initiative (AMETI), which delivers new dedicated busways and cycleways to improve access and safety in the

area, unlocking housing development opportunities. Over the next three years work will focus on the Eastern Busway from Panmure to Pakuranga, including the Reeves Road flyover.

- Developing plans for early bus improvements in Northwest Auckland to make it quicker and easier to travel by bus between local roads and the Northwestern Motorway (SH16).
- Part of the NZ Upgrade Programme, the Wiri to Quay Park rail project will provide an additional 5.2km of track to remove the bottleneck along this section of the North Island Main Trunk Line which is currently used by passenger services and interregional freight services. It will also provide additional capacity for the new City Rail Link and the new commuter service being developed from Hamilton to Auckland.
- Also, as part of the NZ Upgrade Programme, a \$371 million investment to extend the electrified rail network will help support planned growth in South Auckland and mean passengers will no longer have to change trains to travel south to Pukekohe. At Drury, \$247 million will fund two new railway stations, park and ride facilities as well as a bus and rail interchange to make it easier for residents in the south to travel by public transport.
- Proposed new and expanded park-and-ride facilities in peripheral parts of the city.

Connecting communities as the city grows

The COVID-19 lock-down has brought with it a visible shift to alternate modes of transport. The number of people, young and old, cycling or walking in areas with high traffic volumes fits well with our mode shift plan and recently announced Innovating Streets programme. A \$13.95 million Waka Kotahi investment will see around 40 projects that make streets more people-friendly being delivered across the country before June 2021.

Much of Auckland's strategic road transport network is now complete, however Waka Kotahi is working to deliver targeted improvements at the same time as it prepares for the networks required to connect growth areas and ensure they are great places to live.

Key corridors around the city will continue to have strategic importance, especially as the city grows and changes. The NLTP 2018-21 and NZ Upgrade Programme is investing in the following key initiatives, which are aimed at connecting communities as the city grows:

- Part of the NZ Upgrade Programme, Penlink is a new transport link between State Highway 1 (SH1) and Whangaparāoa Peninsula north of Auckland. It will open up access to new residential and employment areas, offer increased travel choice with new public transport and walking and cycling options, and help build greater resilience into the transport system. Providing better access and more reliable journeys for those living in the region, the new 7km highway will support growth to the north of Auckland, where the population is expected to grow by about 106,000 during the next 30 years and where more than 21,000 jobs will be created.
- The Southern Corridor Improvements project is almost complete and helps to alleviate a key bottleneck by widening the Southern Motorway (SH1) between Manukau and Papakura, resulting in safer and more efficient journeys in the south. It also includes a new path for walkers and cyclists to connect Takanini to Papakura and Karaka.
- The SH1 Papakura to Drury South improvements project is part of the NZ Upgrade Programme and will provide additional lanes on the motorway to improve journey reliability, safety and network resilience. A walking and cycling path will provide more transport choices for commuters and recreational activities.
- Mill Road will provide a safer, more reliable and accessible transport corridor to support residential and employment growth in south Auckland. Funded by the NZ Upgrade Programme, Mill Road is an additional route from Manukau to Drury. It will provide better access for the 120,000-plus people who will make Auckland's southern suburbs their home during the next three decades.
- The 18-kilometre extension of the Northern Motorway (SH1) from Pūhoi to Warkworth providing a safer and more efficient connection to northern Auckland, Northland and Far North.

- The Matakana Link Road project is underway and will provide an alternative route to the busy Hill Street intersection, improving safety and travel times for the local community.
- Looking ahead, the Supporting Growth programme has been established to investigate, plan and deliver the transport networks needed to support future urban growth areas over the next 30 years. Through this collaborative programme with local government, the NLTP will invest in the initial preferred network and Waka Kotahi will continue a staged programme of route protection processes. Future project delivery will then follow in line with ATAP's priorities and the release of new land for growth.

Improving walking and cycling

Investment will be targeted to extending existing walking and cycling networks, providing connections to public transport hubs, improving safety and accessibility, and helping revitalise regional economies with new tourism opportunities.

Several key infrastructure projects will enable more active ways for people to move safely and easily, including:

- A \$360 million investment as part of the NZ Upgrade Programme in the first section of the Northern Pathway, from Westhaven to Akoranga, with construction expected to be complete in 2024. The preferred design for this walking and cycling link over the Waitematā Harbour is for a continuous path at deck level with the Auckland Harbour Bridge, giving generations of users a seamless link between the city and the wider North Shore. Waka Kotahi is investigating opportunities to extend this pathway and a business case for the next section from Akoranga to Constellation Drive will be complete in late 2020/early 2021. This section would then also connect with the walking and cycling facilities that are currently under construction as part of the Northern Corridor Improvements project. When complete, all three sections will provide a separated walking and cycling pathway from central Auckland to Albany, providing real travel choice for how people access places of work, play or services.
- Work will continue on the Glen Innes to Tāmaki Drive Shared Path, a joint project with AT that will deliver a 7km-long path that connects Auckland's eastern suburbs to the city centre. Sections 1 and 3 of the shared path have been completed and construction on Section 2 will begin mid to late 2020.
- Replacement of the Old Māngere Bridge in the Manukau Harbour with a new, dedicated walking and cycling link will connect local communities and create an iconic landmark for the area. The replacement bridge will reflect what made the old bridge a much-loved and long-standing community asset while providing more opportunities to grow the local walking and cycling network. Construction is expected to be completed in 2022. Auckland Transport's delivery of cycle lanes in the Central City, Henderson, Mangere East and Manukau as part of the Connected Communities programme will be supported by Waka Kotahi funding. Some programmes may be deferred and paused due to the COVID-19 related emergency budget.

More resilient and efficient

A key strategic approach of ATAP is to make better use of the existing network and to explore new opportunities to get more out of what is already in place. This means looking at the whole Auckland transport system and understanding the way people want to interact with it, as well as a programme of optimisation to improve the efficiency and reliability of people's journeys.

New technology is providing opportunities to do this. Waka Kotahi's investment in the Intelligent Transport Systems Programme will use emerging technologies to better manage congestion, improve safety and influence travel demand. The Network Optimisation Programme will provide a package of targeted small-to-medium scale infrastructure projects to ensure the network is operating at capacity through the synchronisation of traffic signals, making best use of the existing road layout, dynamic traffic lanes and managing traffic restrictions. Another key initiative is the Bus Route Priority Phase 1, which involves implementation of bus priority measures along the Frequent Service Network to improve capacity and speed.

While the Auckland Transport Operations Centre can effectively manage incidents and emergencies, there is an ongoing programme of work to strengthen its capabilities to reduce disruption and delay. Core technology upgrades will support and enhance systems such as Journey Planner, web and mobile applications, asset management, CCTV and network upgrades to improve performance, resilience and safety of customers.

Key highlights

In the last 18 months

- Completion of the SH16 Lincoln to Westgate project in late 2019, adding new traffic and bus lanes to support growth in the western suburbs and increased traffic using the Western Ring Route. This project also included an extension of the Northwestern Cycleway alongside the motorway from Lincoln Road to Westgate to provide more transport choice in this area.
- Opening of the new motorway lanes as part of the SH1 Southern Corridor Improvements project late last year to help ease congestion along this vital route. This project also includes a new shared walking and cycling path between Takanini and Papakura to connect communities and provide more travel options.
- Completion of the Franklin Road Upgrade project last July was part funded by AT, Waka Kotahi and Auckland Council, this project includes safety improvements for pedestrians, people on bikes and motorists, along with service and utility infrastructure upgrades.
- Completion of the Ōrākei Basin boardwalk (section 3) of the Glen Innes to Tāmaki Drive Shared Path in July last year. This involved widening the existing boardwalk (while keeping it open for use) to 4.5 metres, installing new skid resistant surfacing and a new balustrade with handrail lighting.

Underway or about to start

- Construction is well underway on the \$700 million Northern Corridor Improvements and involves transport improvements on the Northern Motorway (SH1), including a new SH1/SH18 motorway connection to improve access and reduce congestion on surrounding local roads. The Northern Busway will be extended to Albany and a new busway station will be constructed at Rosedale to provide more transport options in and around this busy industrial area.
- Consultation with shortlisted parties to build the first section of the Northern Pathway project from Westhaven to Akoranga, with construction expected to be complete in 2024. The \$360 million investment is part of the NZ Upgrade programme and Waka Kotahi is also investigating opportunities to extend this pathway from Akoranga to Constellation Drive.
- Notice of Requirement and resource consents application for the Warkworth to Wellsford project is underway, a consenting process that is expected to take one to two years to complete. It's the culmination of three years of project development which has included preliminary engineering design, site investigations, transport planning, technical assessments and engagement with partners, stakeholders and local communities. The Warkworth to Wellsford project is the second stage of [Ara Tūhono Pūhoi to Wellsford](#). Stage one, between Pūhoi and Warkworth, is currently under construction and due for completion in 2022.
- Start of the Auckland Manukau Eastern Transport Initiative (AMETI) Eastern Busway stage 1, Panmure to Pakuranga, a dedicated, congestion free busway between Panmure, Pakuranga and Botany town centres. A total of four stages will complete the AMETI Eastern Busway with the opening of the Botany Bus Station by 2026.
- Progress on local co-funded projects including the Karangahape Road Enhancements, Tāmaki Drive Cycle Route, Glen Innes to Tāmaki Drive Shared Path (Section 2), and New Lynn to Avondale Shared Path. These improvements will create a safer environment for pedestrians and people on bikes, provide improved transport choices and a greener, more attractive environment.

- Advanced Notices issued to seek registrations of interest from prequalified and experienced contractors for Penlink and SH1 Papakura to Drury South improvements, both part of the NZ Upgrade Programme of work. Penlink involves a new 7km highway to help support growth and provide more transport choices to the north of Auckland. The SH1 Papakura to Drury South project will provide a safer and more reliable route for commuters with a range of improvements to support significant residential and employment growth in South Auckland.
- Access to Auckland Airport and surrounding areas will be improved through the Southwest Gateway programme. This work includes Puhinui Rail Station improvements, investigation of rapid transit measures between Auckland Airport and Botany, and identifying improvements along State highways 20, 20A and 20B to improve journey reliability and provide more transport choices.
- Auckland Transport is redesigning and upgrading Puhinui Station to become a major bus/train interchange, improving travel to and from the airport, and its surrounding areas, by providing more reliable and timely travel choices and, connecting people to wider Auckland through southern and eastern line train services. Construction started in mid-2019 and is expected to be completed in 2021.
- Part of the nationwide \$1.3 to \$1.5 billion investment into the Safe Network Programme, targeted infrastructure upgrades are underway to address safety issues on SH1 at Dome Valley and SH16 Brigham Creek to Waimauku. This collaborative programme delivers proven safety interventions, focusing on our highest risk State highways and local roads across New Zealand.
- Part of the NZ Upgrade Programme, the Wiri to Quay Park rail project will provide an additional 5.2km of track to remove the bottleneck along this section of the North Island Main Trunk Line.
- Extending the electrified rail network to Pukekohe will help support planned growth in South Auckland and mean passengers will no longer have to change trains to travel south to Pukekohe. At Drury, \$247million will fund two new railway stations, park and ride facilities as well as a bus and rail interchange to make it easier for residents in the south to travel by public transport.
- Through the collaborative Te Tupu Ngātahi Supporting Growth Alliance programme the NLTP will look to confirm and protect transport networks that are needed to support the development of new future urban growth areas over the next 30 years.

New Zealand Upgrade Programme (NZUP) projects

NZUP is a \$6.8 billion investment over the next 10 years in road, rail, public transport and walking and cycling infrastructure. It is aimed at saving lives, getting our cities moving and boosting productivity in the country's growth areas.

The programme is funded directly by the Crown.

The \$3.48 billion upgrade programme for Auckland delivers on the Government's commitment to support the transformation of Auckland's transport system to manage growth.

This includes developing the first walking and cycling connection across Waitemata Harbour and along the harbour to Takapuna, providing commuters with real choice on how they travel through the city. It is a critical link in the region's transport system, providing an important missing link in Auckland's Cycle Network and a great new facility for both residents and tourists.

The new Mill Road and Penlink transport corridors, being built to the south and north of Auckland, respectively, as well as improvements on State Highway 1 between Papakura and Drury South, will also support growth. All three projects include shared walking and cycling paths, providing important connections through to recently completed sections of the city's walking and cycling network, and more frequent and improved public transport services. This will provide residents with choice on how they move about these communities and access employment opportunities, as well as building safety and resilience into Auckland's transport system.

North of Auckland, at Silverdale, Wainui, Dairy Flat, Orewa, and Whangaparāoa Peninsula, the population will grow three-fold, creating 21,000 new jobs. Penlink will support this growth by providing new travel choice options to and from these areas for residents and businesses.

In the south of Auckland, the Mill Road project will provide a safer, more reliable and more accessible new transport corridor for the 120,000-plus people who will make Auckland's southern suburbs their home during the next three decades.

The SH1 Papakura to Drury South improvements will provide additional capacity on the motorway and a walking and cycling path.

More than \$1 billion will be spent improving passenger and inter-regional freight services, helping make rail a preferred way of travel for communities to the south of Auckland. A new rail track will be built between Wiri and Quay Park, new stations developed at Drury and the rail network electrified through to Pukekohe. Importantly, this investment will also provide additional capacity for the new City Rail Link and supports the new commuter service being developed from Hamilton to Auckland. The rail work will be delivered by KiwiRail.

Investment in Auckland

NLTP	2015–18	2018–21*
Forecast total investment	\$4.6 billion	\$6.2 billion
Forecast maintenance and operations	\$1.3 billion	\$1.2 billion
Forecast public transport investment	\$1.2 billion	\$2.4 billion
Forecast walking and cycling	\$108 million	\$228 million
Regional network improvements	\$1.5 billion	\$1.8 billion

* 2018-21 figures include both NZ Upgrade Programme and NLTF funding

Overview Map

