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## Future Connect 2023 – Evolving Auckland’s Strategic Network Guidance

### Aronga / Purpose

1. To provide an update on Future Connect 2023.

### Tuku mana / Delegation

2. Future Connect does not involve financial commitment. Approval of Future Connect by the Auckland Transport (AT) Board (board) is sought as this plan represents AT’s official transport network intent, with impacts to a range of AT projects and work and which will be publicly available. As such this represents a potential reputation risk. Previous versions were approved by the board for this reason.

### Te tūhonga / Recommendation

That the board:

- a) Approves Future Connect 2023 for public release.

### Te whakarāpopototanga matua / Executive summary

3. Future Connect is a key planning resource that provides unified planning guidance for Auckland’s strategic transport networks. It sets out the current and 2034 strategic networks for each mode, along with current and forecast challenges and identified focus areas.
4. Future Connect was first published in 2021 and has now been revised to cover the period 2024 to 2034 to guide future planning work, particularly the 2024 Regional Land Transport Plan. Future Connect highlights key challenges and opportunities across the Auckland transport system and is used by AT and external stakeholders to help guide planning, design and operations.
5. The updated Future Connect applies enhanced network analysis, including new data, to provide a more robust assessment of the state of the network and identify where improvement works should be focused over the coming decade. It also includes a region-wide transport equity analysis to highlight places where poor transport outcomes impact areas of high social deprivation.
6. Future Connect 2023 will provide greater guidance and insight for AT and its stakeholders as work continues to improve the transport system.
7. It is intended to make Future Connect 2023 available to the public via our website. From a reputation perspective, this presents a low risk to AT as this information is evidence based, and widely used by external stakeholders for planning purposes. The current version of Future Connect is available publicly.

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## Ngā tuhinga ō mua / Previous deliberations

| Date  | Report Title  | Key Outcomes  |
|---|---|---|
| September 2023<br>Design and Delivery Committee (committee) | Future Connect 2023 – Auckland Transport’s Network Plan | The committee supported the updated Future Connect, including its extended analysis and recommended that it be shared with Local Boards and possibly Council. Members suggested clear framing of the document so it is not confused with other plans. |
| August 2022<br>Board  | Chief Executive’s Business Report                       | The project team informed the board that Future Connect will be updated in preparation for the 2024 to 2034 Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP).  |
| February 2021<br>Board                                      | Future Connect  | The board was notified of the public release of Future Connect following several committee and board engagements.   |

## Te horopaki / Background

8. Future Connect is a key planning resource that provides unified planning guidance for Auckland’s strategic transport networks. It synthesises policy and strategy guidance from documents like the Auckland Plan and Auckland Transport Alignment Project, with mode or issue-specific strategies such as the Regional Public Transport Plan. As such, it provides a key single point of reference to internal and external stakeholders who want to understand the existing network, the planned future network and the challenges the network faces over the coming years.
9. Future Connect provides guidance to the network now and in 2034 and has three key outputs:
  - a. Strategic Networks – the most critical links for the movement of goods and people for all modes of transport.
  - b. Transport System Analysis – key issues and opportunities 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.
  - c. Focus Areas – a summarised map showing Auckland’s key challenges over the next 10 years at a whole-of-region level.

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10. Importantly, Future Connect sets out the modal networks and the challenges to be addressed. However, it does not set out specific solutions, as these need to be defined by more detailed investigations, business case work, and documents like the RLTP.
11. Future Connect was first released in 2021 alongside the 2021 RLTP. Since then, it has been widely used as a core planning reference, both internally and by stakeholders, for a multitude of purposes ranging from planning to operations on Auckland's most important roads. It is available to the public as an online mapping portal where all outputs can be viewed.

## **Te hononga ki te “Statement of Intent 2023 - 2026”/ Alignment to Statement of Intent 2023 - 2026**

12. Future Connect supports the Statement of Intent by integrating the most crucial routes for each mode into a single plan. It assesses performance, including proxies for travel time, on those routes using current and forecast data, helping us understand user experience across all modes when decisions are made. Future Connect also informs present day optimisation projects, allowing us to make the best use of existing networks.

## **Me mōhio koe / What you need to know**

13. Future Connect has been updated to provide refined and deeper insights into the state of the network and to inform the next major planning round, including the 2024 RLTP. Future Connect now looks from 2024 to 2034 instead of 2021 to 2031. Key changes are outlined below.
14. Strategic Networks have been updated to reflect recently delivered projects, refinements of plans (e.g. business case development), and new plans (e.g. the draft Regional Public Transport Plan). They show an increasingly complex network, with a small number of roads being important for a wide range of modes. Over the next decade, growth and new public transport (PT) services will see Auckland's strategic transport network expand by 260 km, or 8%.
15. Transport System Analysis has been updated with new data and improved indicators. Future Connect ranks the severity of deficiencies against the hierarchy of network links. This means deficiencies on important links score higher than the same deficiency on lower order links. Without investment, about 33% of the combined strategic networks are expected to have multiple deficiencies by 2034.
16. Transport Equity is a new problem area that has been added to Future Connect 2023. It measures how transport outcomes are distributed across the region. The new Equity Analysis is aligned with the draft Auckland Transport Equity Framework, which defines Auckland's transport equity problems and outcomes. Future Connect measures equity outcomes across three domains:
  - a. Local Access – measures the quality of local infrastructure and the distance to key destinations (PT stops, schools, shops, etc.),
  - b. Regional Access – measures access to employment and population across the region,
  - c. Transport System Disbenefits – measures negative transport impacts such as safety, noise and severance.

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17. 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. Not all areas of high deprivation have poor transport outcomes, and poor transport outcomes do not only occur in areas of high deprivation.
18. Focus Areas – The ‘so what’ of Future Connect. These have been restructured away from a Geographic Information System generated summary of the Transport System Analysis and offer a higher-level summary of four key challenges that need some form of intervention:
  - a. Deficient Movement Patterns – The analysis shows key commuting flows that are reliant on a deficient general traffic network with major safety and environmental issues and few competitive alternatives to the car. This particularly involves access from the west and south to key employment areas such as the City Centre, Westgate, Penrose, East Tāmaki and Manukau.
  - b. Multimodal Streets with space and safety constraints – Issues flag up on many local roads that are relied upon by multiple modes. These modes compete for space, leading to multimodal deficiencies and safety issues. These roads often have well-established land uses, increasing demand for the streetscape. This covers a large portion of Auckland’s urban arterial routes.
  - c. Major destinations with complex transport interconnections – The analysis flags complex issues around key hubs where people work and study. These places coincide with major transport interchanges, causing a hub of land use and transport activity. This involves the City Centre, Henderson, Manukau, New Lynn, Penrose/Otahuhu and the area around Esmonde Road on the North Shore.
  - d. Transport Deprivation Priority Areas – Areas of high deprivation that are flagged by the equity analysis as having poor transport outcomes across two or three equity domains. The most significant transport equity problems are found in the west and south.
19. A summary of the new Future Connect, including the output maps, is included in Attachment 1.
20. The Focus Areas, detailed networks and deficiency maps will be key inputs for the RLTP, which will propose solutions for these challenges.
21. Public release of this plan may create unrealistic public expectations of its full delivery, and thus represents a potential reputational risk to AT. This risk is considered low as caveats across the collateral will clearly state the purpose of the plan, and how its artefacts are intended to be used.

## **Ngā ritenga-ā-pūtea me ngā rauemi / Financial and resource impacts**

22. Future Connect is a tool that informs planning and investment but has no specific financial or resource impacts.

## **Ka whaiwhakaaro ki te Tiakanga Taiao / Climate change and sustainability considerations**

23. Future Connect supports Environmental and Climate Change outcomes by clearly specifying the sustainable transport networks (PT, walking, cycling and micromobility), and identifying deficiencies in these networks that need to be addressed.

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24. Future Connect also identifies a number of key environmental metrics, such as flooding/erosion risk on the Strategic Networks, as well as stormwater runoff. It has also mapped sections of the Strategic Network with a high Heat Vulnerability Index and low canopy cover.

## Ngā whakaaweawe atu anō / Other impacts

| Relationship                     | Consulted Y/N   | Views and Perspectives Received  |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| Māori                            | Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No mana whenua engagement took place as part of this update. There was extensive engagement with mana whenua in developing the first version of Future Connect. Feedback was generally positive, with particular support for environmental indicators, which we improved in this update. |
| Elected members                  | Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No elected member engagement has taken place as part of this update.   |
| Council Controlled Organisations | Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/> | We have worked with Auckland Council teams to identify improvements to Future Connect and develop the transport equity analysis that is incorporated in this update. Eke Panuku uses Future Connect for its work, and they will be briefed on the new version.                           |

## Ā muri ake nei / Next steps

25. Following board approval, we will publish Future Connect via an update to the existing web portal and inform key stakeholders.

## Te whakapiringa / Attachment

| Attachment number | Description                     |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1                 | Future Connect Summary Document |

## Te rārangi o ngā kupu whakatau / Decision checklist (for Board and Committee members)

| Have the following matters and impacts on them been considered in decision making?                | Considered Y/N   |
|---|--|
| Alignment to Statement of Intent 2023 – 2026 principles and statement of performance expectations | Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/> |

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|   |                               |                              |
|---|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Budget and fiscal constraints   | Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> | No: <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Climate change and sustainability (including contributing to the Transport Emissions Reduction Pathway) | Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> | No: <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Customer and community engagement   | Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> | No: <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Equity of access to transport   | Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> | No: <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Māori outcomes  | Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> | No: <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Health, safety and wellbeing outcomes   | Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> | No: <input type="checkbox"/> |

### Te pou whenua tuinga / Document ownership

|                                |  |   |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <b>Submitted by</b>            | Robin Verstappen<br><b>Senior Transport Planner, Integrated Network Planning</b> |  |
| <b>Recommended by</b>          | Jenny Chetwynd<br><b>Executive General Manager Planning and Investment</b>       |  |
| <b>Approved for submission</b> | Dean Kimpton<br><b>Chief Executive</b>   |  |