



# Auckland Congestion Report 2017

GUIDING LIFE'S JOURNEYS FOR OVER 110 YEARS.

New Zealand Automobile Association



Issue One: March 2018

Holding back the tide...but only just

The AA Auckland Congestion Report is an annual review of congestion trends in Auckland, based on Google travel-time data. It is designed to increase awareness and understanding of congestion issues, and drive a more informed public debate.

## 2017 Key points:

- Relentless growth in travel on Auckland's roads shows no sign of slowing. There are more people, more cars, and Aucklanders are driving more
- The Auckland network continues to reel under the strain. Congestion is rife across the strategic road network during peak hours
- Even so, congestion eased slightly in 2017 (compared to the year before), bucking the long-standing trend
- This was largely thanks to the Waterview Connection. The focus now needs to go on what comes next, before Auckland's growth catches up

## Auckland's growth is driving congestion

In the last year:



**43,000**

More people  
(total population 1.66 million)



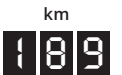
**40,000**

More cars on the road  
(total cars 950,000)



**700 million km**

Increase in distance travelled on Auckland's roads  
(total distance travelled 14.6 billion km)



**189 km**

Increase in distance travelled on Auckland roads by each Aucklanders  
(distance travelled per capita 9,043 km)



**7%**

Increase in public transport patronage



**5%**

Public transport share of total person kms travelled

Sources: Auckland Transport, Ministry of Transport, NZTA, Stats NZ (based on latest available data)

**Sarah Geard** Senior Advisor - Infrastructure  
**Barney Irvine** Principal Advisor - Infrastructure

**M:** +64 27 281 2069  
**M:** +64 27 839 9309

**E:** sgeard@aa.co.nz  
**E:** birvine@aa.co.nz

## Congestion's toll in 2017

Across the region:



### 78.6 hrs

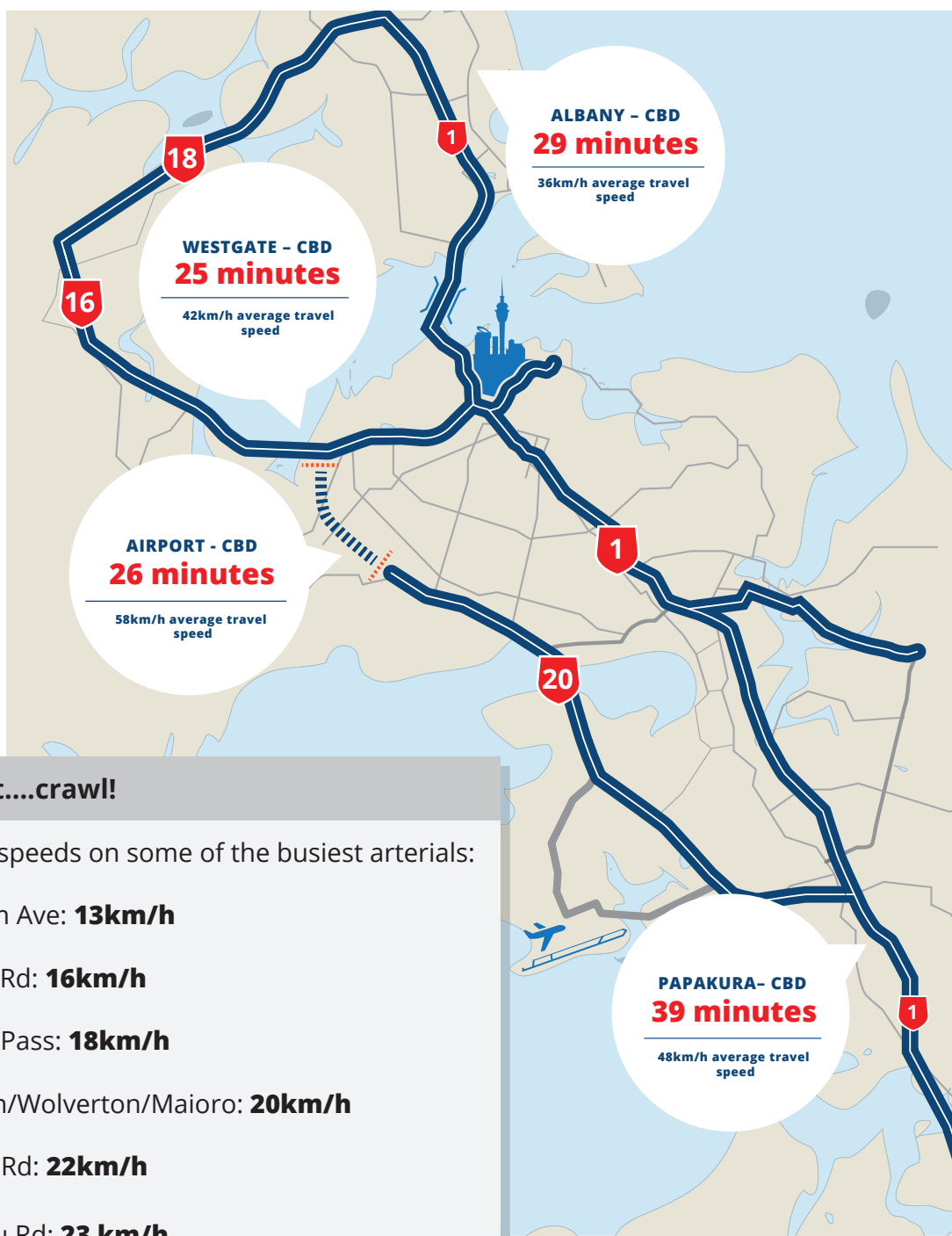
Time lost to congestion over the year by the average peak-hour motorway user



### 43 km/h

Average peak-hour speed on main motorways

## Key routes: Typical morning peak travel times and speeds



### Ready, set....crawl!

Peak-hour speeds on some of the busiest arterials:

- Tristram Ave: **13km/h**
- Onewa Rd: **16km/h**
- Khyber Pass: **18km/h**
- Tiverton/Wolverton/Maioro: **20km/h**
- Lincoln Rd: **22km/h**
- Te Atatu Rd: **23 km/h**

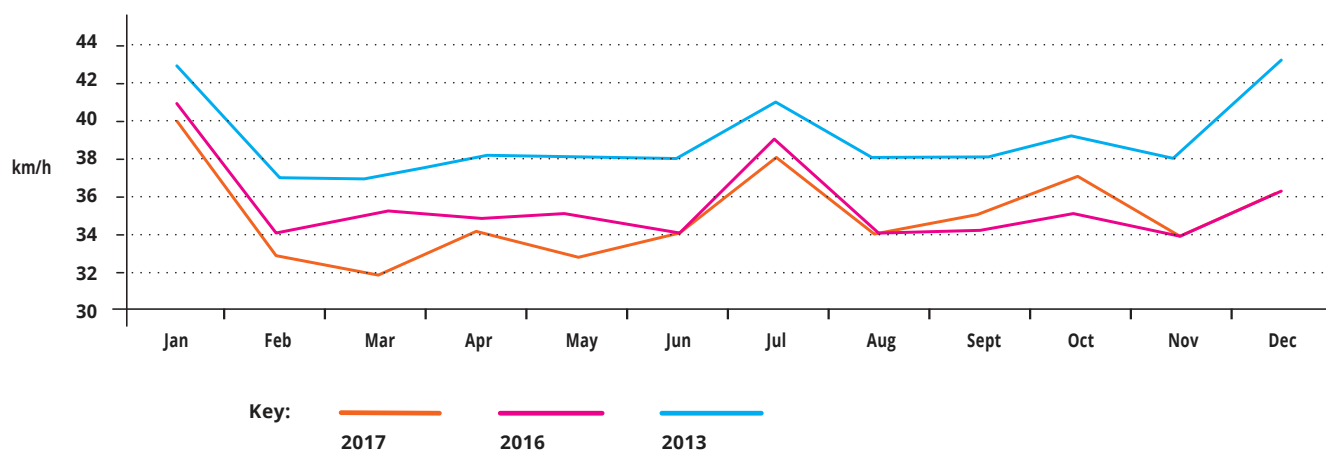
## Year-on-year growth

In spite of the growth pressure, Auckland’s congestion actually eased in 2017 – an astounding result, given that travel times in the morning peak increased by 40-50% on Auckland’s main motorways between 2012 and 2016. Travel times fell and average speeds increased in the second half of 2017, on both the motorways and arterial network.

### Travel-time savings in the morning peak, 2017 (compared to 2016)

|                                     |                  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Northern M’way (Albany – CBD)       | 1 minute faster  |
| Northwestern M’way (Westgate – CBD) | 7 minutes faster |
| Southern M’way (Papakura – CBD)     | 3 minutes faster |

### Average speed on the arterial road network during the morning peak period 2013-2017



Source: Auckland Transport

### It all comes down to Waterview...

The Waterview Connection has had a massive impact since opening in July last year. By providing a second complete north-south motorway, trips have been spread across the network, traffic has been drawn off local roads, and travel times have eased. The challenge will be to get moving on the next set of strategic projects before Auckland’s growth eats into the de-congestion benefits.

### Travel-time savings in the morning peak, as a result of Waterview

|                                     |        |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Airport – CBD*                      | 7 min  |
| Northern M’way (Albany – CBD)       | 5 min  |
| Southern M’way (Papakura – CBD)     | 11 min |
| Northwestern M’way (Westgate – CBD) | 5 min  |
| Dominion Rd (citybound)             | 4 min  |
| New North Rd (citybound)            | 3 min  |

(\*Former route was via Manukau Rd / Gillies Ave)

## Actions

The coming year will be an important one for deciding the shape of the Auckland transport programme, and the AA will be part of that conversation.

Attention will inevitably focus on the big-ticket congestion-busting projects – highways, light rail and busways, congestion charging – which cost billions of dollars and take years to deliver.

For now, though, here are five smaller-scale initiatives the AA wants to see the Government and Auckland Council get moving on in 2018.



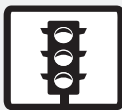
### 1. Congestion targets

Set firm targets for Auckland's congestion that the public can see and understand, and report regularly on progress against them. The goal for Auckland should be to get closer to the congestion levels of similarly sized Australian cities (Adelaide, Brisbane, Perth). Currently, we are significantly worse.



### 2. Mini congestion charging trial

A small-scale practical trial of a congestion charging scheme, to raise public awareness, and better understand how motorists might respond to new price signals. This could take the form of a more targeted and more sophisticated version of a trial of a distance-based charging scheme in Melbourne in 2016, which involved 1600 participants.



### 3. Smart traffic lights

Upgrade the bulk of Auckland's 830 signalised intersections with traffic lights that are able to:

- Detect, and adjust to, queue lengths accurately and in real time
- Provide video camera coverage so problems can be assessed and dealt with immediately
- Gather data about traffic movements, to identify opportunities to improve intersection design and layout



### 4. More park and ride

Auckland is seriously under-supplied when it comes to park and ride, and we're missing an opportunity to bring a chunk of new users onto public transport. Starting now, Auckland needs to deliver at least 10,000 more park and ride bays over the next decade.



### 5. Make walking and cycling to school safer

Work with schools to better understand and address safety concerns that are stopping parents from sending kids to school on foot or by bike.