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Auckland Metro Programme Newsletter

October 2025

KiwiRail in final stages of preparing for City Rail Link

As we move closer to the opening of the City Rail Link (CRL) next year, our teams continue to make huge progress on our major projects and upgrade works across Auckland's network.

The Rail Network Rebuild which progressively replaces foundations under the tracks and upgrades drainage in priority areas of the network, is in its final stages. Over the September/October school holiday closure, teams completed major rebuild work around Te Mahia, Takaanini and Homai Stations. These Government funded improvements are essential to support the increased services and faster journey times that the CRL will bring.

From the end of October, Rail Network Rebuild teams will be carrying out drainage and investigative works from Fruitvale Road Station to Swanson on the Western Line and around Morningside to Kingsland.

South Auckland work still to come includes the installation of turnouts in Papakura, which enable trains to move from one track to another. Work on these will start during Labour weekend for completion during the summer closure.

Alongside the rebuild work we are continuing with:

- Henderson Station third platform project
- Drury Rail Stations construction
- Scheduled maintenance
- Upgrading signalling systems, fibre and cables
- Testing and commissioning of CRL infrastructure

The CRL will increase rail capacity by at least 50 per cent on its opening day and significantly cut journey times. It'll take 35 minutes to travel from Henderson

to the city centre (saving 24 minutes) and the trip from Maungawhau Station (formerly Mt Eden) to Waitemata will be less than 10 minutes, which is about half the current time.

Thank you for your continued patience and cooperation as we continue to work in your community and prepare for all the benefits CRL will unlock!



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To complete essential work ahead of the CRL opening, two more network closures are scheduled this year:

Labour Weekend (24–27 October): The entire rail network will close for four days.

Summer Rail Upgrade (from 26 December): A four-week closure will allow for intensive upgrades.



Panel Lifters in use in Homai. These specialist machines significantly reduce the time it takes to lift long sections of track when teams are upgrading foundations under the rails.

Celebrating the Third Main Line opening

The section between Westfield and Wiri is the busiest part of Auckland's (and New Zealand's) rail network, with 380 freight services and 1500 passenger services travelling through the area each week. To ease congestion, accommodate faster train journeys and reduce delays, KiwiRail constructed the Third Main Line which is approximately 6.5km in distance, funded through the Government's New Zealand Upgrade Programme.

The project began with the design phase in 2019 and six years later, one of Auckland's major rail upgrades is officially open. Auckland One Rail has been running EMU (passenger unit) test trains on the new line over the past few months, and we will soon begin driver training for freight services.

The completion of the Third

Main Line marks a major service improvement for both freight customers and passenger rail.

To celebrate the completion of the project, the Minister for Rail, Rt Hon Winston Peters, and the Minister of Transport, Hon Chris Bishop, gathered at Auckland One Rail's Wiri EMU Depot. They were joined by Auckland Mayor Wayne Brown, Deputy Mayor Desley Simpson, and representatives from KiwiRail, Auckland Transport, Auckland One Rail, Auckland Council, Te Whatu Ora | Health NZ, and key freight partners.

Guests had the opportunity to check out the driver training simulator, which featured the new Third Main Line route. A special EMU train service then transported attendees on the new line to Middlemore Station, showcasing the newly completed line.





Auckland beautification trial complete – more murals coming soon

Our trial beautification initiative has completed its first year, with seven large-scale murals now brightening Auckland's rail corridor. These artworks aim to transform graffiti hotspots into vibrant community artworks, reflecting local themes of nature, culture and safety and shifting mindsets away from graffiti eradication.

Highlights include:

- **Papatoetoe & Manukau:** John Apelu Crouch, a local south Auckland artist, painted two retaining wall murals near the stations, which draw on local landscapes and name origins.
- **Parnell:** Jonny 4Higher
- **Sturges Road:** Lucia Laubscher turned a massive, tagged retaining wall into a celebration of native flora and fauna woven in with important rail safety messaging.
- **Ōtāhuhu:** Ross Liew and Margarita Vovna painted two

signal sheds and a container into colourful structures, with designs based around flowers from NZ, the Pacific, and Asia.

- **Quay Park:** In the heart of the city, Ngāti Whātua artists Caine Taihia and Uira Nahi collaborated on a mural honouring the heritage of the whenua.

We're proud of these efforts to enhance our network for Auckland train passengers, and we're excited to continue this initiative with more murals starting from late October. Know a local artist who might be a great fit? Ask them to get in touch via murals@kiwirail.co.nz.



Progress on Drury Rail Stations

Ahead of expected population growth in south Auckland, we're building three new train stations to make travelling by train more accessible and appealing to those living in the area.

Drury Railway Station recently reached a major milestone with the completion of the new Station Access Road. As part of the station works, the northern end of Flanagan Road was permanently closed, and traffic has now been redirected via the new access road. Our teams worked hard to ensure a smooth transition, resulting in zero disruptions for nearby residents. During the recent September partial rail closure, teams made the most of the two-week window to carry out further structural and construction work.

Similar progress is being made at Paerātā Railway Station. The steel frame for the pedestrian overbridge has been installed, along with the beams for the road overbridge. The road bridge spans the rail corridor and required a 600-tonne crane to lift six 35-metre beams, weighing 65,000kg each, into place during the September closure. Teams worked around the clock to complete this work, including pouring concrete to finish the bridge deck. The road bridge will provide access to car parks, bus drop-off areas, and the station entrance from State Highway 22.

Drury and Paerātā Railway Stations are expected to be operational by mid-2026, with Ngākōroa Railway Station to follow. The three stations were funded with \$475m Government investment.

Some of our Project team regularly attend NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi's quarterly community days at the Drury School Hall. The next session will be held from 10am to 1pm on Saturday 29 November. If you have any questions about our work, we'd love for you to come along and have a chat with us.



Western Power Feed progress powers ahead

Our West Coast Road Power Feed, located on KiwiRail land near Singer Park, is progressing rapidly.

This new feeder station is being developed to complement our existing power feeds at Penrose and Westfield, with an additional Southern Power Feed set to be constructed in the future. By adding more power feeds, we are enhancing the resilience of the network, supporting future growth, and providing a backup power supply in case of emergencies.

The Western Power Feed transforms three phase 33kV power from the Hepburn Road substation to single phase 25kV power for use across the rail network and utilises

new Static Frequency Converter (SFC) technology. This new technology allows us to feed power much further and more efficiently into the network when paired with one of our existing transformer power feeds.

The team has completed the trial phase of the project, which focused on testing how the new feeder station integrates with the wider Auckland electrified area.

Once fully complete, the West Coast Road Power Feed will make our network more resilient ahead of the City Rail Link opening next year.



Parnell tunnel and Henderson Station in focus over summer

KiwiRail regularly inspects and maintains all our rail assets around the country to ensure they're safe and well maintained. These extend from the brand new CRL tunnels to the Parnell Rail Tunnel which is more than a century old.

The Parnell Tunnel is an important part of the Auckland network, with nearby Newmarket being a major rail junction and Parnell Station being one stop away from Waitematā station.

We'll be making some repairs to the inside of Parnell Tunnel over the summer closure to ensure it's in good shape for the next hundred years. When KiwiRail teams are working in the tunnel, no trains can use it, for safety reasons.

Work will also continue during these closures to build a third platform at Henderson Station and install modern drainage along significant portions of the Western Line – particularly important in flood-prone west Auckland.

As we get closer to opening CRL, KiwiRail is working alongside our

partners to ensure rigorous testing and commissioning of the country's first underground railway.

We're starting to see the benefits

of the work achieved during these upgrade periods as existing rail tracks are upgraded to significantly support more trains and passengers.



Recent water blasting of the Parnell Tunnel reveals where repairs need to be made

