



# Mahurangi Trail Society Submission to the RLTP April 2021

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The Mahurangi Trail Society aims to provide safe efficient off road travel options connecting the communities of Mahurangi East to Warkworth and Matakana. These connections form part of the Matakana Coastal Trail and its local extensions.

The RLTP aims to increase active transport mode share by delivering safe and more integrated walking and cycling infrastructure, supported by a range of behaviour change activities, together with bicycle parking facilities and network-wide safety improvements including speed management. We support this and need it to definitely include Rodney District

In total, the RLTP programme is expected to deliver 200km of new and upgraded cycleways and shared paths across the region by 2031, the majority of which is included as part of the strategic cycling network. We support this and want it to extend to include the Matakana Coastal Trail - both its main route and its local extensions.

Auckland Council staff have not included the Pūhoi to Mangawhai Trail in the RLTP and thereby completely failed to understand that:

- It would provide genuine cycling commuter options for workers and students between Warkworth – Matakana – Snells Beach, all rapidly urbanising areas
- It provides the most cost-effective option per km to grow Auckland's cycling network
- AT have failed to provide walkers and cyclists with a safe active mode transport option in Auckland most dangerous roading area thereby completely failing to live up Auckland's Vision Zero Strategy

The proposed Matakana Coast Trail promotes walking and cycling which support efforts to tackle climate change, bring significant public health benefits, stimulate the economy, and create jobs as well as making the entire network more productive. Commuters will use this trail.

The Matakana Coast Trail will contribute directly to the government's land transport objectives in relation to economic growth and productivity, safety, environmental mitigation and the provision of transport choice. Cycling is a low-carbon emission, healthy and sustainable mode of transport and recreation, ideal for short to medium distance trips which will also increase the resilience of the region's transport network.

The trail will also make a significant contribution to the region's economic performance through significant resident, domestic visitor and international tourist use. The Matakana Coast Trail is a natural and integral fit for our country's transport, health, economic and environmental objectives and sets out a vision to positively contribute in creating the world's most liveable city.

Investment in the proposed cycle network will:

- Provide a high Level of Service for people who bike within an integrated transport network or walk / cycle for recreational purposes;
- Improve cycling infrastructure and facilities so that cycling makes a much greater contribution to network efficiency, effectiveness and resilience;
- Provide a key facility that promotes recreational activity and a 'nursery' for the uptake of active transport modes;
- Reduce carbon emissions by people choosing walking and cycling over vehicle journeys
- Ensure cycling is a viable, safe and attractive transport choice;
- Provide substantial health benefits to the widest section of the community;
- Improve Auckland's sustainability, liveability and attractiveness.
- Ensure Future Proofing and Community Resilience.

These features align with the objectives set out in the draft RLTP as follows.

### Emissions:

In the draft RLTP opening paragraph there is focus on climate. "Auckland Climate Plan aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2031. ....encourage transport mode switch to Public Transport and active modes" (walking and cycling).

On Page 28 of the Draft RLTP it states: For active transport to increase across Auckland, further investment is required to:

- Continue the delivery of the Urban Cycleway Programme to progress development of the cycle network
- Deliver of cycleways in areas associated with the Cycling Investment Programme
- Deliver important travel behaviour change programmes such as Safe Schools and Travelwise to encourage more people to use active transport
- Continue to develop and improve the cycling infrastructure on the cycle and micromobility strategic network
- Increase the comfort and safety of people on bikes across the wider transport system
- Make some historical cycling infrastructure fit-for-purpose and consistent with customer requirements.

### Safety:

- Consultation on the draft 2018 RLTP attracted 18,091 submissions and showed that Aucklanders were firmly behind greater investment to make the road network safer.
- Auckland continues to have one of the highest rates of pedestrian, cyclist and motorcyclist road deaths in the world.
- Rodney has the most dangerous roads in the Auckland region.
- It is a high speed, open road rural network with no footpaths, cycleways or off road facilities connecting the communities.
- Most road fatalities in Auckland occur on rural open roads and 26% of them are cyclists or pedestrians.
- There is no current provision for safe cycling or walking between the communities of Rodney.

- New safe cycleway infrastructure and shared paths have been built and many more are planned but they are restricted to the urban area of Auckland and not in the most dangerous rural areas of Rodney and Franklin.
- Current AT activity is in significant conflict with the stated goals of the recently adopted 'Vision Zero' strategy.

### Alignment of RLTP with Government Objectives and Auckland Plan (longterm plan to 2050):

- Make walking, cycling and public transport preferred choices for many more Aucklanders
- Move to a safe transport network, free from death and serious injury

### Health:

- With insufficient physical activity being a key risk factor for conditions such as cardiovascular disease, cancer and diabetes, removing barriers to walking and cycling provides a genuine opportunity to support Aucklanders to live longer and healthier lives

### Congestion:

- Auckland's transport strategy to avoid congestion increasing is to absorb future growth in travel demand by improving the public transport and active mode networks to encourage more Aucklanders to change the way they travel. Warkworth and surrounds need these advantages now. Without them growth could be a burden.

### Supporting Growth :

In response to the projected growth of Auckland's demand, the Auckland Unitary Plan has identified 15,000 hectares of predominantly rural land for future urbanisation over the next 30 years (sometimes referred to as 'greenfields'). A key area identified as part of this future urban growth land is Warkworth. No provisions for walking and cycling options to and around Warkworth have been properly considered in the RLTP. There is a significant opportunity to implement a walking and cycling network as growth is occurring and ensuring genuine commuter connections for students and workers.

### Our Request

We request that Auckland Transport incorporates into the planning framework the following:

1. Mandatory consideration of connections for walking and cycling with all new subdivisions. This includes taking into account the proposed Matakana Coast Trail and the Rodney Local Board Greenways Plan for our area.
2. Proactive support from AT for 'Corridor Security' or 'Creating Connectivity' for all routes both on road and off road across multiple land tenures.
3. When support is requested by Matakana Coastal Trail Trust or the Mahurangi Trail Society, that request is given a higher priority it might currently have. We need your timely support in building a world class trail.
4. The ability to request timely expert advice on dealing with road-trail interfaces as these are identified. e.g.
  - a. where an off-road route crosses an existing road
  - b. where the trail may be in the road corridor
  - c. identifying locations suitable for bus stops or public transport access

**The Matakana Coast Trail initiative is a low cost, low risk, highly deliverable opportunity that provides many beneficial outcomes to our local communities. The planned Matakana Coast Trail is so closely aligned with the objectives of the RLTP we urge you to include it officially in the RLTP. We will be attracting significant funding from alternative sources.**