

FRANKLIN-NORTH WAIKATO

TRACKS AND TRAILS STRATEGY



Image © Peter Kolejask

WALKING ACCESS
ARA HĪKOI AOTEAROA



shades of green

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



In April 2019 the New Zealand Walking Access Commission engaged with Shades of Green to develop a long-term strategic vision and direction for the tracks and trails network in the Franklin-North Waikato region. The development of the Strategy has involved ongoing input, workshops and discussion with iwi, local government and central government agencies, local community groups and key stakeholders. This document sets out a strategic direction for the Franklin-North Waikato region's tracks and trails network. The strategy utilises existing opportunities and addresses key challenges, and celebrates the capacity of the Waikato River and its many paths and journeys to inspire and connect people. The strategy is underpinned by the following vision.

Our Vision is to

Connect the trails and journeys of this place with the path of the Waikato River...

Connect locals and visitors with the Awa and the ways we can all care for the river's health, life and stories, both now and for generations to come...

and through these connections grow a trail network that creates active, healthy, and connected communities.

This vision is to be realised through an interconnected series of six linked strategies and six foundation trail projects that work to support and strengthen existing local and central government initiatives.

SIX LINKED STRATEGIES

STRATEGY 01

INTEGRATE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PATHWAYS WITH CONSERVATION PROJECTS

STRATEGY 02

ACTIVELY SUPPORT TANGATA WHENUA VALUES WHEN DEVELOPING TRAIL OPTIONS THAT CONNECT MARAE TO THE AWA

STRATEGY 03

GROW A NETWORK OF TRACKS AND TRAILS THAT CONNECTS LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO THE AWA, NEARBY NATURE AND EACH OTHER

STRATEGY 04

IMPLEMENT A CYCLING CORRIDOR FOR PEOPLE COMMUTING BETWEEN SETTLEMENTS AND ALSO VIA RAIL TO AUCKLAND AND HAMILTON

STRATEGY 05

DEVELOP AN OVERARCHING STORYTELLING/ EDUCATION PROGRAMME TO CONNECT THE REGION'S TRAILS WITH ITS STORIES

STRATEGY 06

CREATE SELECT TRAILS WITH HIGH VISITOR APPEAL THAT CONNECT WITH NATIONAL WALKING AND CYCLING NETWORKS

SIX FOUNDATION TRAIL PROJECTS

PROJECT 01

RIVER JOURNEY

PROJECT 02

LOCAL CONNECTIONS

PROJECT 03

GREEN COMMUTING

PROJECT 04

REGIONAL CYCLE TRAILS

PROJECT 05

TE ARAROA TRAIL

PROJECT 06

SHARED STORYTELLING

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SECTION A:

PROJECT CONTEXT

REGIONAL CONTEXT



Regional Context

The population of the greater Auckland region is rapidly growing, and will lead to significant changes in land-use in the next thirty years. Major motorway investments are underway that will facilitate residential development and subdivision in what are currently rural areas with high amenity values and naturalness.

This will greatly impact on the Franklin-North Waikato region in terms of population growth and also increased numbers of day and overnight visitors from Auckland and beyond. The appeal of the area for current residents, new residents and visitors lies in its natural environment, culture, local communities, recreational opportunities, and connections to nature.

The region's tracks and trails

Dedicated walking and cycling tracks and trails are a fundamental part of the infrastructure required by the region. They are essential to connecting the region's communities both with each other, and also the area's natural amenities. They are a vital part of the region's appeal of being a healthy, active and natural place to live. They also provide story-telling opportunities for tangata whenua to express cultural values and key connections. However, the region's current network of tracks and trails is sparse, often disconnected and inadequate to meet the rapid influx of people, and demand for the lifestyle-based values and well being residents and visitors seek.

Given current and projected investments in transport infrastructure it is timely and essential that consideration be given to the development of a regional scale of a coherent network of walking, cycling, and river-based routes, and that these opportunities are actively incorporated into the planning processes now underway.

PROJECT CONTEXT

Connecting Franklin-North Waikato Stakeholder Report

The Connecting Franklin-North Waikato Project began in late 2018. It is a partnership between the NZ Walking Access Commission, Waikato District Council, and the Waikato Regional Council, and supported by the Franklin Local Board of Auckland Council.

This has been driven by a desire by local community members to highlight the need for connected communities and connection with the outdoors. Community members brought the NZ Walking Access Commission and the three councils together for a public forum in mid-2018.

An outcome of the forum was the creation of Connecting Franklin-North Waikato Project. The project fosters a shared vision and strategy for public accessways across the region. It is intended these access ways will cater for

a variety of purposes, including recreation, tourism and commuting, via a variety of means, including walking, cycling and horse-riding.

In the first stage of this project, the NZ Walking Access Commission conducted extensive interviews with more than 60 people who live, work and play in the area from Pukekohe in the north, to Rangiriri in the south, and between the West Coast and Mangatawhiri to the east. This report gathers together many of the issues canvassed in these interviews. It identifies key themes and opportunities to build healthy, vibrant communities in the northern Waikato and southern Auckland.

The report can be found at walkingaccess.govt.nz/north-waikato

Key themes identified include:

1. Connecting communities in a time of rapid change, with cornerstone places being the towns of Pukekohe, Tuakau and Pokeno
2. Strengthening council / developer relationships
3. The significance of the Waikato River, the sea and natural amenities to the region
4. Telling local stories to create a sense of place

This strategy is developed as the next stage in the Connecting Franklin-North Waikato Project, in ways that will identify a linked strategy and foundation projects to address the key themes outlined in the stakeholder report. It has also seeks to create alignment between relevant community groups and local and regional councils in realising the region's tracks and trails vision.

CURRENT STRATEGIES

Relevant Strategies this document draws from and supports

Current local and central government strategies recognise the importance and value of tracks and trails in generating beneficial outcomes for communities and stakeholders. They also identify ways specific projects can be implemented through partnerships with local iwi and hapū community groups, NZTA, and as part of any proposals relating to landuse change and development.

These include:

- Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River
- Waikato Tainui Te Ara Whakatupuranga 2050
- Waikato District Council 2016 Trails Strategy
- Franklin Local Board 2018 Pukekohe-Paerata Paths Plan
- Waikato Regional Council 2014 Rural Cycling Survey
- Environment Waikato Regional Walking and Cycling Strategy 2009-15

These strategies have a strong and effective focus on the implementation of local trails and also their role as a form of local infrastructure, with one purpose of this strategy is to support this.

An additional function of this strategy is to provide a strong landscape and place-based dimension to the long-term planning of tracks and trails in the region, that links the development of a coherent network trails to strengthens and grows values of belonging and connectedness at both local and regional scales.

PROJECT PURPOSE

Brief

The Franklin-North Waikato Project has identified a need to foster a shared vision and strategy for public accessways across the region.

The purpose of this strategy is to:

1. Create a regional scale vision, rationale and narrative for substantially growing the region's network of tracks and trails. The vision and narrative should allow all involved in tracks and trails policy, planning, development, implementation, construction and use to see themselves as part of a bigger project. It should also readily invite new audiences to be involved in using and developing these trails.
2. Enable and support local community and trail groups to be actively involved in the development, engagement and implementation of these tracks and trails

3. Engage wider local communities with the project
4. Enable ways for landowners involved in any land-use change to support the development of long-term 'community to community' and 'community to nature' tracks and trails.

To meet these objectives this strategy develops the following:

1. A central vision to be used as the unifying kaupapa of the strategy
2. Six linked strategies that enable implementation of the vision and which can be championed by local government, iwi, and communities, and phased according to the availability of resources and investment
3. Six foundation trail projects that identify the next stage in the Connecting Franklin-North Waikato Project

COMMUNITY/STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT



Fostering a unifying vision

From our engagement with local community, iwi and community groups we identified a need for a overarching vision to strengthen to strengthen the case for investing in the region's trails projects.

The region's position is pivotal to wider Auckland and Hamilton regions

The Franklin-North Waikato region provides key connections to major trails and commuter routes including:

- Inter-regional cycle and walking trails (e.g. Waikato River Trail, Te Awa, Te Araroa Trail)
- Passenger commuter rail link that is extending south from Auckland to Hamilton

Putting the optimal routes 'on paper'

A number of specific walking/cycling routes have been considered in depth. However, we have identified there is a need to link these efforts into their part in growing a bigger picture in which the sum of all these initiatives is greater than each individual part.

Urgency to create future-proofed routes

The region is currently experiencing rapid growth. As roading and infrastructure investments increase it is essential to realise future potential in creating well-connected communities, both to each other and to nearby nature. Without this focus there is a high risk these values could be forgotten and disconnection and disfunction could be locked into the long-term structure of the region.

SECTION B:

KEY CHALLENGES

The section identifies key challenges that need addressing.



KEY CHALLENGE 01 CONNECT COMMUNITIES IN TIMES OF RAPID GROWTH

How can rapid growth occur in ways that create connected communities?



KEY CHALLENGE 02 CONNECTING WITH NATURE

How can key connections to our environment become an integral part of this process of development?



KEY CHALLENGE 03 RAIL LINK AND GREEN COMMUTING

How can the development of passenger rail services better enable active, healthy lifestyles and transport options?

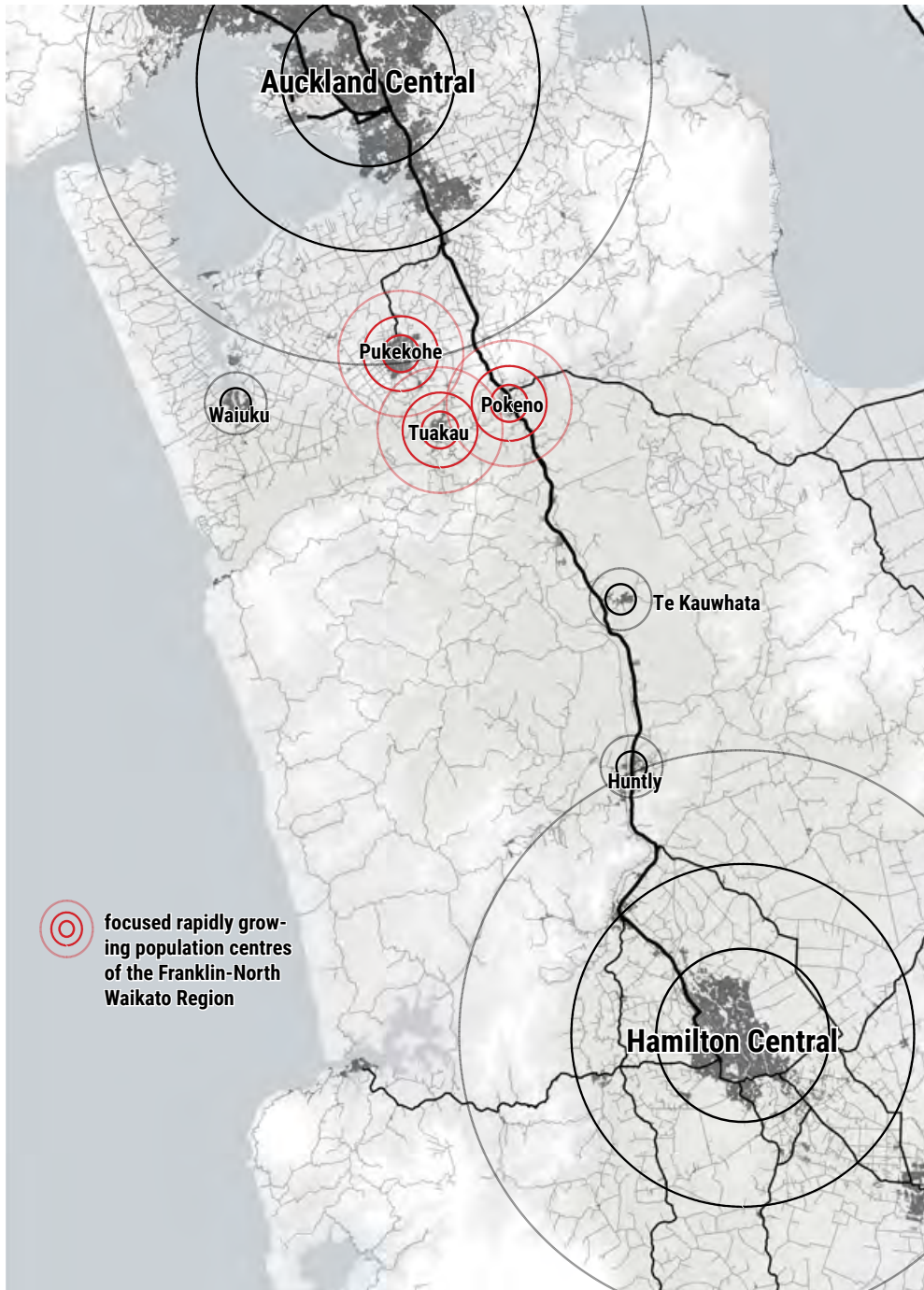


KEY CHALLENGE 04 CONNECTING WITH LARGER TRAILS

How can current and future walking and cycling trails create deeper experiences for locals and visitors and a stronger sense of belonging, identity and appeal for locals and visitors?



Image © Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency



KEY CHALLENGE 01

CONNECT COMMUNITIES IN TIMES OF RAPID GROWTH

How can rapid growth occur in ways that create connected communities?

The Auckland to Hamilton corridor

Population growth in this region is unprecedented with major investments in the Auckland-to-Hamilton motorway corridor are underway. However the push to develop connections between Auckland and Hamilton could lead to communities along the route subject to much growth yet - without adequate planning - becoming disconnected to important landscape features.

Many settlements, such as Pokeno, Meremere and Rangiriri are by and large cut off from the Waikato River and the significant cultural and historic associations the Awa holds. In Pokeno this disconnection also extends to the Puketutu / Mount William. Without regional scale planning such separations will become further entrenched and lead to communities becoming increasingly disconnected

from their surrounding environment and the values these places have for them.

Also important is the provision of green commuting options that connect communities to both passenger rail and neighbouring centres. Otherwise there will be an ever-increasing reliance on private vehicles as both the main mode of transport for commuting to work, and also when accessing local recreation opportunities. As well as increasing the burden on roading infrastructure it also disadvantages families and whānau without ready access to private transport.

In addition provision of trails to support commuting and recreation, and connections to nearby nature supports health and well being objectives that benefit the community across all ages and demographics.





KEY CHALLENGE 02

CONNECTING WITH NATURE

How can key connections to our environment become an integral part of this process of development?

Connecting with the river, the sea and natural amenities

The role of the Waikato River as a key connector of these communities is increasingly well-recognised. Historically the river was the major transport route. The potential of on-water journeys should again be considered when considering options for recreation, tourism and potentially even commuting.

It is essential to view the river as a connector of people and towns, and to work to secure meaningful and readily accessible connections to and along the full length of the river. The Waikato River has shaped this landscape and its people for many generations and directed the region's sense of place. Planning for the growth of towns on its banks must be done in ways that embraces and enhances the mana of the river, its value to each community, and its centrality to the Waikato region.

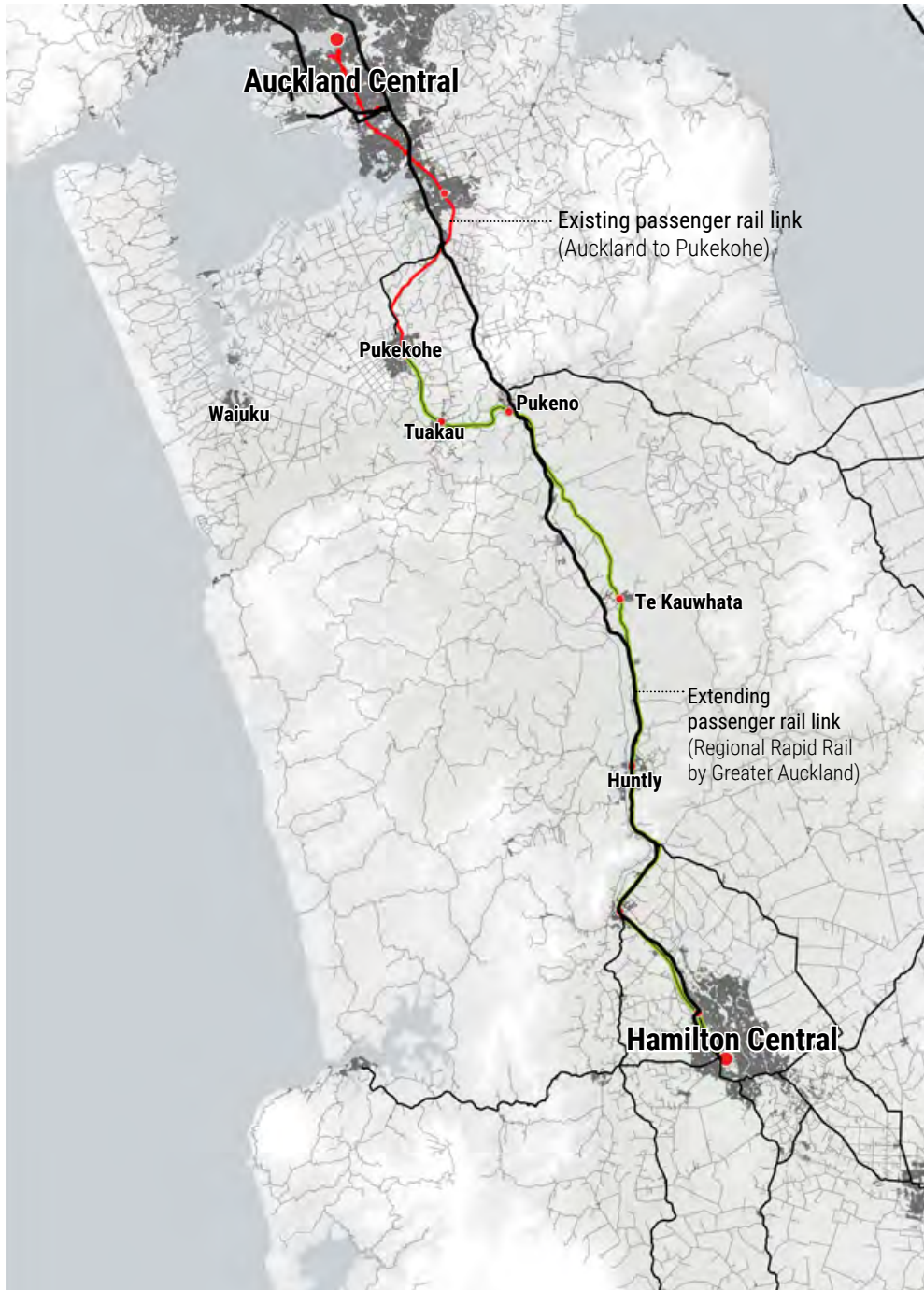
There are a number of other areas of high natural value that have been highlighted in interviews, that can also be connected to this expanded trail network that focuses on the Waikato River. These include:

- Awhitu Peninsula
- Hunua Ranges
- Lake Waikare
- Whangamarino Wetland
- Mount William / Puketutu
- Waiuku Forest

These places offer recreation opportunities for walking, cycling and horse-riding. While these opportunities will primarily be used by locals, there is potential for them to be promoted to both domestic and international tourists. In particular, the market for daytrips and weekend breaks for Auckland and Hamilton residents could be significant if quality experiences are targeted.



Image © Jan Kaluza



KEY CHALLENGE 03

RAIL LINK AND GREEN COMMUTING

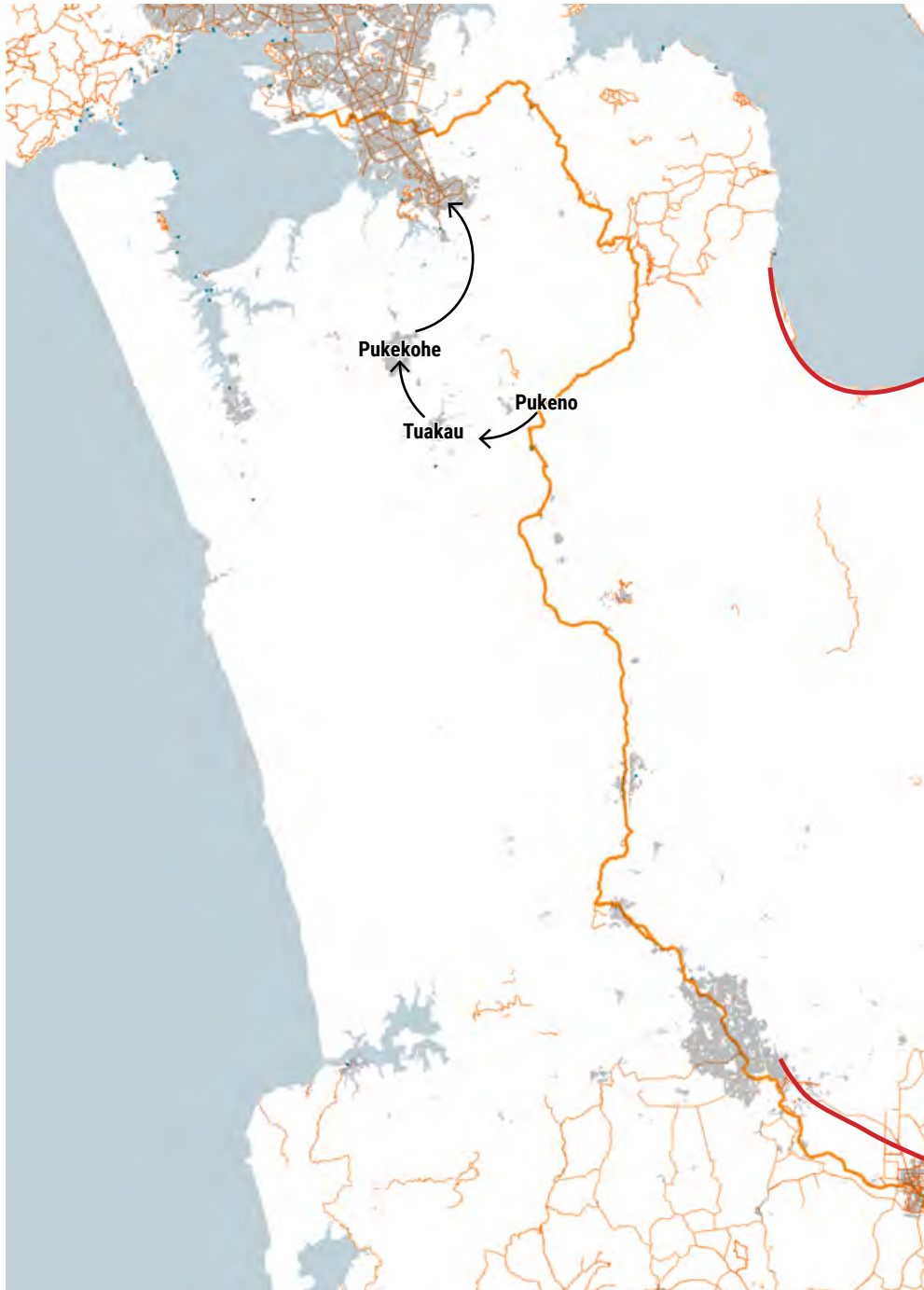
How can the development of passenger rail services better enable active, healthy lifestyles and transport options?

Passenger Rail Link

Establishing a passenger rail service between Hamilton and Auckland is a transformational project for the Waikato region that is being actively progressed.

The rail service will also create opportunities for weekend recreation with passengers coming into the region from Auckland and Hamilton. As well as park and ride options there is an opportunity to develop trails that support cycling and hiking experiences that involve journeys linking stations along the rail network. This includes options for recreational cycling, walking and river routes that connect centres with each other and the Waikato River.





KEY CHALLENGE 04

CONNECTING WITH LARGER TRAILS

How can current and future walking and cycling trails create deeper experiences for locals and visitors and a stronger sense of belonging, identity and appeal for locals and visitors?

Te Araroa Trail (walking corridor)

Currently the Waikato section of Te Araroa Trail is portrayed as one of the least interesting parts of this Cape Reinga to Bluff national walking trail, with the region rarely featuring in any promotional material.



Required commuter biking routes

Rapidly growing centres including Pokeno, Tuakau and Pukekohe will benefit from commuter biking routes for those who travel for work and to school, such as connecting Pokeno with Tuakau and Tuakau High School.

Great Ride cycle trails

There are opportunities to connect the region with the wider network of Great Ride cycle trails. For instance the Waikato River Trail and Te Awa River Ride could be extended along the lower reaches of the river and also connect into south Auckland. Also connections can be made east towards the Hauraki Rail Trail.

SECTION C:

THE VALUES OF TRACKS AND TRAILS IN AOTEAROA - STUDIES

This section looks at the role of trails in Aotearoa New Zealand and previous regional scale projects led by the New Zealand Walking Access Commission.

EARLY PATHWAYS AND HIGHWAYS



Image © National Library of New Zealand | A-187-030 | Pencil work by William Swainson



Image © National Library of New Zealand | PA1-f-179-54-1 | Photograph by Thomas Pringle

The first trails

Aotearoa was settled by Māori at places along its coastline at places where there was safe harbour and abundant food. Trails around headlands and between settlements were formed, with an extensive network of routes developed inland along rivers, or following their banks, with these historic trails providing access to food gathering sites and the settlements that formed there. Trails were also established over high mountain passes providing access from one coast to the other.

European settlement

European settlement followed a similar pattern of settling the coast, then establishing routes between these coastal settlements and inland. While historical accounts make mention of discoveries - for instance McKinnon finding a land route to Milford Sound - most of these trails came from knowledge about earlier established routes shared by local kaumātua.

FROM TRACKS FOR WORK TO RECREATION



Image © National Library of New Zealand | 1/2-066563-F | Unidentified photographer



Image © National Library of New Zealand | PAColl-6181-03 | Unidentified photographer

Tracks and trails for recreation

In the 20th Century an extensive network of walking trails was developed to provide access for hunters who were paid to cull deer, whose exploding numbers were decimating the forest. Over time these tracks, along with the many huts built for these hunters, became the backbone of the extensive network of recreation facilities, now managed by the Department of Conservation, and enjoyed by local recreationalists and international visitors alike.

The surveyor's legacy

During the period of European settlement the land was subdivided into individual parcels of land, a process that created enormous ongoing issues regarding customary use and title to land. The surveyors' attempts to imagine the type of future land-use required involved establishing road reserves, whose title was vested in the Crown. Many of these 'unformed legal roads' or 'paper roads' have remained in public ownership and today retain the potential to be the site of walking and cycling trails that could connect places and people together both now and into the future.

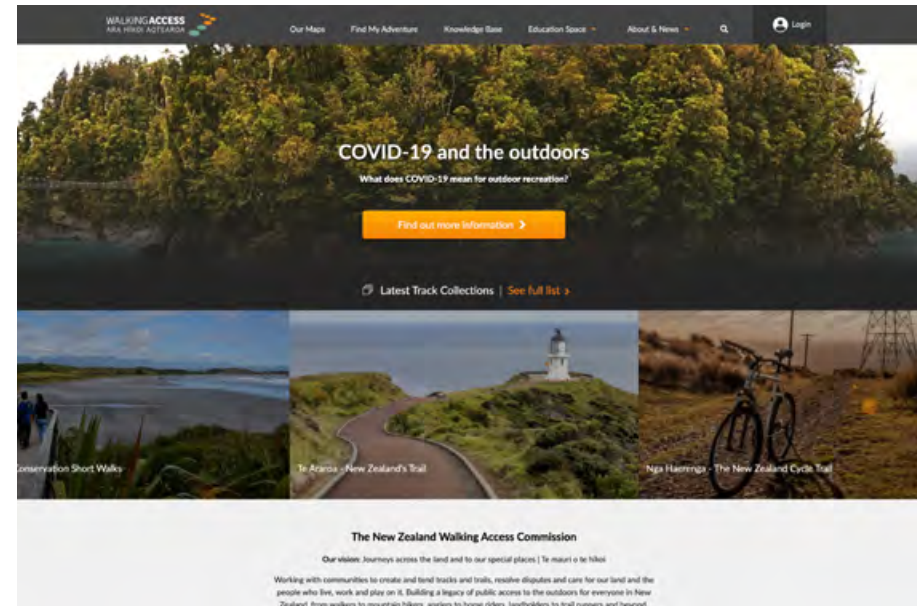
RIBBONS ACROSS THE LANDSCAPE



Image © Te Araroa

Te Araroa - New Zealand's Trail

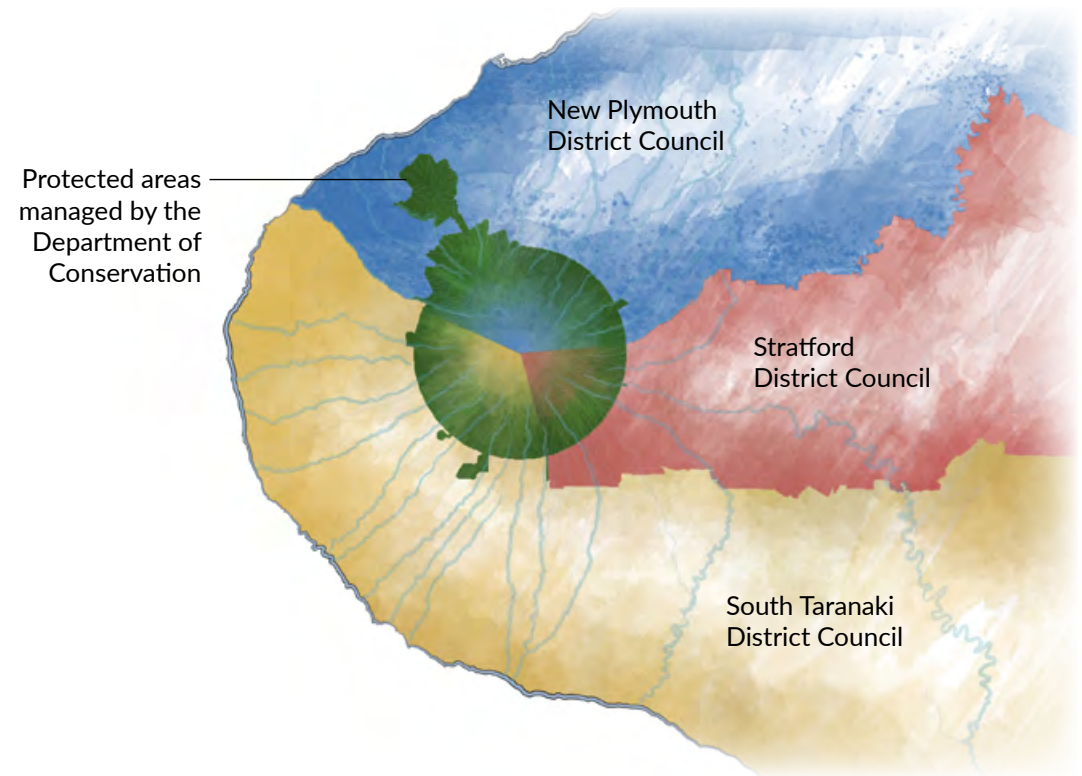
Te Araroa Trail traverses the length of Aotearoa and is the ultimate 5-month hiking experience. Yet it is a different kind of trail from normal back-country tramping tracks. Te Araroa connects settlements, townships and cities, with public conservation lands and national parks. Te Araroa's vision is to create a journey into the nature, culture, history and hospitality that makes this country and its people unique. The trail is in its infancy with the best routes through each region still being fully established.



New Zealand Walking Access Commission Ara Hīkoi Aotearoa

In 2008 the New Zealand Walking Access Commission was established by an Act of Parliament with the purpose of enabling journeys across the land and to this country's special places. The Commission seeks to work with communities to create and tend tracks and trails, resolve disputes and care for the land and the people who live, work and play on it. Its goal is to build a legacy of public access for everyone in Aotearoa, from walkers to mountain bikers, anglers to horse riders, landholders to trail runners and beyond.

CASE STUDY PROJECT 01 - TARANAKI TRACKS AND TRACKS STRATEGY

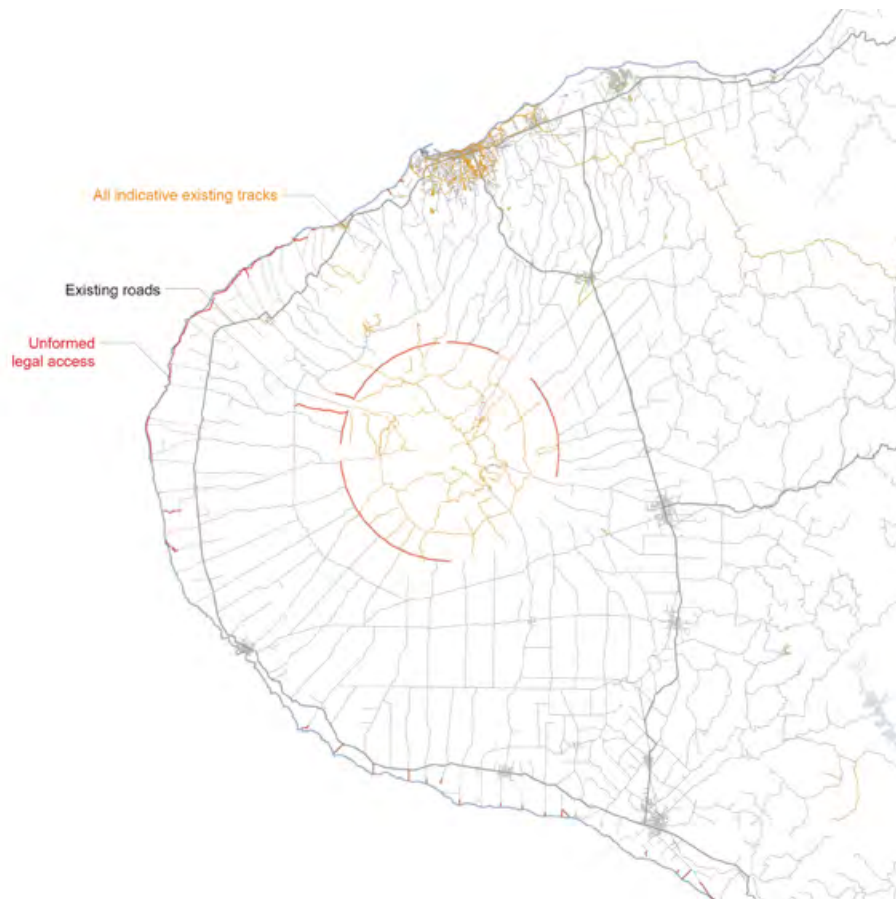


Taranaki Tracks And Trails Strategy 2040

In The purpose of this project, facilitated by the New Zealand Walking Access Commission, has been to develop a strategic vision and direction for the tracks and trails network in the Taranaki Region.

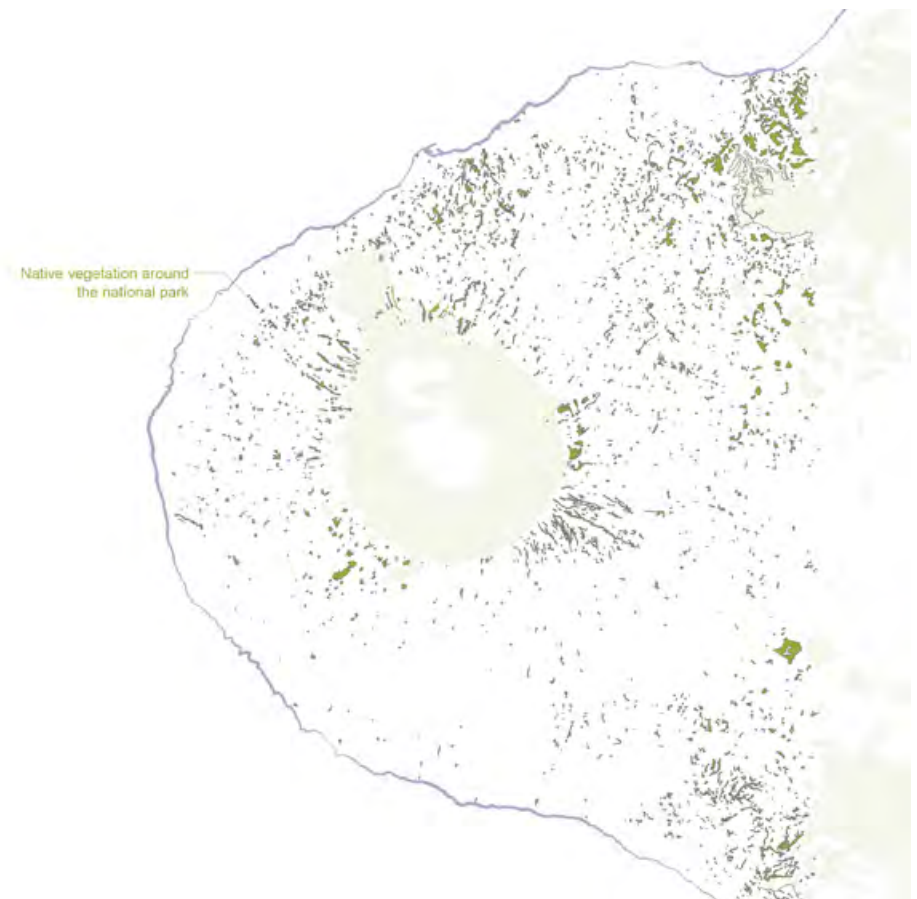
Seeing the region and the mountain as one.

This work resulted in the development in 2018 of the Taranaki Tracks and Trails 2040 Strategy which identifies a series of journeys by which people can connect with the mountain and its mana. This project, which involved working with local iwi, district councils and the Department of Conservation included breaking down individual agency boundaries so the mountain could be recognised as one indivisible whole.



Utilising existing trails network and unformed legal access

The study identified the region as a place already rich in pathways and potential routes, which could underpin the strategy.



Multi-purposed trails network that also strengthens ecological connectivity

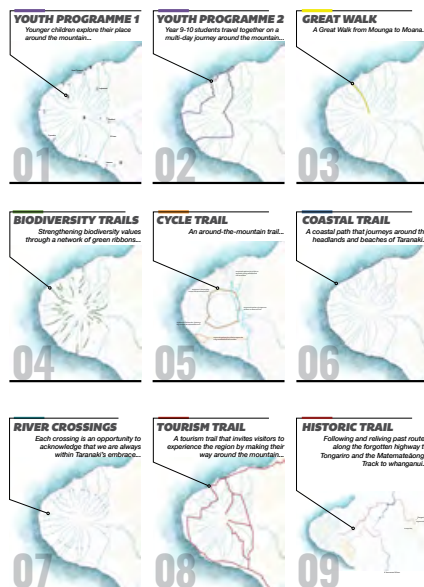
It also considered the potential of trails as a mechanism that can further connect people with its natural ecosystems and the growing number of biodiversity corridors being grown around the region. This includes seeing trails as an essential component of ecological restoration.

TRACKS STRATEGY

The map illustrates a strategic network of tracks radiating from a central point in Ethiopia towards the coast. The tracks are shown as a series of lines connecting the interior to the coast, representing a strategic network. The map is color-coded: light green for land and blue for water. Labels in Amharic and English identify various regions and cities. The tracks represent a strategic network connecting the interior to the coast.

The Taranaki Tracks and Trails vision invites everyone – local and visitor alike to join in Taranaki’s journey by making their own journeys around the mountain, along routes woven from mountain to the sea.

NINE KEY PROJECTS



Enabling nine core projects to support the region's deep connections to the mountain

The Taranaki Tracks and Trails 2040 Strategy sets out to create a movement of people around the mountain.

Elsewhere in the world, trails make historic sites the focus of a pilgrimage. Here the promise of being connected to that which deeply belongs here – the mana of Taranaki – invites all people to share in a journey that can shape and change people.

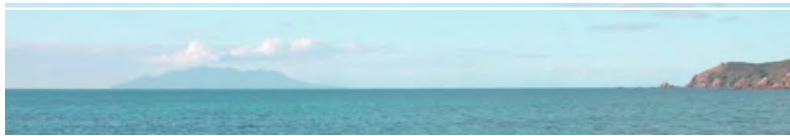
In this none of the nine projects that were identified is to be dominant. Each works to strengthen the mana of the mountain in ways that enables Taranaki's presence to draw people to it, not just from the region or Aotearoa, but also from around the world.

BE MOVED BY TARANAKI



CASE STUDY PROJECT 02 - MATAKANA COAST TRACKS AND TRAILS STRATEGY

MATAKANA COAST TRACKS AND TRAILS STRATEGY VISION



Matakana Coast Tracks And Trails Strategy 2040

The purpose of the Strategy is to focus community efforts on generating on the ground impact that achieves greatly improved tracks and trails in the Matakana Coast Region.

Developing a coherent and 'big picture' action plan that addresses rapid changes

The vision and supporting narrative works to align the efforts of mana whenua, trail builders, the community, funders, and end users to create, sustain and use the trail network. The Strategy identifies ways rapid changes in population and development growth due to extensions to the Auckland motorway, can be the catalyst for creating a 'big picture' network of tracks and trails that allows residents and visitors to connect with the region's nature and each other.

MATAKANA COAST TRACKS AND TRAILS STRATEGY

— VISION —

the forests, beaches and oceans
that stretch from Pūhoi to Mangawhai
connect this landscape together as one

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Our
vision is to create a series of trails
that join together to connect us with our coast and forests
and the presence of the ocean Te-Moana-Nui-o-Toi that is always in our midst

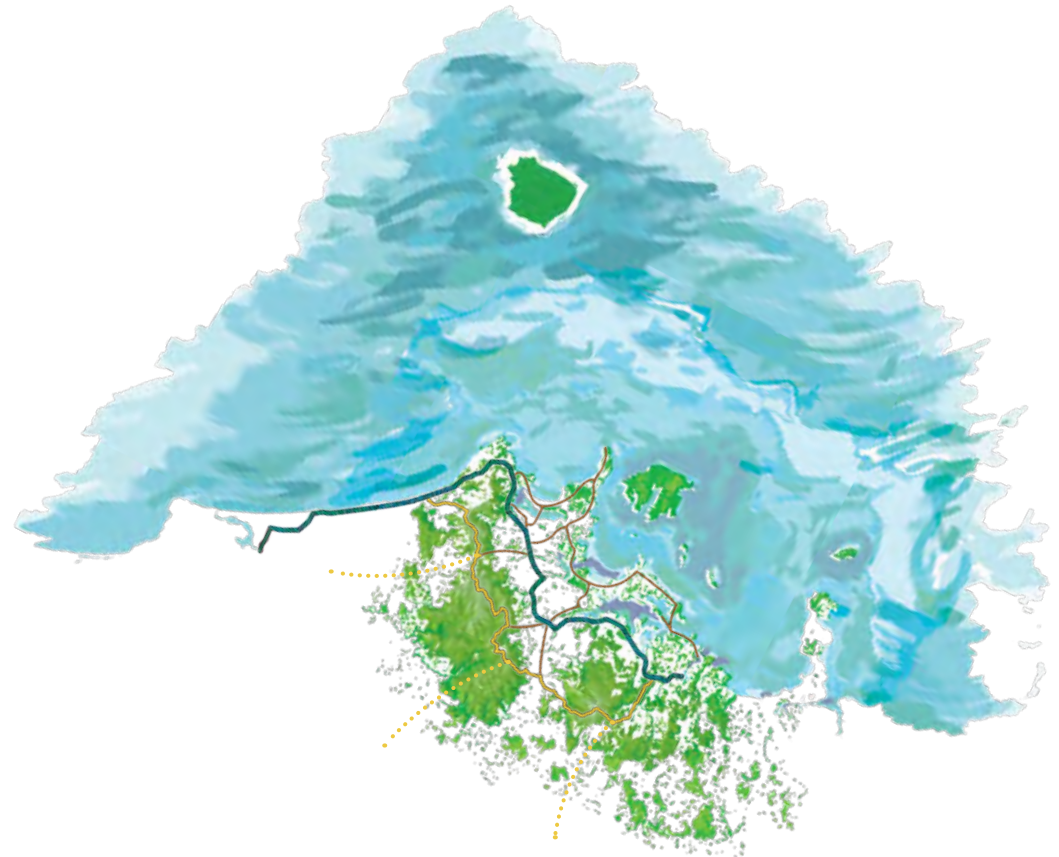
...a three-step strategy is to grow...

(1)
a vibrant, world-class coastal trail connecting Pūhoi to Mangawhai,
so all people can walk and cycle in the presence of this coast

(2)
local trails that connect our communities to each other
and onto local beaches and reserves

(3)
a network of simple, low-impact trails that journey back into our forests
and across to the Kaipara

+
with
each trail
and every step
seeking out moments to connect
with the values, tupuna and spirit of the
natural world of forests, coasts and ocean
that keeps a watching presence over
this special place



++++++

a tracks and trails strategy being developed by
the Matakana Coast Trails Trust, Ngāti Manuhiri, Auckland Council
and New Zealand Walking Access Commission

Setting out a tracks and trails vision for the region

Three core projects are identified in the regional tracks and trails vision to direct the efforts of the Matakana Coast Trails Trust focus.

Structuring a network of trails to support locals and attract visitors

This includes the development of a vibrant world-class coastal trail spanning the region, local trails that connect communities to the coast, and a network of low-impact trails that connect back into the forests and hills.

A SHIFT FROM DESIGNING TRACKS AS SIMPLY INFRASTRUCTURE THAT CONNECTS PLACES...



Images © Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency, GPS 56

Approaching tracks and trails as infrastructure

Tracks and trails are physical routes that provide access for people to journey across the land. Various standards identify the form of trail, and its dimensions in terms of the type of walking, cycling and travel they are intended to provide for. This supports a focus regarding who such trails are for. Yet around Aotearoa there is a significant shift in how trails are made. Rather than by funding solely drawn from central or local government, volunteer groups and trusts are being formed to grow trails in local communities, in ways that take them beyond being just infrastructure.

TO BEING VALUED AS A KEY PATHWAY TO CREATING PEOPLE-PLACE CONNECTIONS



Images © John & Rochelle Kean, epitree, catspyjamasnz, Russell Street, Ron Knight, Sheila Thomson, Dino Borelli, Robert Engberg, Tony Morris

Valuing tracks and trails as a way of bonding with places, in ways that build lifelong connections for people and communities

Trusts are becoming motivated to develop trails for the bonds they create for the volunteers and their communities, and the sense of being part of creating an enduring legacy. In this process trails begin to become places in their own right that people treasure for what they reveal about their community's values. Conservation activities and trail making, and sharing stories along these trails are all ways people connect to place. Values of belonging, stewardship and sustainability over time become embedded. In this trails are an invitation to both grow places and communities together.



SECTION D:

VISION

BEING GUIDED BY THE LAND

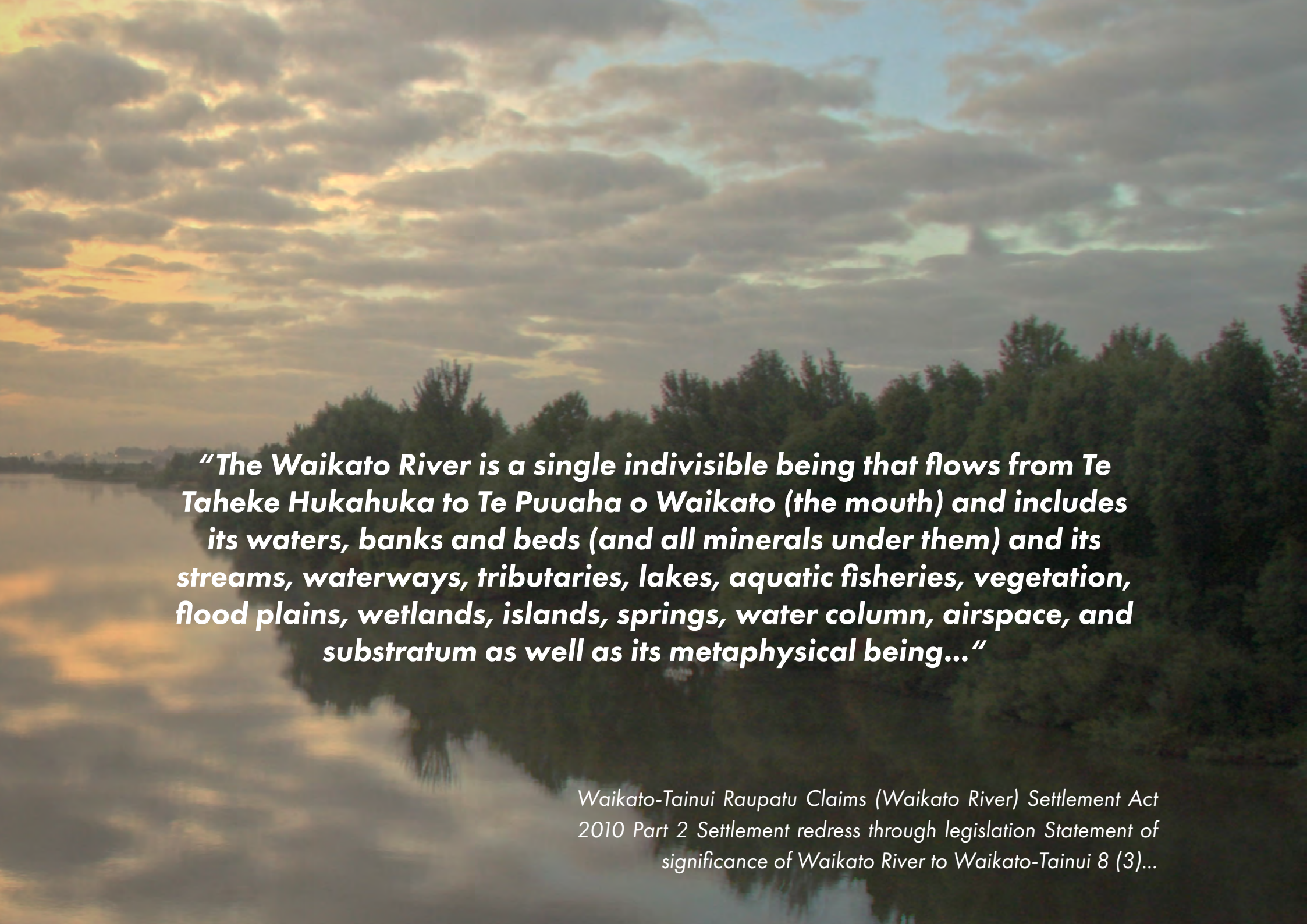
The common thread in the development of tracks and trails in Aotearoa is the way the landscape and its waterways, as well as its stories shape their form and purpose.

In Taranaki it is about being connected to the maunga in its fullest sense, while in Matakana it is about being connected to the coast - not as a thin edge between land and sea but as a 'thick' place that extends both inland and out into the water.

In the Connecting Franklin-North Waikato Project it is the Awa, the Waikato, which shapes this place and its people, directing the rich fabric of settlements and activities that make up this place. In terms of determining a long-term vision for the region's tracks and trails it is the opportunity to connect with the Awa in its fullest sense that should guide this strategy and the projects identified.



VISION



“The Waikato River is a single indivisible being that flows from Te Taheke Hukahuka to Te Puuaha o Waikato (the mouth) and includes its waters, banks and beds (and all minerals under them) and its streams, waterways, tributaries, lakes, aquatic fisheries, vegetation, flood plains, wetlands, islands, springs, water column, airspace, and substratum as well as its metaphysical being...”

*Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Act
2010 Part 2 Settlement redress through legislation Statement of
significance of Waikato River to Waikato-Tainui 8 (3)...*

An aerial photograph of a river system, likely the Colorado River, flowing through a semi-arid landscape. A prominent blue line traces the main river channel and its tributaries. Several areas, particularly in the central and lower-middle sections, are highlighted in a solid green color, possibly indicating protected land, wetlands, or specific land-use zones. The surrounding terrain is a mix of light tan and grey, with some darker patches of vegetation or urban development. The word "VISION" is overlaid in large, bold, blue capital letters on the left side of the image.

VISION

Map of the region showing part of the extent of the Waikato, including its waterways, wetlands and lakes.

“The Waikato River is a single indivisible being that flows from Te Taheke Hukahuka to Te Puuaha o Waikato (the mouth) and includes its waters, banks and beds (and all minerals under them) and its streams, waterways, tributaries, lakes, aquatic fisheries, vegetation, flood plains, wetlands, islands, springs, water column, airspace, and substratum as well as its metaphysical being...”

*Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Act
2010 Part 2 Settlement redress through legislation Statement of
significance of Waikato River to Waikato-Tainui 8 (3)...*



“Our vision is for a future where a healthy Waikato River sustains abundant life and prosperous communities who, in turn, are all responsible for restoring and protecting the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River, and all it embraces, for generations to come.”

VISION

***The vision of the Connecting Franklin-North Waikato
Project is to ...***

***Connect the trails and journeys of this place
with the path of the Waikato River...***

***Connect locals and visitors with the Awa
and the ways we can all
care for the river's health, life and stories,
both now and for generations to come...***

***and through these connections
grow a trail network that creates active, healthy,
and connected communities.***

SECTION E:

SIX KEY STRATEGIES

How can we better connect with the Awa and what are the ways trails can support this? In response we identify six linked strategies.

A series of **linked strategies** with each building on the connections established by the others...



STRATEGY 01
INTEGRATE
DEVELOPMENT
AND
IMPLEMENTATION
OF PATHWAYS
WITH
CONSERVATION
PROJECTS

STRATEGY 02
ACTIVELY SUPPORT
TANGATA
WHENUA
VALUES WHEN
DEVELOPING TRAIL
OPTIONS THAT
CONNECT MARAE
TO THE AWA

STRATEGY 03
GROW A
NETWORK OF
TRACKS AND
TRAILS THAT
CONNECTS LOCAL
COMMUNITIES TO
THE AWA, NEARBY
NATURE AND
EACH OTHER

STRATEGY 04
IMPLEMENT
A CYCLING
CORRIDOR
FOR PEOPLE
COMMUTING
BETWEEN
SETTLEMENTS AND
ALSO VIA RAIL TO
AUCKLAND AND
HAMILTON

STRATEGY 05
DEVELOP AN
OVERARCHING
STORYTELLING/
EDUCATION
PROGRAMME TO
CONNECT THE
REGION'S TRAILS
WITH ITS STORIES

STRATEGY 06
CREATE SELECT
TRAILS WITH HIGH
VISITOR APPEAL
THAT CONNECT
WITH NATIONAL
WALKING
AND CYCLING
NETWORKS

STRATEGY 01

INTEGRATE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PATHWAYS WITH CONSERVATION PROJECTS



Image © Ron Knight

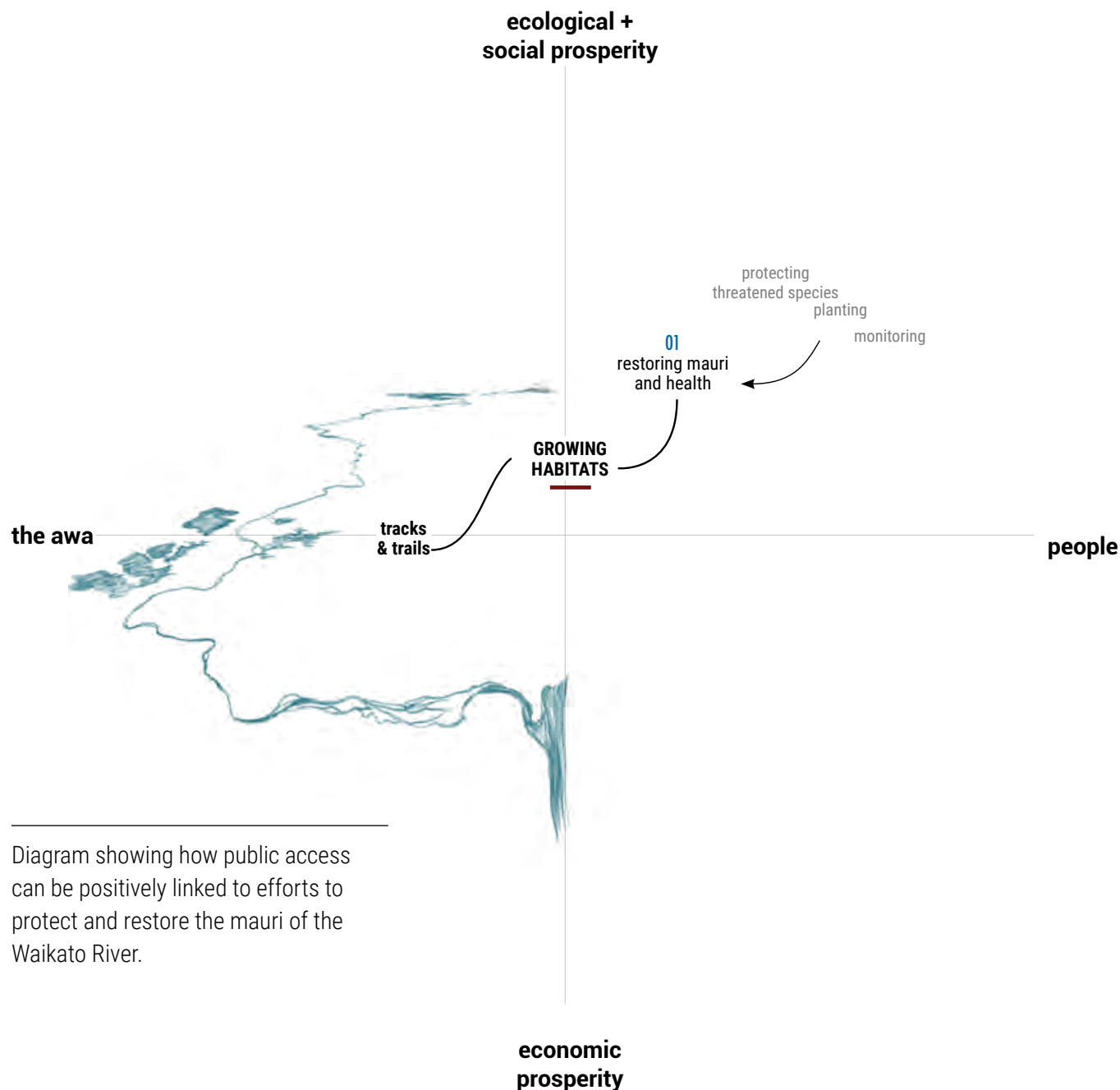


Diagram showing how public access can be positively linked to efforts to protect and restore the mauri of the Waikato River.

Challenge

Trails and public access can support efforts to strengthen biodiversity values. Increased access can allow more effective stewardship of conservation projects and support ongoing requirements for planting, weeding, trapping and monitoring. Collaboration with community groups and conservation trusts is essential to ensure all future tracks and trails projects actively support the vision outlined in the Vision & Strategy for the Waikato River.

Opportunity

The region is important in supporting the whole-of-river ecological connectivity of the Waikato River, and the many significant habitats it sustains.

- The Waikato River Authority (WRA) was established in 2010 as the custodian of the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River. The Authority is also the body responsible for overseeing the implementation of the clean-up of the river.
- Each year, significant funding is made available to support local restoration projects including restoring the habitat of whitebait, wetland areas, and the extension of native planting areas.

STRATEGY 01

INTEGRATE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PATHWAYS WITH CONSERVATION PROJECTS

Strategy

The existing tracks and trails network can be a means for local communities to more strongly integrate values in the maintenance of existing trails and the establishment of new trails and trail extensions.

- Councils and the Department of Conservation continue to support and grow volunteer and community-driven efforts to improve water quality, pest control and replanting at key identified sites including Lake Waikare, Whangamarino Wetland, and Puketutu/Mount William.
- Where appropriate, provide improved public access to support projects aimed at improving biodiversity and water quality of wetlands, lakes, rivers and streams, and where appropriate identify ways to link this access with options for recreation.
- Opportunities to support ecological connectivity through tracks and trails also include the Hunua Ranges and the route the Te Araroa Trail takes.
- Existing tracks also create opportunities for biodiversity projects.

STRATEGY 01 ACTIONS

Actions

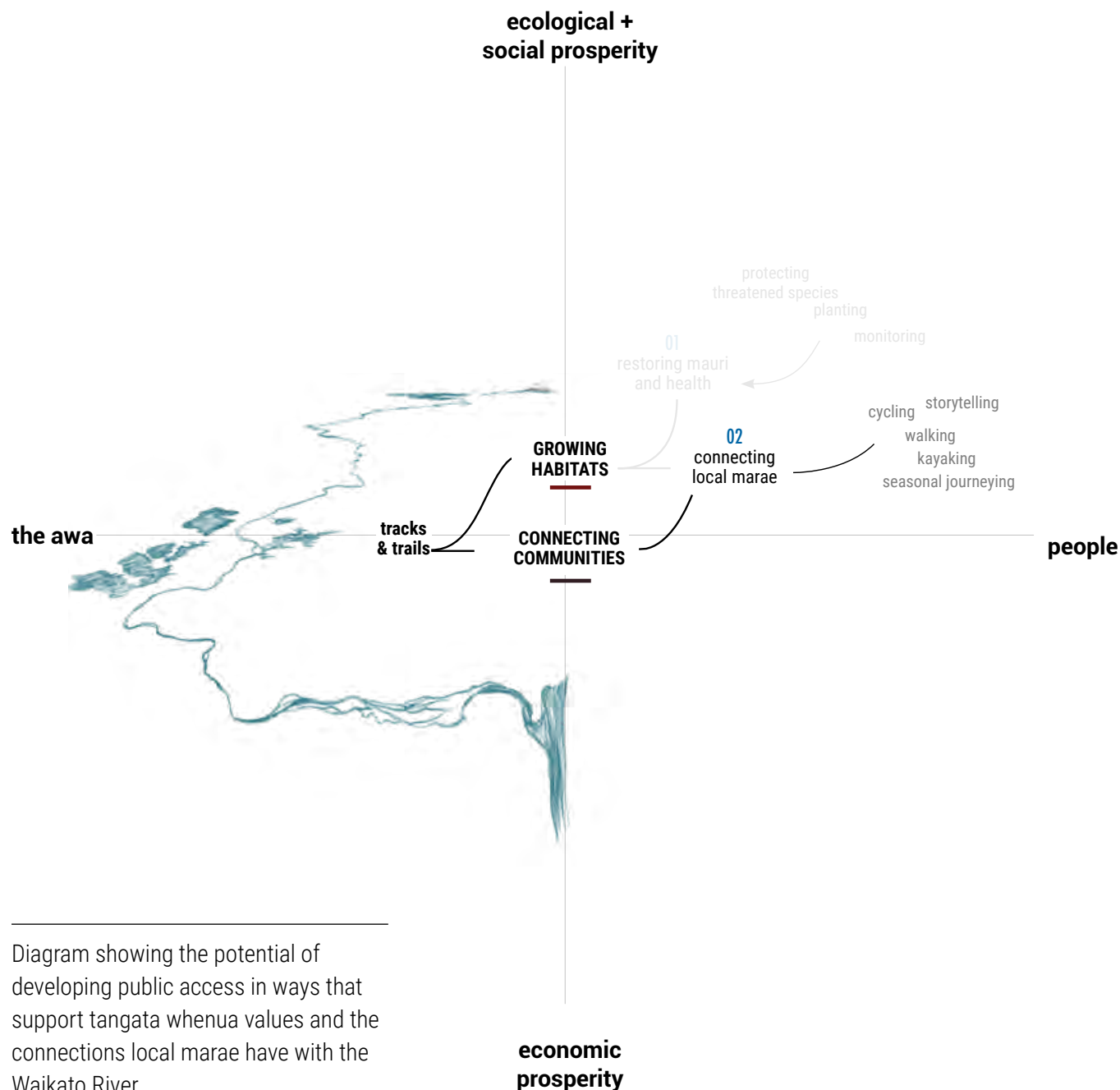
1. Communicate goals of this strategy with all conservation groups operating in the region, including those driving projects funded by the Waikato River Authority.
2. Work with iwi and hapū in the planning and implementation of these conservation trails.
3. Work with experts to develop conservation strategies to be included in trail implementation projects including:
 - Native planting
 - Restoration of native habitats
 - Pest eradication
 - Covenancing
 - Interpretation and engagement
 - Fencing
 - Managing litter and other adverse effects
4. Communicate opportunities to embed ecological restoration values within the region's tracks and trails projects, as well as neighbouring sites.
5. Establish a protocol defining how trail volunteer groups can be supported in the implementation of projects along, and around the Waikato River and its connected wetlands, rivers and streams.
6. Run regular events to guide and involve residents and visitors in these projects, to establish a sense of community ownership of river improvements.
7. Strengthen community participation and presence in local conservation activities and events to better link trail volunteers with conservation volunteers and the work that can be undertaken together when developing and maintaining trails.



STRATEGY 02

ACTIVELY SUPPORT TANGATA WHENUA VALUES WHEN DEVELOPING TRAIL OPTIONS THAT CONNECT MARAE TO THE AWA





Challenge

Tangata whenua values need to be actively supported while developing trail options and implementing the strategy.

- Practices of kaitiakitanga, manaakitanga, whanaungatanga and mahinga kai are fundamental values for the ways people can shape and be shaped by the Waikato River.

Opportunity

Tangata whenua have a deep relationship with the mountains, rivers, lakes and environment in general, which are indivisible and have defined Māori as kaitiaki for this area since before the arrival of Europeans.

- The Connecting Franklin-North Waikato Project can support and strengthen the role of tangata whenua as kaitiaki and to ensure that the fundamental values of the Awa and environment are maintained.

Strategy

- Work closely with iwi on all future tracks and trails projects to ensure wherever appropriate, places and sites are protected;
- Connect local marae with the Waikato River in the Waikato catchment via walking, cycling and water-based routes.

STRATEGY 02 ACTIONS

ACTIVELY SUPPORT TANGATA WHENUA VALUES WHEN DEVELOPING TRAIL OPTIONS THAT CONNECT MARAE TO THE AWA

Actions

1. Actively engage iwi in the consideration and development of all trail options.
 2. Work with iwi to ensure trail planning and implementation projects positively link in with local marae.
 3. Establish a protocol defining how the intellectual property and cultural knowledge shared by mana whenua is to be used.
 4. Work with iwi to ensure cultural and heritage narratives and values are incorporated in trail implementation project. This includes:
 - Identifying practices, values and taonga of significance.
 - Sites and places of significance to mana whenua:
 - Places and paths for active kai gathering
 5. Work with Auckland Council, Waikato District Council and Waikato Regional Council to actively identify and strengthen the presence of tangata whenua in current and future development and implementation of tracks and trails strategy.
- Iwi ancestral connections for Waikato Tainui
 - Marae locations
 - Pā locations
 - Origin of place names based on historical figures
 - Battles / sites
 - Wāhi Tapu – sacred sites and places
 - Rawa
 - Tūturu - Customary Resource Area



STRATEGY 03

GROW A NETWORK OF TRACKS AND TRAILS THAT CONNECTS LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO THE AWA, NEARBY NATURE AND EACH OTHER



Image © Auckland Hiking Group

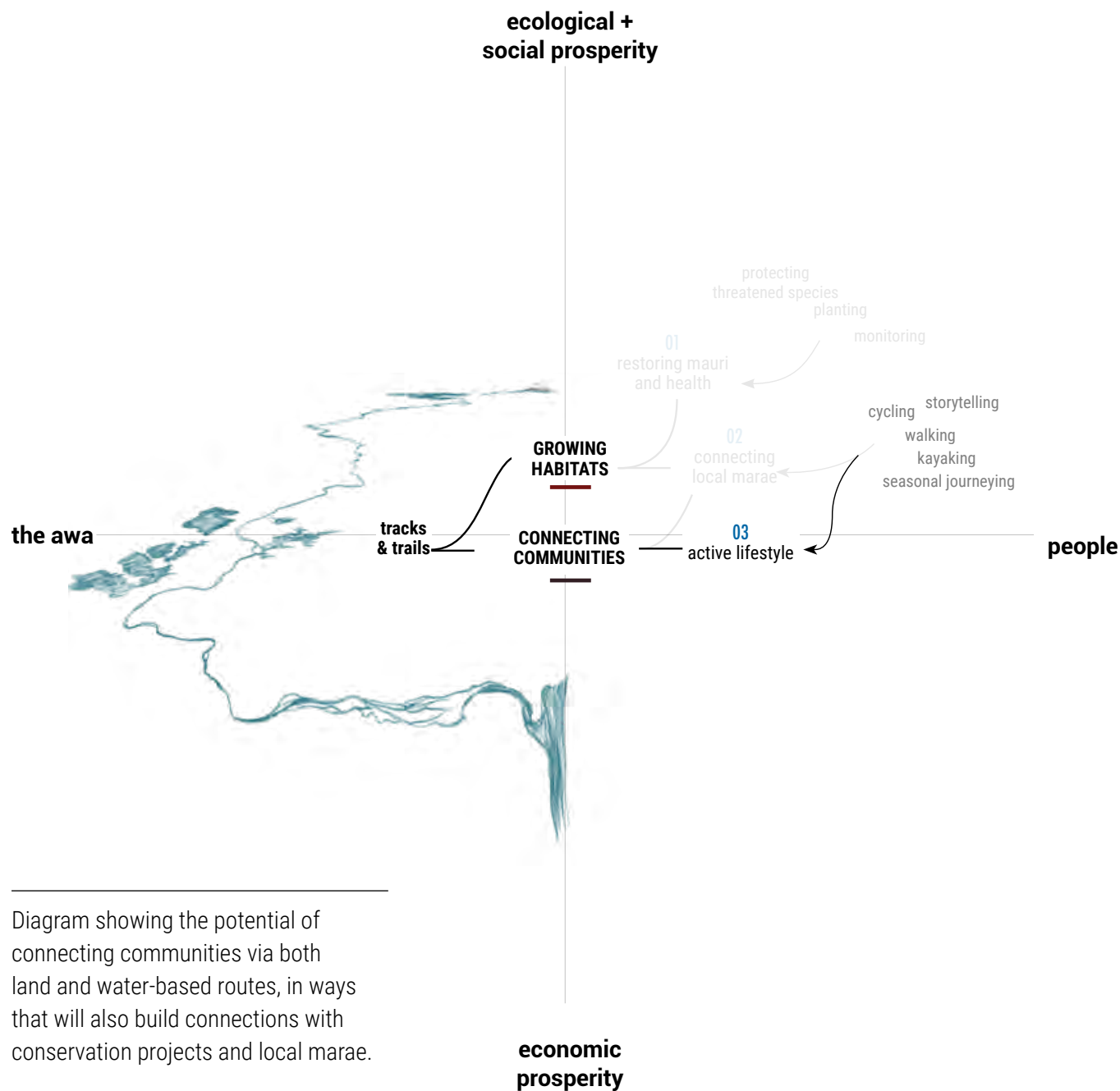


Diagram showing the potential of connecting communities via both land and water-based routes, in ways that will also build connections with conservation projects and local marae.

Challenge

Most centres lack viable walking and cycling connections to the Waikato River and also nearby nature usually due to the main highways and railway lines cutting off viable access.

Also these centres lack walking and cycling connections to each other. Nor are such connections an optional component of development.

As populations increase these issues and pressures will grow and there is a pressing need to provide quality cycling and walking access both between centres and nearby nature an urgent priority. Undertaken in a coherent way they can build both social well being and economic value.

STRATEGY 03

GROW A NETWORK OF TRACKS AND TRAILS THAT CONNECTS LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO THE AWA, NEARBY NATURE AND EACH OTHER

Opportunity

The scale of development and population growth in the region suggests a network of local tracks and trails can be readily incorporated in plans for growth in all the population centres.

There is the opportunity to determine the optimum long-term linkages to the Awa, nearby nature and neighbouring communities, and ensure local government planning processes prioritise this requirement.

Strategy

Identify the optimal level of walking and cycling opportunities that each community should have access to.

Determine the routes and sites respective communities should have connections to.

Determine which routes should be developed including the standard of amenity values to be provided.

Determine which other routes should have access secured, even if there are insufficient resources available in the short term for their implementation.

STRATEGY 03 ACTIONS

Actions

1. Identify and confirm for each community a preferred network of 'community to river', 'community to nearby nature', and 'community to community' routes for walking, cycling and, where appropriate, horse riding.
2. Determine the standard of trail to be provided including trail type, function and primary experience factors. This also includes optimum gradients, duration, proportions of on-road versus off-road route, options for water-based journeys and associated experience factors.
3. Work with local government, iwi, community and stakeholders to ensure inclusion of routes within local plans.
4. Work to ensure NZTA, KiwiRail and developers are aware of these preferred networks so they can be incorporated in any land-use change proposals.
5. Work with local government, iwi, community and stakeholders to improve and where appropriate grow the number of places the Waikato River and its connected streams, rivers and water bodies can be accessed.





STRATEGY 04

IMPLEMENT A CYCLING CORRIDOR FOR PEOPLE COMMUTING BETWEEN SETTLEMENTS AND ALSO VIA RAIL TO AUCKLAND AND HAMILTON

Challenge

The current tracks and trails network is limited and fragmented. It primarily offers walking opportunities within public conservation lands and within townships.

For rapidly growing town centres, including Pokeno, Pukekohe and Tuakau, it is important to ensure safe connections between these communities are provided. There is also a long-term requirement for all communities to be connected by efficient cycling routes.

Pukekohe is currently the primary entry point for commuting to Auckland. Safe off-road or back-road connections to Pukekohe Train Station for commuters, in particular from Tuakau, Pokeno and Drury need to be identified and secured.

As passenger rail options are extended south it is important cycling routes are identified that take commuters safely to the nearest railway station. The ability to cycle and the commute by train is important to reduce private vehicle congestion and also ensure passenger services are successfully adopted by the public.

Most current options for walking and cycling routes depend on providing shared access on existing roads. Costs to achieve this may be relatively high due to:

- Narrowness of existing road network creating significant safety issues for cyclists and walkers and all users.
- Lack of shoulders on current roads.
- Multiple driveways accessing these roads.
- A key user groups being school children.

- Requirements for paths to safely cross from one side to the other due to topographical constraints (eg steep banks).
- An ineffective, unsafe and unpleasant walking and cycling network will result in locals and visitors continuing to rely on vehicles for all local travel. There are already increasing volumes, with local roads already reaching capacity due to growing population. Upgrading local roads to increase capacity for vehicles on these roads will be costly. Some residents have identified potential routes that avoid main roads and which warrant more detailed examination.

STRATEGY 04

IMPLEMENT A CYCLING CORRIDOR FOR PEOPLE COMMUTING BETWEEN SETTLEMENTS AND ALSO VIA RAIL TO AUCKLAND AND HAMILTON

Opportunity

The scale of roading development between South Auckland and Hamilton currently taking place suggests a potential network of local tracks and trails can be readily incorporated in plans for growth in all the population centres.

There is opportunity to link commuting requirements with recreation and tourism routes, especially as an option to utilise the passenger rail to provide weekend destination options.

Public transport networks will grow with new bus routes beginning in some centres, and a pilot commuter train from Hamilton to Auckland undergoing evaluation.

Strategy

Identify cycling and/or walking routes that link Pukekohe, Tuakau and Pokeno with an alternative network of walking and/or cycling trails that where possible avoids main roads.

Ensure these connections do not stop at town boundaries but continue onto proposed railway station sites.

STRATEGY 04 ACTIONS

Actions

1. Identify and confirm for each community a preferred network of 'community to rail hub, and 'rail hub to nature' options, for cycling and walking. This includes options for:
 - Pukekohe Train Station to Tuakau Train Station
 - Tuakau Train Station to Pokeno Train Station
 - Pukekohe Train Station to Drury Train Station
2. Determine the standard of trail to be provided including trail type, function and primary experience factors. This also includes optimum gradients, length, and desired percentages of on-road versus off-road route.
3. Work with local government, iwi, community and stakeholders to ensure inclusion of routes within local plans.
4. Work to ensure NZTA, KiwiRail and developers are aware of these preferred networks so these are incorporated in any land-use change proposals.





STRATEGY 05

DEVELOP AN OVERARCHING STORYTELLING/ EDUCATION PROGRAMME TO CONNECT THE REGION'S TRAILS WITH ITS STORIES

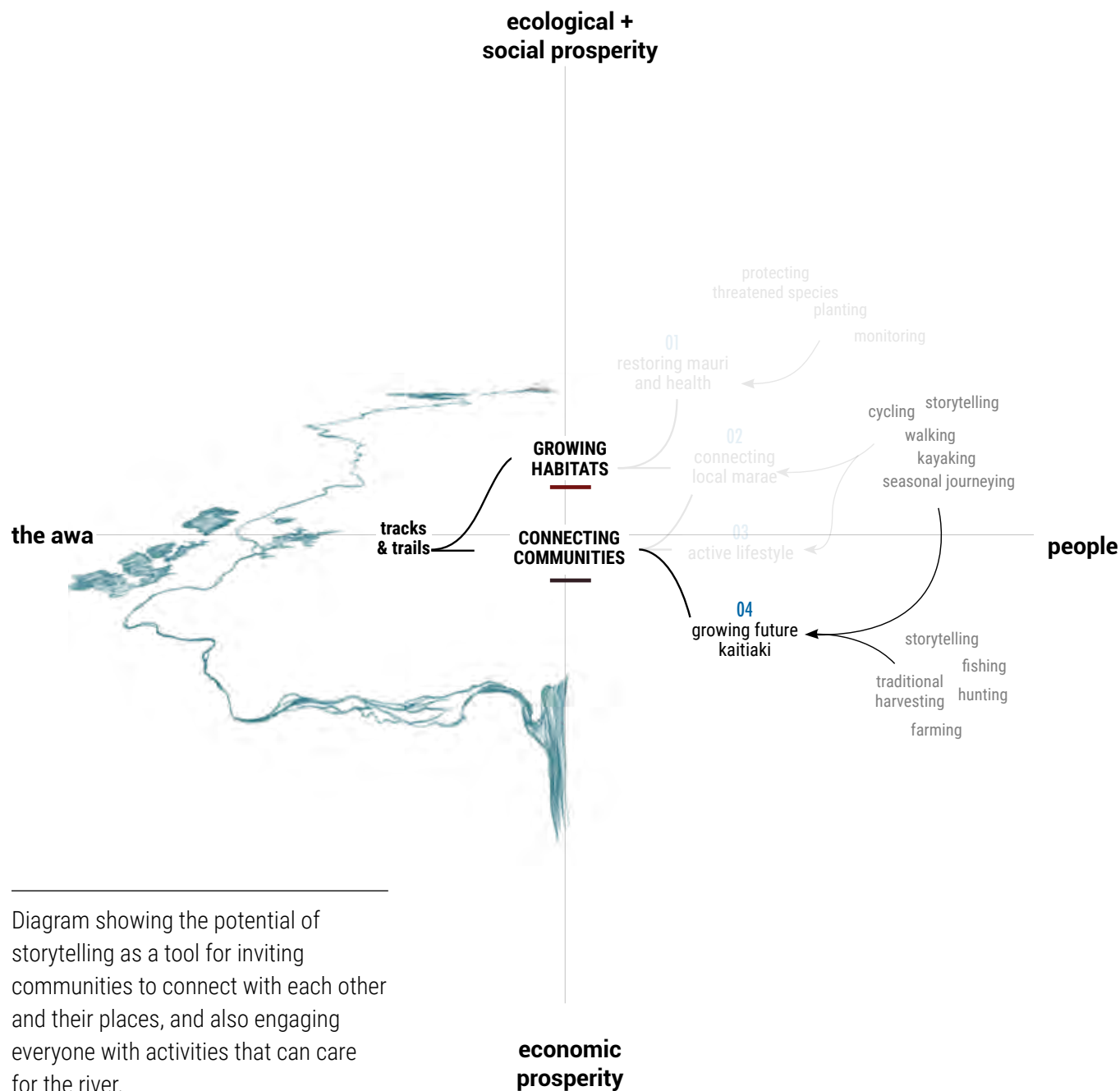


Diagram showing the potential of storytelling as a tool for inviting communities to connect with each other and their places, and also engaging everyone with activities that can care for the river.

Challenge

Tracks and trails can build a sense of place for residents, and in particular those new residents who are part of growing numbers of people moving to the area. Through interpretation and other techniques tracks and trails can reveal stories of place. However, when considering options for storytelling, it is important to determine whose story it is and whether people are comfortable with it being told.

Opportunity

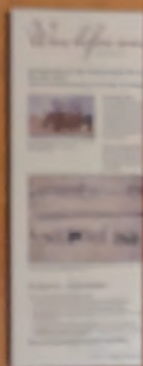
The region is rich with stories, both Māori and Pākehā, that can be told through signage and events, and also digitally. As well as engaging locals and visitors there is the opportunity to enable new residents learning more about the place they have chosen to call home.

STRATEGY 05 ACTIONS

DEVELOP AN OVERARCHING STORYTELLING/ EDUCATION PROGRAMME TO CONNECT THE REGION'S TRAILS WITH ITS STORIES

Strategy

- Work with iwi, hapū and community groups to share and celebrate the stories of each place and the connections they have with the Awa, with nature, their communities and their past.
- Integrate interpretation in the trail design so key stories are revealed over the duration of the journey.
- Work with iwi, hapū and community groups to develop a single overarching framework with tools to guide development and implementation of tracks and trails based storytelling projects.
- Identify appropriate sites and/or printed/digital mediums where stories can be best told.
- Partner with councils, the Department of Conservation, local trail building enthusiasts and others to implement storytelling projects and sites.
- Work with schools to develop education programs that encourage students to protect and restore the mauri of the Awa, and engage them with key values including manawhenua, kaitiakitanga biodiversity, history and discovery.
- Develop a large format trails map to be distributed to the community and stakeholders that expresses the way current and proposed trails network enrich the community, ecology, and everyone's experience of the region.
- Host regular events to guide locals around their area, sharing stories of the place, its culture, history and ecology.



The Great South Road

After a December 1861 visit to the Waiwera Governor Grey asked General Cameron, 36, to put his men to work on constructing a road from Dargy in the Waiwera River to "undertake other defensive or aggressive operations against an enemy or circumstances may require".

This was in effect an extension of the Great South Road and a precursor to the formation of the Waiwera.

Black Island

STRATEGY 06

CREATE SELECT TRAILS WITH HIGH VISITOR APPEAL THAT CONNECT WITH NATIONAL WALKING AND CYCLING NETWORKS



Image © Danny Radzuweit

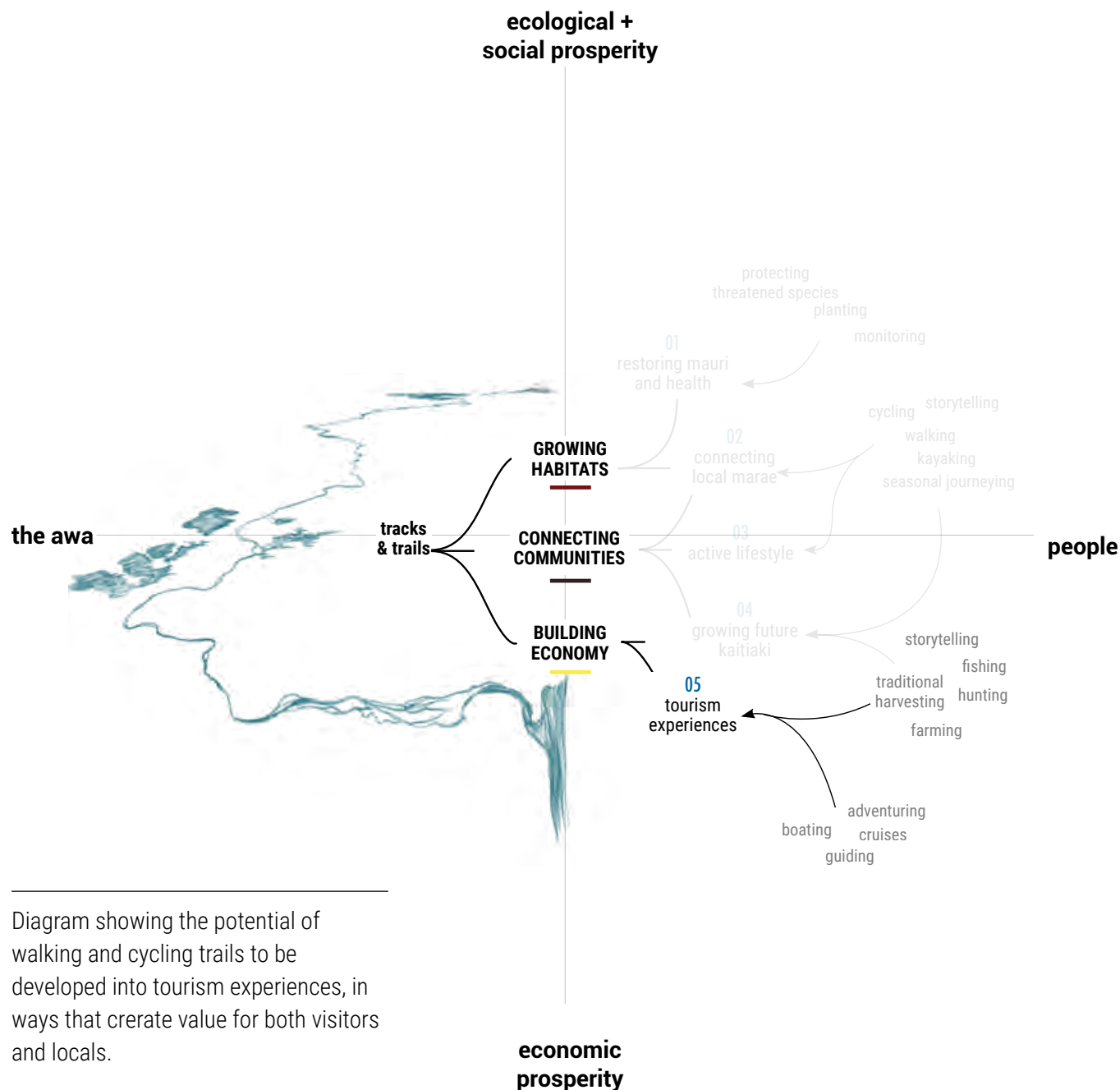


Diagram showing the potential of walking and cycling trails to be developed into tourism experiences, in ways that create value for both visitors and locals.

Challenge

Population growth in Auckland and Hamilton will result in an increased demand in recreational opportunities in the region.

- Currently there are limited options for full-day walking and cycling in the region.
- Te Araroa in this area is considered a dull and unattractive option, with much of the trail in the area requiring considerable improvement. In particular, Te Araroa walkers are forced to cross a dangerous stretch of State Highway 1 between Pokeno and Mercer, and elsewhere walk under motorway bridges.

Opportunity

Situated between Auckland and Hamilton, the region can become a readily accessible recreation area with the Waikato River being a core attraction.

- Inter-regional and regional walking and cycling trails can attract locals and visitors to enjoy the special places of the country.

STRATEGY 06

CREATE SELECT TRAILS WITH HIGH VISITOR APPEAL THAT CONNECT WITH NATIONAL WALKING AND CYCLING NETWORKS

- Te Araroa trail is an increasingly popular jewel in New Zealand's trail networks. Each year, the number of people walking the full length of the trail increases, both from locals and foreign tourists. Section walking is also popular in many places, where the trail provides a high-quality experience.
- Changes in recent months to the trail route due to track closures caused by Kauri Dieback in the Hunua Ranges offers the opportunity to consider the best long-term route options with the potential for tracks supporting commuting and recreation in the area also becoming part of the formal Te Araroa route.
- Scenic options, such as the Mt William Walkway and new tracks along the banks of the Waikato River, could form an attractive and high-quality section of the trail.
- Similarly, there is strong potential to increase cycle touring in the area.
- As public passenger rail extends south from Auckland, it will become easier for day visitors to begin their cycle journey at Pukekohe, or at Pokeno, rather than Papakura.
- This opens up new areas of possibility including at Waiuku, the hills around Onewhero, and potentially riverbank links further south.
- There is also the opportunity to connect eastwards along the base of the Hunua Ranges to the Hauraki Rail Trail.
- Connections further south to the popular Te Awa River Ride and Waikato River Trail open up the possibility of a cycle trail that takes people along the full length of the Waikato.
- Investment in higher quality and well-connected walking and cycling trails can bring significant economic benefits to current tourism operators and local communities.

Strategy

- Develop long-term options for implementing sections of high-quality scenic walking trails that can become an integral part of the Te Araroa Trail, to be enjoyed by both visitors and locals.
- Develop options for implementing high-quality cycling trails that connect south with the Te Awa River Ride, and east to the Hauraki Rail Trail.

STRATEGY 06 ACTIONS

Actions

1. Undertake a review of the current Te Araroa routes, and identify options for alternative Te Araroa routes to provide a richer experience for users journeying this part of the country.
2. Evaluate other options, such as developing Mt William Walkway as the gateway leading to new tracks along the banks of the Waikato River, and around the eastern boundary of the Whangamarino Wetland.
3. Consider cycle routes that can connect the Te Awa River Ride and the Waikato River Trail with Pokeno and the Waikato River mouth.
4. Identify a preferred route that connects eastwards from Pukekohe with the Hauraki Rail Trail.



SECTION F:

SIX FOUNDATION PROJECTS

A series of key projects led by local and regional partners, which in combination realise the region's tracks and trails vision and strategy.



PROJECT 01
RIVER JOURNEY



PROJECT 02
LOCAL CONNECTIONS



PROJECT 03
GREEN COMMUTING



PROJECT 04
REGIONAL CYCLE TRAILS



PROJECT 05
TE ARAROA TRAIL



PROJECT 06
SHARED STORYTELLING

PROJECT 01

RIVER JOURNEY

Activate the Awa as the primary pathway that enables and guide journeys in the region.



Image © easynl

UNDERLYING VALUES:

The Waikato River has been a culturally significant pathway for generations. It is essential that everyone continues to be able to connect with the Awa, including being able to journey down the river and its tributaries, streams, wetlands and lakes. This involves inviting locals and visitors to take part in the Waikato River's journey, and growing a deeper relationship with the Awa.

KEY OUTCOMES:

OUTCOME 1A |

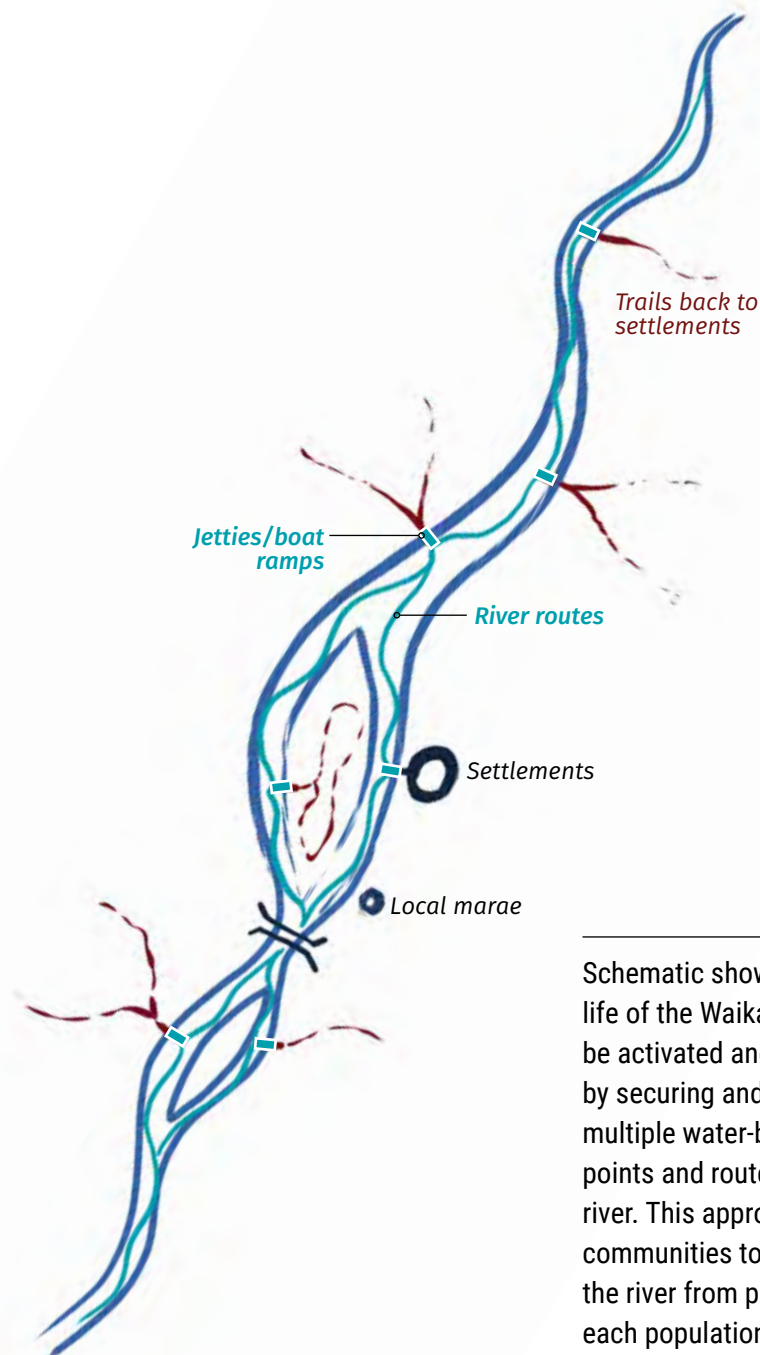
Communities can access the river in every population centre...

- Everyone can access, take part in, share, and benefit from water-based journeys on this section of the Waikato River and its connecting rivers, streams, wetlands and lakes, including kayaking, canoeing.

OUTCOME 1B |

Local marae are physically connected to the Waikato River via land and water-based routes...

- This includes options for walking, cycling, horse riding and water-based pathways.



Schematic showing ways the life of the Waikato River can be activated and strengthened by securing and growing multiple water-based access points and routes along the river. This approach can allow communities to journey along the river from places close to each population centre and local marae.

PROJECT 02

LOCAL CONNECTIONS

Connecting local communities with each other, and to the Awa.



Image © Alex Rajala

UNDERLYING VALUES:

The Waikato River has a special and enduring place in the hearts of local residents. It is important this relationship is shared with new residents who will also call this place home. Being able to walk and cycle down to the river will provide opportunities for current and new residents to better appreciate, care, protect and restore the mauri of the Awa.

KEY OUTCOMES:

OUTCOME 2A |

Connecting communities and Mount William/ Puketutu to the Waikato River...

- Mount William/Puketutu is the northern gateway to the region. It is important that a trail be established that provides a seamless connection between the maunga, Pokeno and the Waikato River.

OUTCOME 2B |

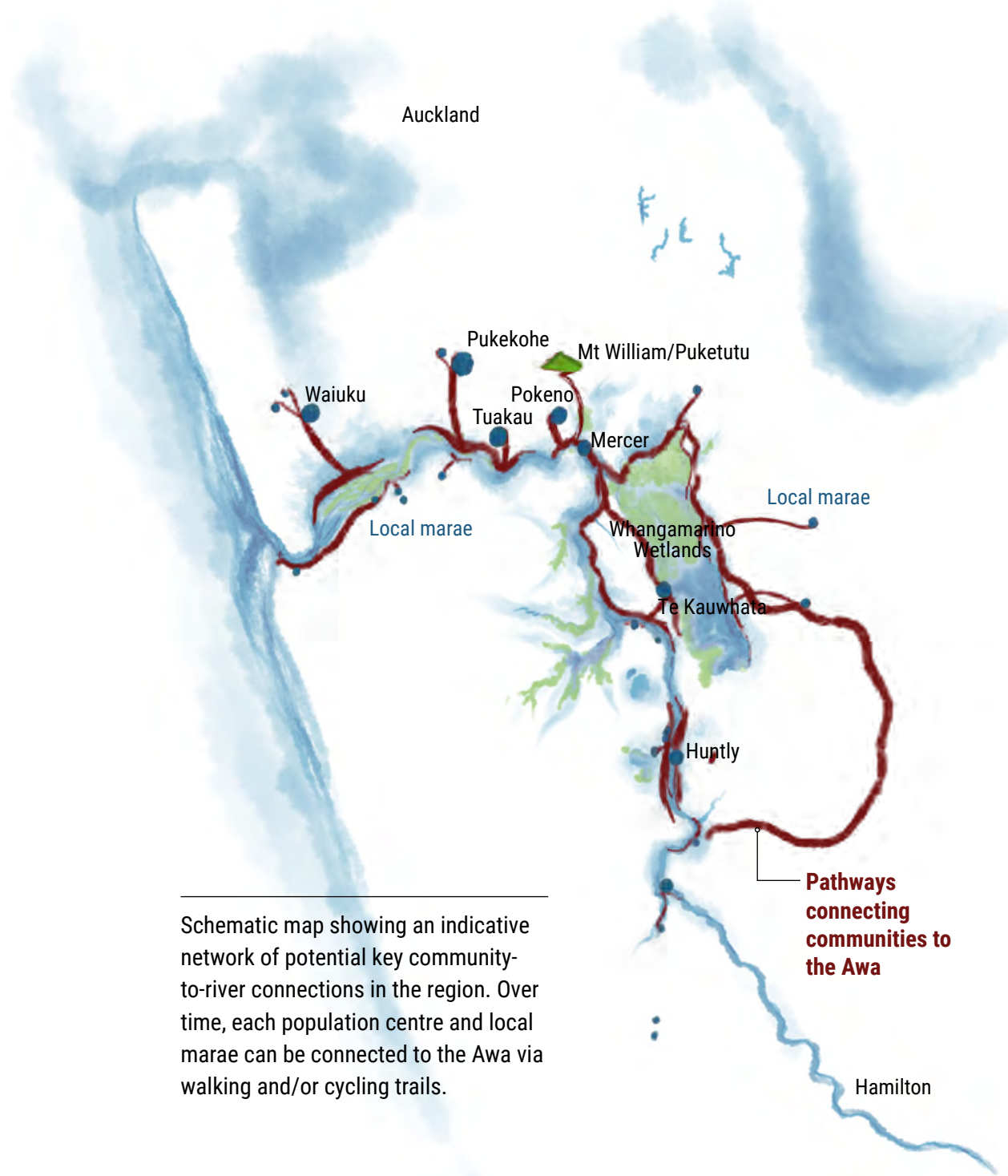
Restoring native forest and wetlands along each path...

- River and habitat restoration and planting projects can involve residents, both current and new, to play a part in looking after the health of the Awa.

OUTCOME 2C |

Over time, connecting communities through trails that follow the path of the river...

- The Awa and its banks provide a natural and historic route along which to connect communities.

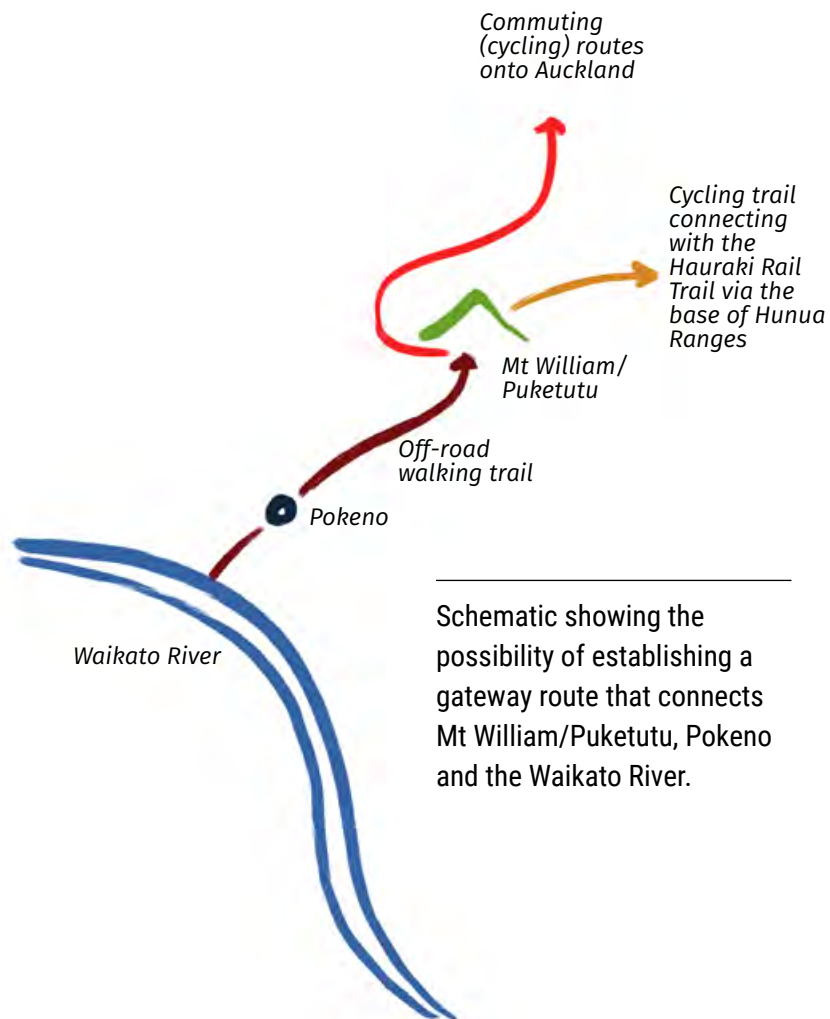


Schematic map showing an indicative network of potential key community-to-river connections in the region. Over time, each population centre and local marae can be connected to the Awa via walking and/or cycling trails.

PROJECT 02 KEY OUTCOMES

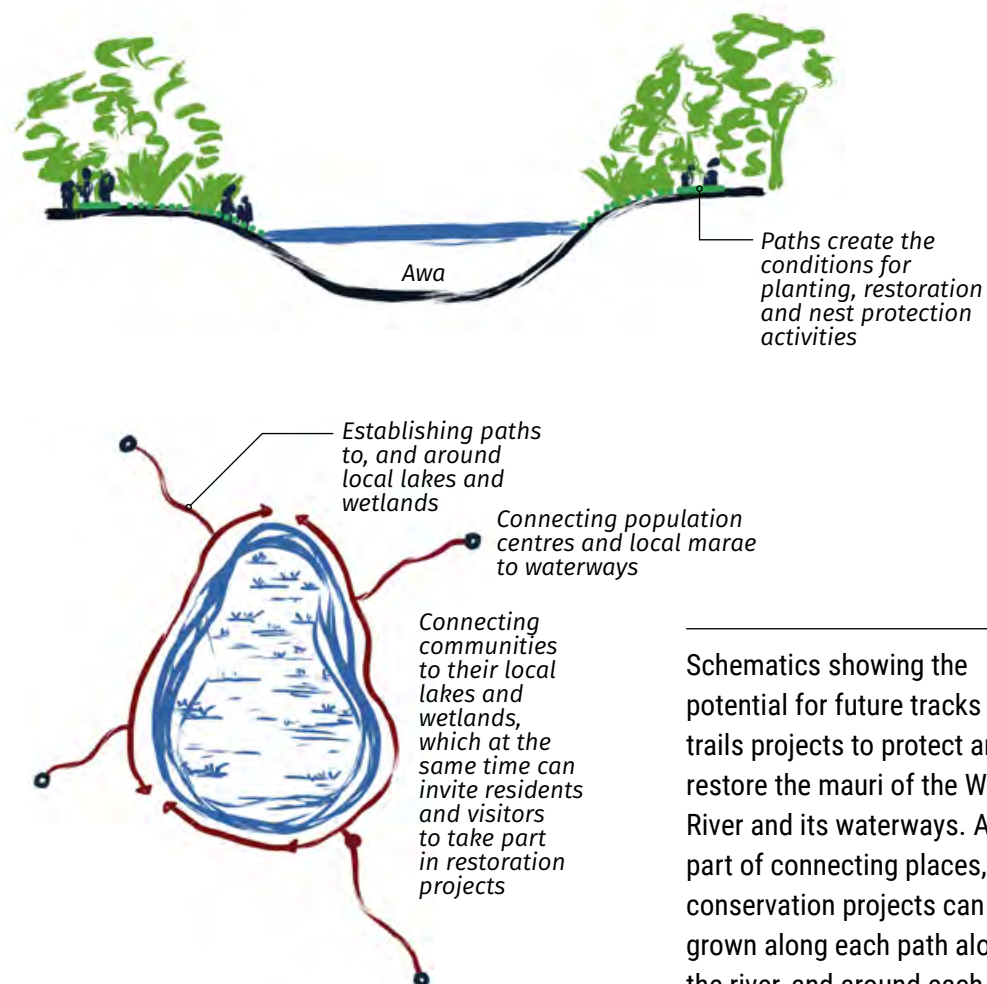
OUTCOME 2A |

Connecting communities and Mount William/
Puketutu to the Waikato River...



OUTCOME 2B |

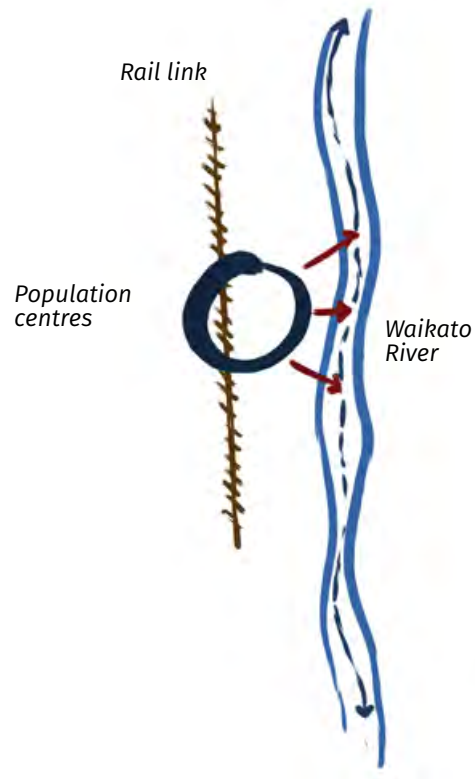
Restoring native forest and wetlands along each path...



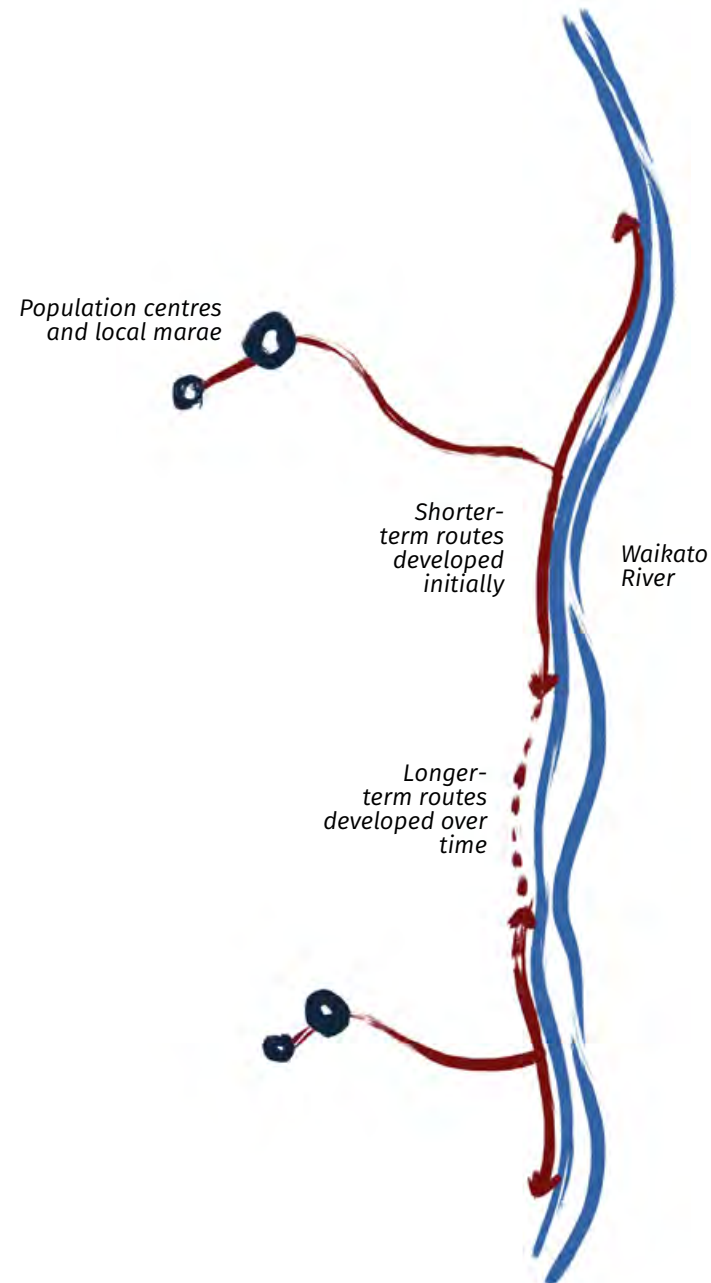
Schematics showing the potential for future tracks and trails projects to protect and restore the mauri of the Waikato River and its waterways. As part of connecting places, conservation projects can be grown along each path along the river, and around each lake and wetland.

OUTCOME 2C |

Over time, connecting communities through trails that follow the path of the river...



Schematic showing the importance of connections between each town and population centre and the river so enduring connections between communities and the Awa are sustained.



Schematic showing the potential to connect over time communities through pathways along the Waikato River.

PROJECT 03

GREEN COMMUTING

*Creating green commuting routes
between rail hubs and nature areas.*



Image © Kim Hardwood

UNDERLYING VALUES:

With the Auckland-Hamilton passenger rail link being trialled, low cost and low carbon rail commuting options across the region is becoming a strong possibility. To prepare for this shift in the ways people commute to work and to school, safe and efficient walking/cycling routes between communities and train stations need to be developed and protected. Also, natural amenities such as Mount William/Puketutu and the Whangamarino Wetland will draw visitors to experience this place.

KEY OUTCOMES:

OUTCOME 3A |

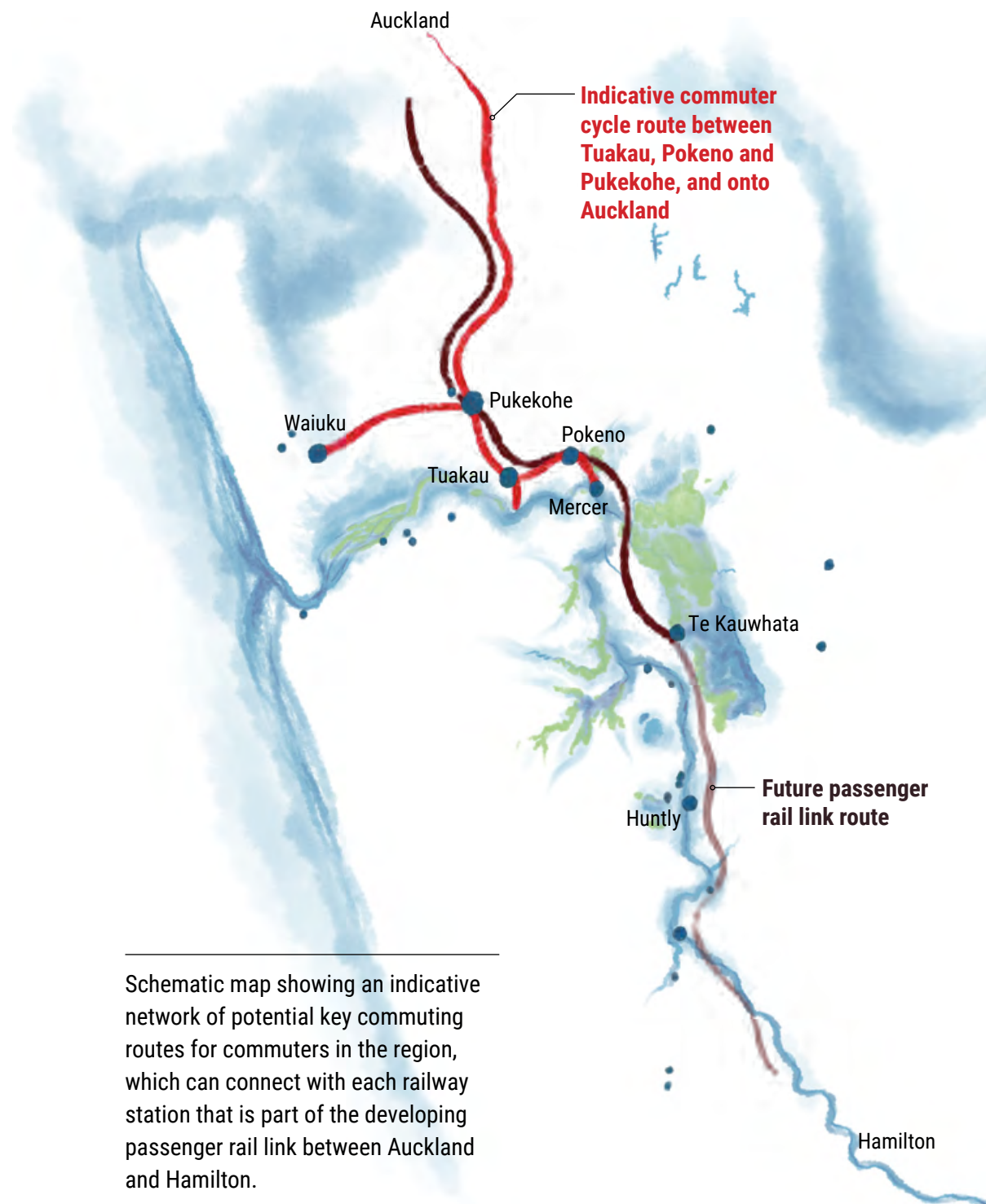
Creating green commuting routes between key population centres and onto Auckland...

- School children and daily commuters can cycle safely and enjoyably between the railway station of Pukekohe, Tuakau and Pokeno.

OUTCOME 3B |

Sharing connections with the river through inviting passengers from the new rail link service...

- Visitors can bring their bike on the train, and then cycle from one railway station to the next, around the region's stunning natural areas such as along sections of the Waikato River, Mount William/Puketutu and the Whangamarino Wetland. In time this route can connect with Te Awa River Ride and .

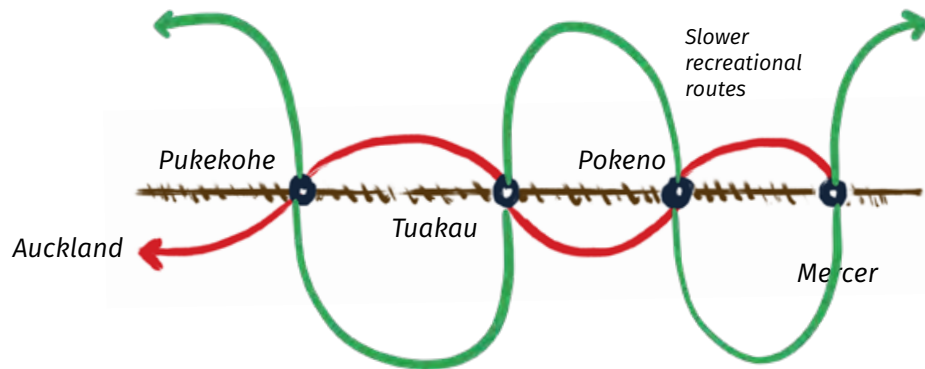


Schematic map showing an indicative network of potential key commuting routes for commuters in the region, which can connect with each railway station that is part of the developing passenger rail link between Auckland and Hamilton.

PROJECT 03 KEY OUTCOMES

OUTCOME 3A |

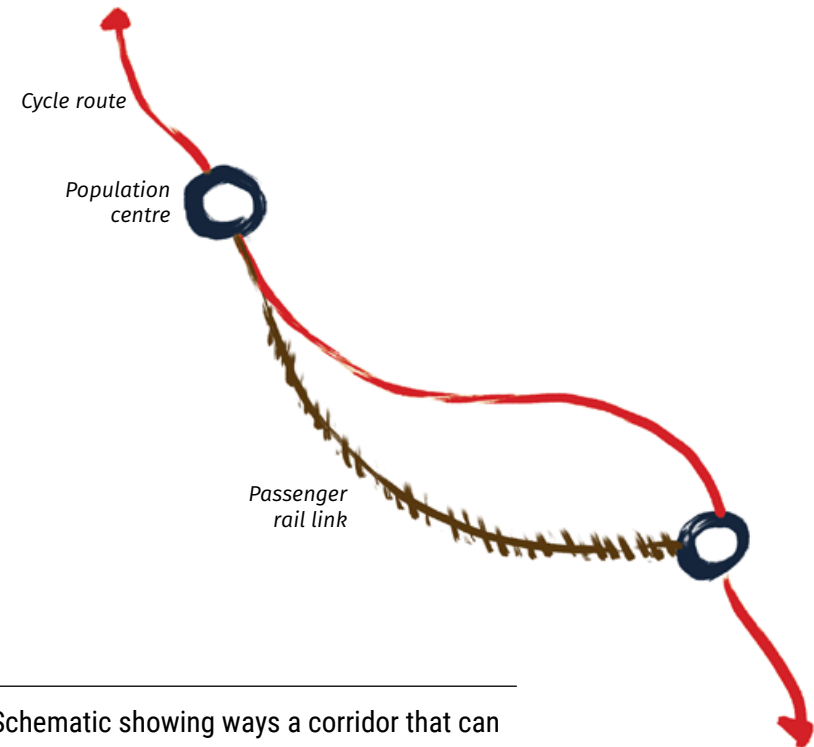
Sharing connections with the river through inviting passengers from the new rail link service...



Schematic showing a flexible approach in implementing commuting cycling routes, which will be determined by optimal gradient, land status etc.

OUTCOME 3B |

Sharing our connections with the river through inviting passengers from the new rail link service...



Schematic showing ways a corridor that can be created to provide safe off-road cycling linkages for communities between key population centres in the region.



PROJECT 04

REGIONAL CYCLE TRAILS

Connecting with larger inter-regional cycle trails.



Image © Brian S

UNDERLYING VALUES:

A regional cycle trail can be formed by linking connected routes, including lesser used roads, with cycle routes that utilise existing access opportunities including unformed legal roads. Connecting with inter-regional cycle trails will attract visitors to come and spend more time in the region.

KEY OUTCOMES:

OUTCOME 4A |

Creating options for a great ride that journey the Waikato River all the way to its mouth...

- Cyclists can journey down the Waikato River from Lake Taupo, through Hamilton to its mouth, connecting with existing great rides south of this project area - Te Awa River Ride and Waikato River Trail.

OUTCOME 4B |

Creating a cycle journey that connects the region to the Hauraki Rail Trail via the base of the Hunua Ranges...

- Cyclists can travel to Hauraki Rail Trail from Pukekohe through the foothills of the Hunua Ranges.

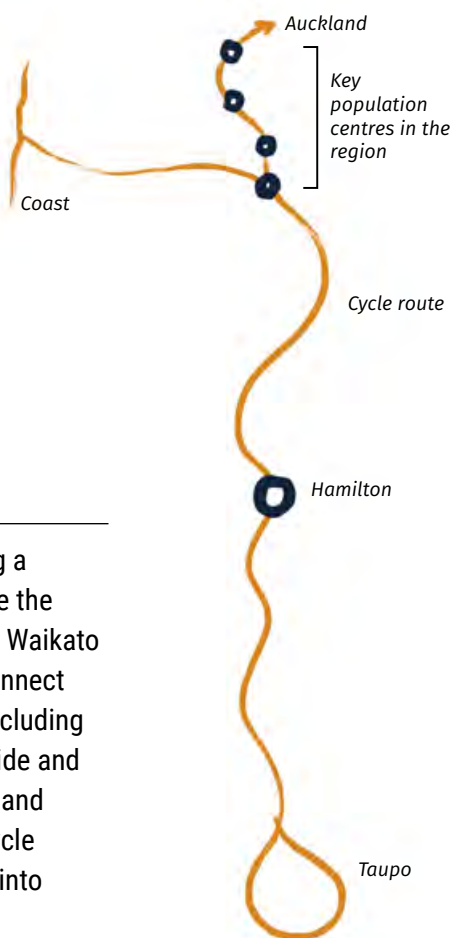


Schematic map showing the indicative cycling routes, connecting with the Te Awa River Trail and the Hauraki Rail Trail.

PROJECT 04 KEY OUTCOMES

OUTCOME 4A |

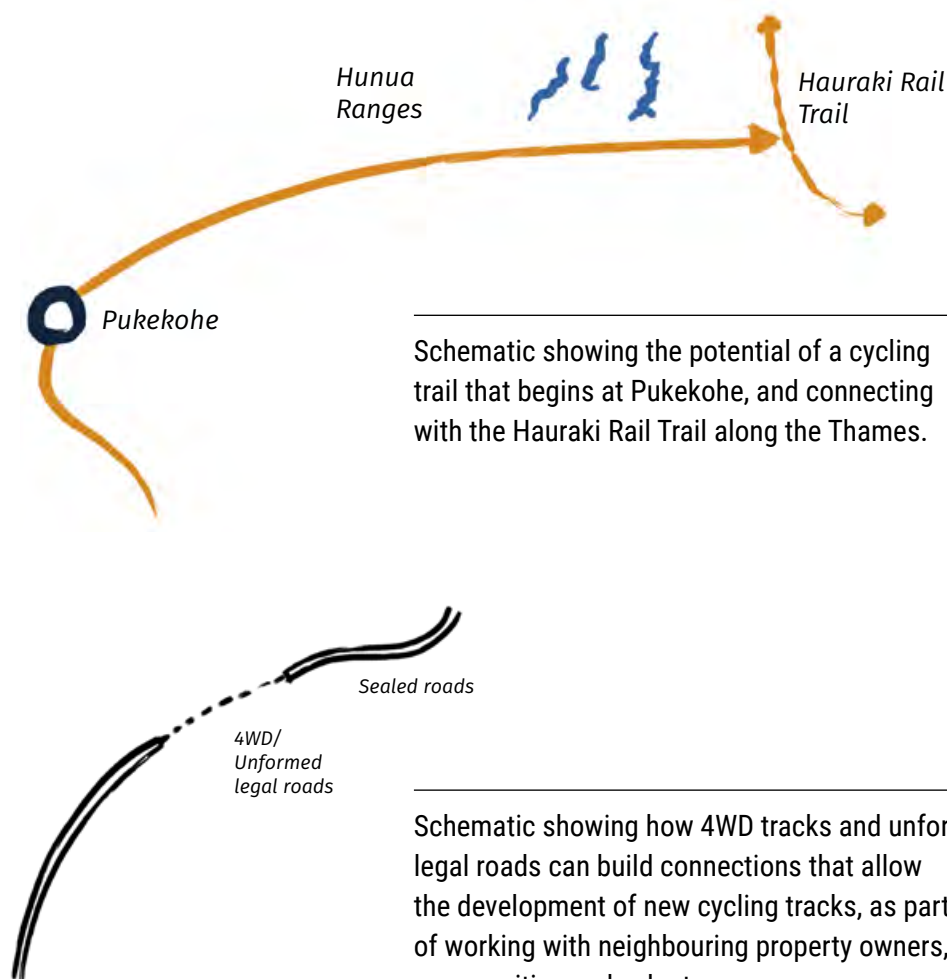
Creating options for a great ride that travels the Waikato River all the way to its mouth...



Schematic showing a potential single ride the entire length of the Waikato River, which can connect up existing trails including the Te Awa River Ride and Waikato River Trail and also link up with cycle commuting routes into Auckland.

OUTCOME 4B |

Creating a cycle journey that connects the region to the Hauraki Rail Trail via the base of the Hunua Ranges...



Schematic showing the potential of a cycling trail that begins at Pukekohe, and connecting with the Hauraki Rail Trail along the Thames.

Schematic showing how 4WD tracks and unformed legal roads can build connections that allow the development of new cycling tracks, as part of working with neighbouring property owners, communities and volunteer groups.



PROJECT 05

TE ARAROA TRAIL

*Creating a rich experience for
Te Araroa Trail users in the region.*



UNDERLYING VALUES:

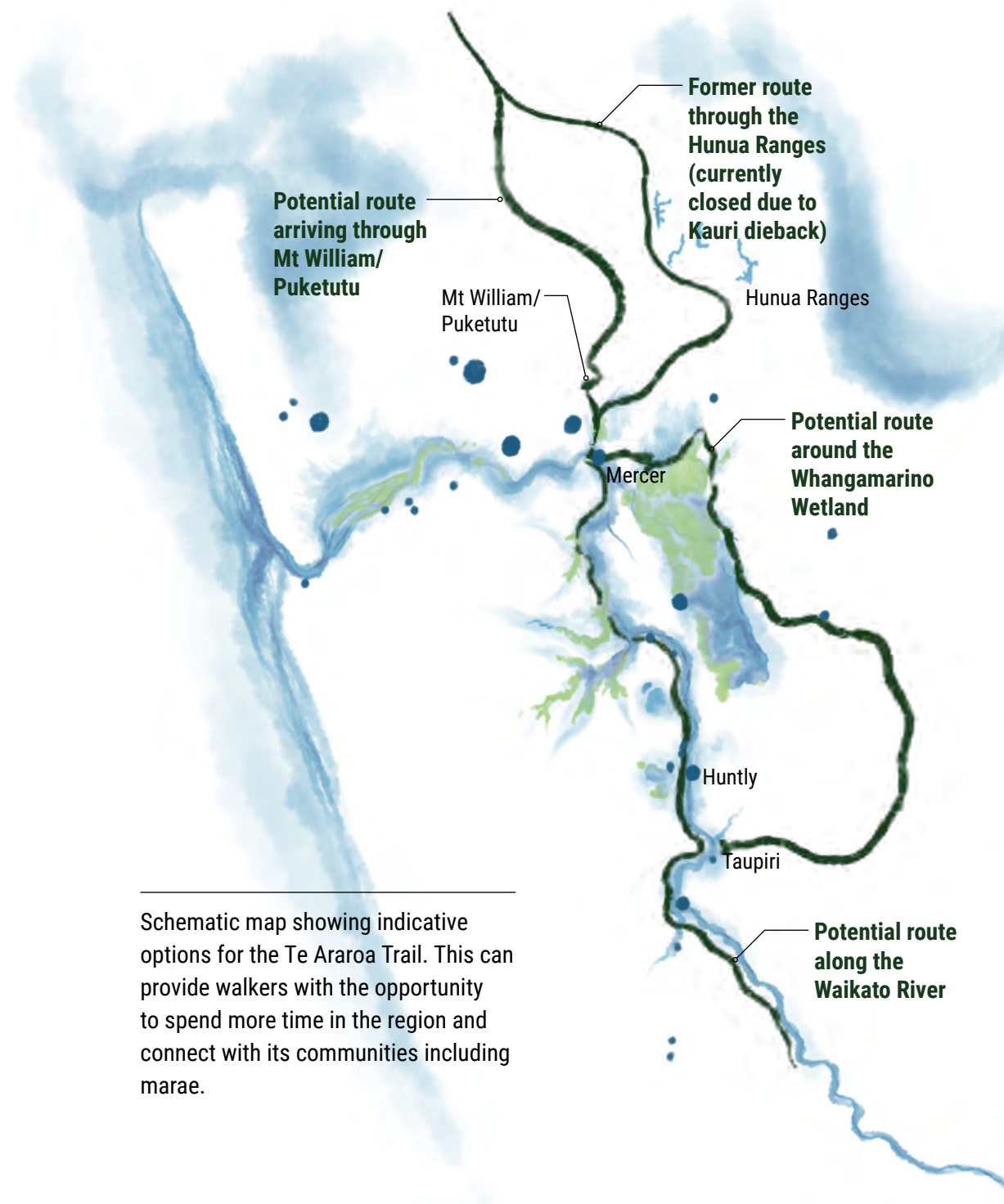
This region has the potential to become a highlight for Te Araroa Trail walkers and provides a deep and unforgettable experience. Mount William/Puketutu and the Whangamarino Wetland provide the opportunity to develop alternative and highly appealing routes that take visitors into the heart of the environment that shapes this place, engaging them in the shared stories of its peoples.

KEY OUTCOMES:

OUTCOME 5A |

Giving memorable experiences to those travelling on the Te Araroa...

- Visitors are welcomed into the region at Mount William/Puketutu, and are invited to choose a route that most appeals to them.
- Options also exist for part of the Te Araroa Trail to involve a journey along the Awa.

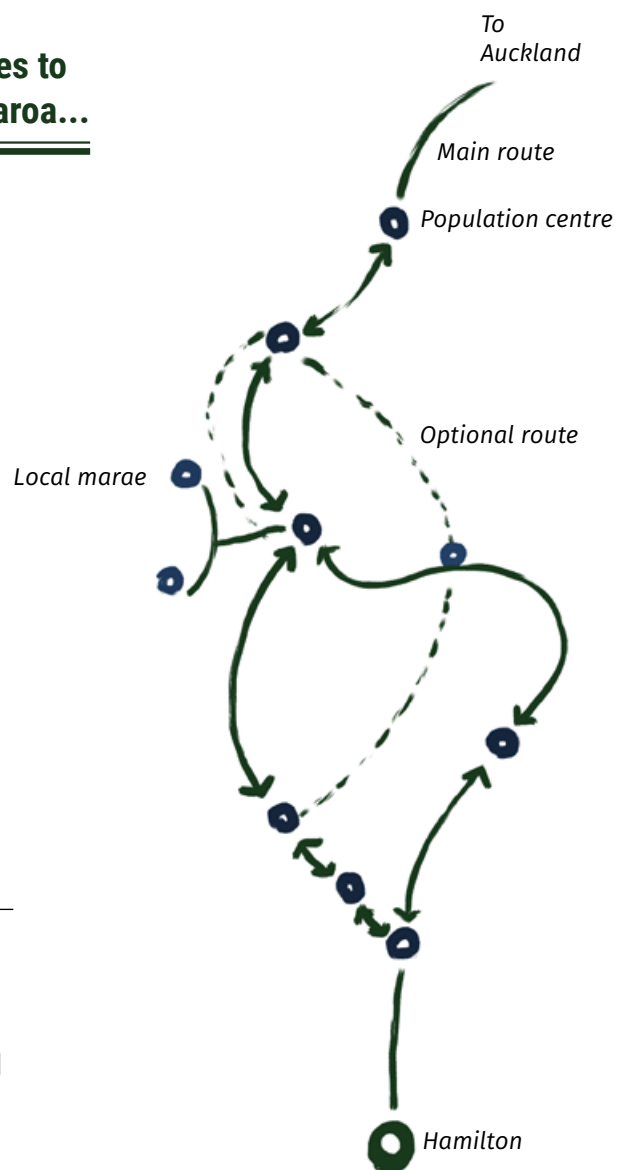


Schematic map showing indicative options for the Te Araroa Trail. This can provide walkers with the opportunity to spend more time in the region and connect with its communities including marae.

PROJECT 05 KEY OUTCOMES

OUTCOME 5A |

Giving memorable experiences to those travelling on the Te Araroa...



Schematic showing the potential of a network of walking trails that gives Te Araroa travellers and local communities the opportunity to travel between places and the range of nature-based places in the region.

Variety of experiences along this part of the Te Araroa Trail that allows walkers to better connect with the Waikato River.



PROJECT 06

SHARED STORYTELLING

Developing community-led storytelling and education programmes.



UNDERLYING VALUES:

Many locals have expressed enthusiasm for sharing their community's stories along their tracks and trails. This can help create a deeper and more engaging experience for trail users including new residents and their families. Done effectively it can also inspire children with the significant values of the place and their role to care for the place and share these stories with future generations.

KEY OUTCOMES:

OUTCOME 6A |

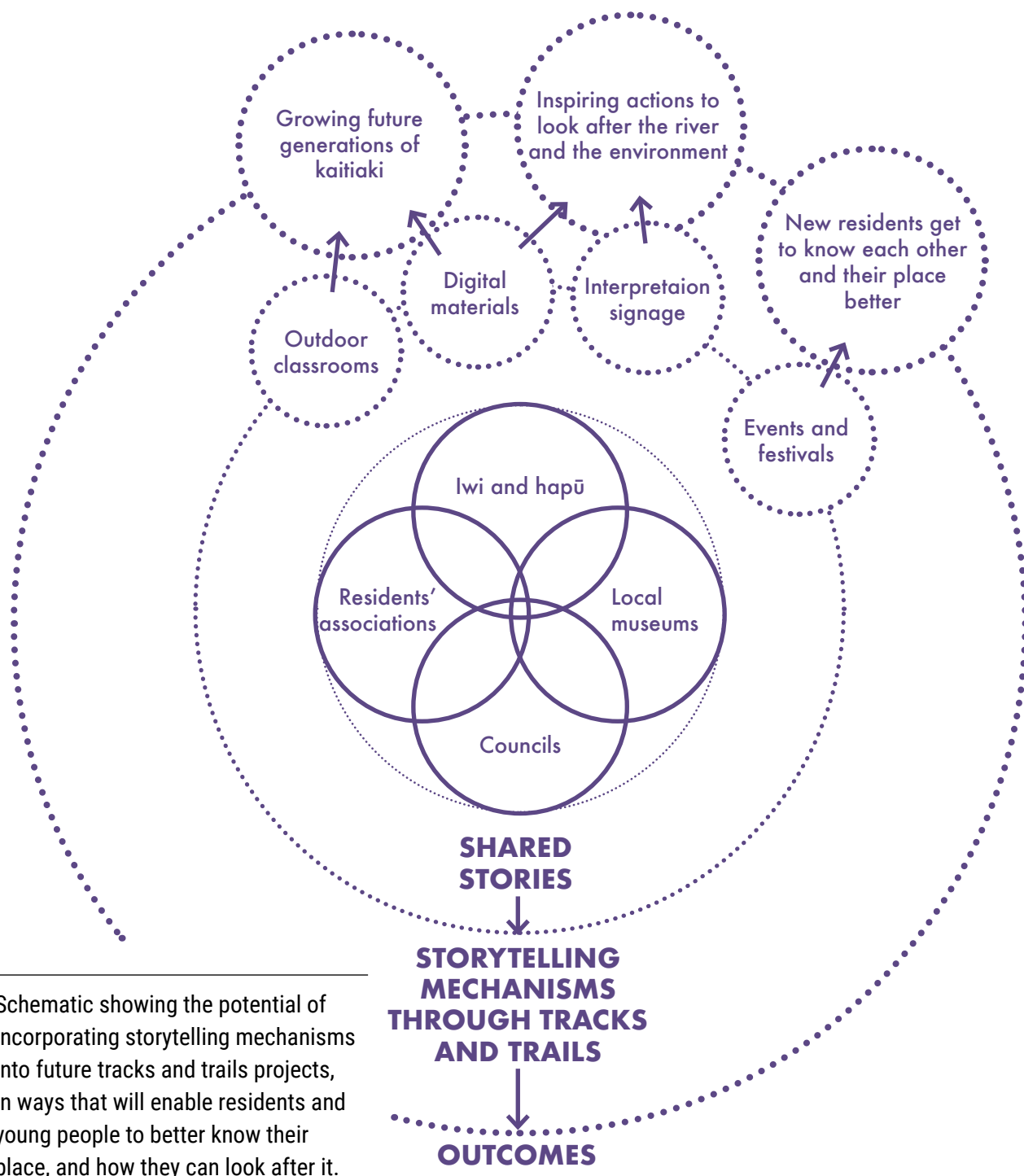
Developing and implementing a community-led storytelling programme that can be incorporated in future tracks and trails projects...

- More stories are shared with trail users, with a diverse medium including Interpretation panels and digital materials.
- Regular events are held to guide new residents on a journey by foot or cycle around their area, sharing stories of history and ecology.
- Local museums can help identify stories and appropriate ways of telling them.

OUTCOME 6B |

Developing and implementing an education programme that will focus on engaging youth in connecting with the Awa...

- Outdoor classrooms are created for school children to better develop their sense of responsibility in looking after the river.





Our thanks for guidance and input from:

Waikato Tainui

Ngāti Tamaoho

Waikato District Council

Waikato Regional Council

Franklin Local Board

Auckland Council

And the many local community groups, passionate individuals and other organisations who have generously shared their time and knowledge.



Our Vision is to

**Connect the trails and journeys of this place
with the path of the Waikato River...**

**Connect locals and visitors with the Awa
and the ways we can all
care for the river's health, life and stories,
both now and for generations to come...**

**and through these connections
grow a trail network that creates active, healthy,
and connected communities.**

FRANKLIN- NORTH WAIKATO TRACKS AND TRAILS STRATEGY

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