



Blue-Green Network Programme

Report | July – December 2021

SIX MONTHS AT A GLANCE | 2021

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An Integrated Vision for the Future

Council adopted the Blue-Green Network Strategy for Whangārei City in 2016.

The Blue-Green Network Programme seeks to deliver walking and cycling outcomes together with ecological restoration, improved stormwater management and flood protection while also connecting people and nature across the city. This integrated approach creates economic, social, and cultural opportunities for communities as well as good environmental outcomes.

Outlined below is the long-term vision for the Programme.



Enhance and connect our communities

Landscaped shared use paths extend along urban watercourses, linking with large parks and reserves.

People are recreating and commuting in a more active fashion and there are opportunities for children, older people and those with disabilities to access these facilities.

Social well-being is improved and cultural and spiritual connection to the waterways is enhanced.



Enhance ecosystem services and ecological connectivity

Riparian planting extends along all waterways to provide corridors across the City for our flora and fauna.

Barriers to fish passage have been removed and migration routes have been re-established.

Water quality is improved and ecosystem services are being provided and valued by the community.

Taonga species and traditional customary resources are protected and enhanced, enabling sustainable harvest.



Provide opportunities for economic development

The City is attractive and vibrant with people living, working and engaging in activities along the waterways and in our urban parks.

Tourism is enhanced and there is increased value of land along waterways, with areas transformed into mixed use residential developments where people can live, work and play.



Protect our communities from natural hazards

Flood protection works reduce the risk of flooding and provide opportunities to enhance urban amenity and increase a sense of place.

A future proofed system is in place that can cope with the challenges climate change will bring in the future.

Snapshots of Success

Progress made over the last 6 months

In the last six months, several steps have been taken to support this complex 10-year plus programme of work:

- A Programme governance structure was established, including representation from Tangata Whenua, and key WDC and NRC departments.
- 14 Programme Steering Group meetings have been held to enable integrated decision making and shared outcomes on related projects.
- A GIS tool has been developed to enable clear communications on project status across a broad audience, easy updating and sharing of information, and management of the programme.
- Work to clarify river management responsibilities between NRC and WDC has commenced, alongside stormwater catchment and flood modelling.
- 5 key projects were prioritised and progressed to define a holistic and practical programme.

Key projects were prioritised to define a holistic and practical programme. These include:

1

Upper Hatea Link

Works to complete planting and connections along the Upper Hatea and Waitaua Streams between Gillingham Road and Whangārei Falls.

2

Raumanga Recreation Corridor

Works to rehabilitate the Raumanga Stream alongside the Raumanga Shared Path project.

3

Waiarohia Recreation Corridor

Works adjacent to Lovers Lane Bridge, the new Civic Centre site and through Cafler Park.

4

Lower Waiarohia Loop

Works to establish a shared path loop on both sides of the Lower Waiarohia River between Okara Drive bridge and the Hihiaua Cultural Centre, connecting to the Hatea Loop.

Snapshots of Success

Progress made over the last 6 months





Snapshots of Success

Progress made over the last 6 months



Works Supported by the Programme To-Date

Name	Waitaia Stream Shared Trail Extension	Totara Parklands Estate Shared Trail
Stage	Physical Works	Completion
Associated With	Upper Hatea Link	Upper Hatea Link
Contractor	Plantpro Ltd	Northland Parkcare
Planned Completion Date	February 2022	November 2021
Description	An approx. 420m shared gravel trail connecting the existing Bush Haven track to Gillingham Rd, including minor road frontage and right-of-way improvements in the esplanade reserve.	Co-funded with Parks & Recreation and a private developer, an approx. 1.5-kilometre shared gravel trail connecting the existing Bush Haven track to the Totara Parklands Estate development.
		



Waitaia Stream Shared Trail Extension and Totara Parklands Estate Shared Trail

These projects complete two missing links in an approximately 7-kilometre stretch from Gillingham Road to Whangārei Falls, linking the local communities with waterways and open space. This is expected to increase recreation opportunities and boost suburban amenity.



Works Supported by the Programme To-Date

Name	<i>Raumanga Stream Rehabilitation Pilot</i>	<i>Waitaua Stream Weeding & Riparian Planting</i>	<i>Lower Waiarohia Loop</i>
Stage	Post-Pilot Analysis and Planning	Completed	Due Diligence and Concept Design
Associated With	Raumanga Recreation Corridor & Raumanga Shared Path	Upper Hatea Link	Raumanga Recreation Corridor
Contractor	Waterway Specialists	Whitebait Connection	Stellar Projects and others
Planned Completion Date	3 December 2021	15 June 2021	20 December 2021
Description	Weed and rubbish clearance pilot on the Raumanga Stream between Otaika Rd and Porowini Ave to determine the viability of any future stream rehabilitation works in 2022.	Weeding and riparian planting with 2,220 plants in the ground and over 180 community members participating, including two schools.	A costed concept design and due diligence investigations to determine the viability of shared path loop along the Lower Waiarohia River, connecting to the Hatea Loop.



Raumanga Stream Rehabilitation Pilot and Waitau Stream Weeding & Riparian Planting

These projects maximise the outcomes of existing walking/cycling infrastructure projects. Restoration of riparian margins is an important part of improving water quality, providing shading and habitat for terrestrial and aquatic fauna. It also helps to improve the mauri and profile of waterways.



Lower Waiarohia Loop

This project builds upon investigations undertaken in 2016/17 and takes a design-led approach. Once completed, this loop is expected to increase foot traffic through the nearby business areas and provide an incentive for mixed-use development and tourism.

Success story

Riparian planting in Tikipunga North

Community planting days were run in June by Whitebait Connection and Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust as part of the Whangārei Matariki Festival, and funded through the Blue-Green Network Programme.

Over 2,000 native plants were planted over five days in the riparian margin of the Waitaua Stream in Tikipunga, which is in the upper Hatea catchment.

Various school groups attended over two days as part of their environmental education, and another open public planting day was held.

A key community group was Totara Grove School with 112 students, plus their teachers and whānau, getting their hands dirty, planting 650 natives on their day along the banks. The students were proud of their efforts and excited to bring their whānau down to see their mahi.

Riparian vegetation is essential for a clean and stable river environment and a key element of the Blue Green Network Strategy. Over time, increased vegetation on our river and stream banks will improve bank stabilisation and water quality, provide shade and corridors.



“The best part of the day was planting the Totara because they are special to our school,” one student said.



