

6. Ahuriri Regional Park

Kick-start improvements to the environment in partnership with Napier City Council for recreation, to manage stormwater and improve Ahuriri Estuary.

Ahuriri Estuary is a place of great significance. It is well-used by the community but it's in a sad state.

Known as Te Whanganui-ā-Orotu, this area is particularly significant to Ngā Hapū o Ahuriri. In spite of its current issues the estuary is popular for recreation, is home to many native and migratory birds, and acts as a nursery for ocean-going fish.

Untreated stormwater drains feed contaminants directly into the estuary, from nearby urban and industrial areas. A build-up of chemicals in the estuary muds is from decades of industrial contamination, where sewage or chemicals occasionally spill into the estuary. Shellfish gathering here is regularly banned after rainfall, due to contamination. Accidental oil spills from boats in the inner harbour are also a risk to water quality and wildlife.

The Regional Council and Napier City Council are committed to working together with Mana Ahuriri for the long-term to create a step change in the life-force or mauri of the estuary.

In addition, both organisations want to establish a park that returns significant biodiversity enhancement and cultural benefits, as well as recreation benefits for the whole community.

So far the Regional Council has been working on an Ahuriri Catchment Land Action Plan with 14 nearby landowners. We are scoping further research into the water and contaminants in the catchment, and we have worked with Mana Ahuriri Trust to remove 219 tonnes of invasive marine tubeworm from the estuary to improve water flow and quality.

Why now?

In sync with Napier City Council's Long Term Plan, we want to work together to plan, design and manage all the waterways, drain and stormwater networks in the estuary, and to develop a Regional Park.

This proposal looks beyond creating a wetland to simply 'polish' stormwater. It will enlarge the intertidal zone to give more habitat back to the estuary, potentially through a rezoning of Lagoon Farm land. This project links to the delivery of Napier City's Ahuriri Estuary and Coastal Edge Masterplan.

OPTION 1 (preferred option)	OPTION 2
<p>Develop a Regional Park with Napier City Council in the upper Ahuriri Estuary.</p> <p>Note – Napier City Council is consulting on similar funding for a total funding pool of \$20 million over 10 years, see napier.govt.nz for more info.</p> <p>Impact on levels of service: Create a new Regional Park and improve recreation elements in Ahuriri Estuary.</p> <p>Total cost: \$1.2 million in 2023-24 and \$9 million over the course of years 4-10.</p>	<p>Status quo - do not invest in the development of this regional park now - leave the concept with Napier City Council who may develop it at some future stage. Play a regulatory role with Napier City Council to deliver the Ahuriri Masterplan project elements in their capital programme over ten years, including a feasibility study on the concept of a regional park on Lagoon Farm land to the south of the estuary channel.</p> <p>Impact on levels of service: No change</p> <p>Total cost: No additional costs.</p>
<p>Impact on rates: included in rates increase Year 3 \$37,000 0.1% increase A total of \$2.52 million from year 3-10 paid for through general rates.</p>	<p>Impact on rates: Nil</p>
<p>Impact on debt: \$10.16 million from years 3-10.</p>	<p>Impact on debt: No impact</p>