

Entered by Board Secretary

Inner West Corridor Projects

For decision: For noting:

Ngā tūtohunga / Recommendations

That the Auckland Transport Board (board):

- a) Approves the award of construction contracts for cycle, pedestrian, bus infrastructure along Point Chevalier, Meola Road and Garnet Road (between Meola Road and West End Road) and Healthy Water's stormwater infrastructure – (P50) capital value \$46.1m including \$8.8m for stormwater works (funded by Healthy Waters) and 15% contingency.
- b) Approves the award of construction contracts for cycle, pedestrian and bus infrastructure along Great North Road - (P50) capital value \$31.4 including \$3.3m for stormwater works (funded by Healthy Waters) and 15% contingency (noting that the design has minimised loss of parking) subject to review of capital funding and endorsement by the Auckland Council Transport and Infrastructure Committee.
- c) Approves pausing the construction of cycle and pedestrian infrastructure along Surrey Crescent, Old Mill Road, Garnet Road (southeast of the Garnet Road/Meola Road intersection), and Richmond Road which would save Auckland Council capital expenditure of approximately (P50) \$38m including 15% contingency.
- d) Supports a safety review of Surrey Crescent, Old Mill Road, Garnet Road and Richmond Road for elements that may have been included in the paused work.

Te whakarāpopototanga matua / Executive summary

1. The projects are part of the Urban Cycleways Programme (UCP) that originated in 2016. All projects have seen scope enhancements above cycling infrastructure through a 'dig-once' approach to corridor improvements and include pedestrian improvements, drainage, streetscape and safety improvements. The Point Chevalier to Westmere and Great North Road projects include public transport bus improvements.
2. An overall UCP budget and delegation to the Chief Executive to progress the UCP projects was approved by the board in July 2021, and the Great North Road scheme was approved to go to construction tender by the board in October 2021. The latest UCP completion forecast estimates a \$40m delta to the approved UCP budget.
3. Management recommendation is to proceed with the two most strategically important multi-modal corridors – Great North Road and Point Chevalier to Westmere – to deliver both cycling and bus priority along with pedestrian and safety improvements, which are also match funded by New Zealand Transport Agency (Waka Kotahi) at 51% requiring 49% Council cost contribution, in order to maximise value from the central

Entered by Board Secretary

government match-funding, recognise predominant local community and local board support for the projects. These projects also demonstrate the highest Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR).

4. Management recommendation is to stop the Waitemata Safe Routes project given the lower strategic nature of the cycling interventions on local access routes, absence of strategic priority for bus, and a significant cost escalation since July 2021 that increases cost estimates above the approved UCP budget of ~\$40m. Not undertaking this project will reduce Council expenditure by \$38m and predominantly balance the UCP forecast estimated costs against approved budget. The absence of Waka Kotahi match-funding places a requirement for 100% Council funding in the current Council fiscal challenged environment. This project also has the lowest Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of the three review projects. Any safety critical elements of the Waitemata Safe Routes projects would be addressed through local road safety schemes and any remaining sections delivered at a later date.
5. Progress was slowed and reviews undertaken in the fourth quarter 2022 due to concerns about project cost escalation in an increasing inflationary environment and with Auckland Council budget constraints being signalled for FY24 onwards, incorrect high-cost perception that these projects were only delivering cycling interventions through a 'dig-once' bundling approach to wider corridor works and some local community views of the need for some of the projects. Since that time the project teams have reviewed the costs to look at value-engineering options and have met with the new local boards to check on local support for the schemes. The board is therefore being asked to further review the schemes in the light of the current financial situation noting further recent local board engagement, representation from local communities, and the direction set within the Mayor's Letter of Expectation. A consequence of pausing progress has been over 50 letters received in support of the schemes (and around 5 in opposition).
6. The schemes were due for delivery in 2023-24 to align with planned pavement renewals and sewer separation work. Healthy Waters will proceed with separation in 2023 along Great North Road and in Point Chevalier. Initial pre-work preparation including tree removal has been undertaken in the Point Chevalier to Westmere. AT is due to undertake reconstruction and renewal of the Meola Road pavement in 2023. This work will happen regardless of the cycleway work.

Ngā tuhinga ō mua / Previous deliberations

Date	Report Title	Key Outcomes
5 August 2021 Board	Urban Cycleway Programme	The board approved an uplift to the programme budget to \$139m within the 2021-2024 Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP) period. The board also approved full delegation authority to the Chief Executive to approve procurement planning and execute remaining construction contracts within the RLTP 2021-24 funding.

Entered by Board Secretary

28 October 2021 Board	Great North Road (Newton) Upgrade	The board approved the Great North Road (Newton) upgrade for construction in October 2021 and provided delegations to the chief executive to approve construction activities.
December 2022 Board	Board workshop	Workshop for board members for familiarisation with the history of each project and key issues. The conclusion was that a site visit will help in understanding the context.
7 February 2023 Board	Site visit	Directors discussed recommendation to proceed to the Design and Delivery Committee (committee) with Point Chevalier and Great North Road subject to satisfactory consideration of parking issues along Great North Road. Discussed a proposal to put on hold the 100% Council-funded schemes (Surrey Crescent, Richmond Road, Old Mill Road and Garnet Road south of Meola Road).
February 2023 Committee	Inner West Corridor Projects	The committee discussed the recommendations in the light of balancing strategic objectives such as the Transport Emissions Reduction Plan, the wishes of local communities and sentiment of local boards, and the pressure on local budgets. It was proposed that the Great North Road project could be referred to the Transport and Infrastructure Committee.

Te horopaki me te tīaroaro rautaki / Context and strategic alignment

7. These three projects form part of the Cycling and Micromobility programme that seeks to establish a city-wide system of safer routes for walking and cycling. The projects originated in 2016 as part of the Urban Cycleways programme and Great North Road is also part of the Connected Communities programme. The projects include pedestrian and cycle infrastructure, together with sections of bus lane and relocation of bus stops to improve public transport performance. Each project also brings the roading corridor in line with modern safety standards to contribute towards Vision Zero.
8. The projects include new pedestrian crossings, bus lanes and safer, more efficient traffic junctions.

Entered by Board Secretary

9. Great North Road is a strategic multi-modal corridor where land-use is being intensified with more residential and office space in future. Point Chevalier Road and Meola Road are strategically important for cycling and part of the high-frequency bus network.
10. Surrey Crescent and Garnet Road are prioritised for cycling and public transport, albeit cycleways on this corridor are of lower strategic importance and the corridors are primarily for local access with residential frontage and smaller commercial units for the local population such as cafes, take-away food and dairies.
11. The projects were previously approved by the board and are fully funded (noting that Waitemata Safe Routes is 100% local share) in the current capital budget. The Greath North Road and Point Chevalier to Westmere project cost estimates are within previous reported estimates. The Waitemata Safe Routes project cost estimates has seen significant increase and the UCP current cost estimates has a delta of \$40m against approved budget.
12. Due to cost escalation in an increasing inflationary environment and with Auckland Council budget constraints being signalled for FY24 onwards, along with an incorrect high-cost perception that these projects were only delivering cycling interventions through a 'dig-once' bundling approach to wider corridor works, the headline costs were investigated in November 2022 and include sewer separation, road renewals, street trees and under-grounding of power lines as part of a 'dig-once' approach. The designs also seek to minimise loss of car parks and existing street trees to meet stakeholder requests.
13. A net loss of up to 130 car park spaces along Great North Road remains a concern for some local businesses and the design team has met with the Grey Lynn Business Association and Residents Association in recent weeks, working to maximise spaces in side roads through use of echelon parking, and to reduce the visibility splay at side roads to the safe minimum, which will also help reduce the number of parking spaces removed. Much of the concern is around employee parking, which is already an issue as spaces along the corridor are mostly time-limited, meaning that some employees move cars around every 2 hours to circumvent the long-stay parking restrictions. The loss of some parking is an inevitable consequence of making any changes along the corridor because the existing sightlines at junctions do not meet current safety standards.

Ngā matapakinga me ngā tātaritanga / Discussion and analysis

14. The attached presentation offers a summary of each scheme and includes options that have been considered to reduce costs.
15. The Great North Road and Point Chevalier routes are considered high strategic bus and cycling routes that connect into the North-Western cycleway which is the busiest route in Auckland carrying over 1000 cycles every day throughout the year. Several walking buses and cycling trains serve schools across the Point Chevalier and West Lynn area and would benefit from the schemes which feature substantial safety measures for pedestrians. The intensification of land-use and connection to the Karangahape City Rail Link station will increase active travel in the Great North Road area. The corridors are categorised as medium/high road safety risk due to frequency of collisions at intersections although there have been no fatalities and few serious injuries in the last five years.

Entered by Board Secretary

16. A 'dig-once' approach has been adopted for these routes, bundling road corridor improvements across cycling, bus, pedestrian, drainage, streetscape and safety. Implementation was initially delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The 'dig-once' opportunity will be lost if work does not start in 2023 due to timing of works by Healthy Waters in the corridors for stormwater improvements.
17. Both Great North Road and Point Chevalier to Westmere will attract Waka Kotahi central government share of 51%. This funding is at risk if works are not complete by mid-2024.
18. Value engineering has been considered for these routes. The main trade-offs associated with lower cost options that were investigated are removal of more car parking spaces, omission of the bus lanes and associated journey time savings, fewer pedestrian facilities, fewer street trees and reduction of sightlines at side road entrances to the absolute minimum, a departure from our Technical Design Manual standard. Lower-cost options were rejected at previous public consultations.
19. The Waitematā Safe Routes project is on a lower strategic cycling and public transport route compared to Great North Road and Point Chevalier to Westmere as the route is on local access roads. The project has seen a significant cost escalation since July 2021 that increases cost estimates above the approved UCP budget of ~\$40m. Not undertaking this project will reduce Council expenditure by \$38m and predominantly balance the UCP forecast estimated costs against approved budget. The absence of Waka Kotahi match-funding places a requirement for 100% Council funding in the current Council fiscal challenged environment. This project also has the lowest Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of the three review projects. Any safety critical elements of the Waitematā Safe Routes projects would be addressed through local road safety schemes and any remaining sections delivered at a later date.

Ngā tūraru matua / Key risks and mitigations

Key risk	Mitigation
Loss of 'dig-once' window of opportunity	Timely decision by March 2023
Loss of Waka Kotahi funding in 2024-25 financial year	Project construction underway in 2023
Reputational risk of non-delivery of projects following years of consultation	Timely decision by March 2023

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Ngā ritenga-ā-pūtea me ngā rauemi / Financial and resource impacts

20. Projects were reviewed by the Finance and Assurance Committee in November 2022 due to the apparent high cost per km. The costs reflects the full scope of kerb to kerb changes (bus lanes, cycle tracks, pedestrian crossings, changes to major junctions, resurfacing, street trees and side road entry treatments) and include contingency of 15%. The elemental costs broadly benchmark with similar full road corridor and intersection changes along major roads, both in New Zealand and internationally. Costs in the table below exclude the storm water separation and renewals works and BCR calculation is based on P50 cost.

Scheme Location	BCR	Estimated P50 Cost \$m	Estimated P95 Cost \$m	Auckland Council share
Great North Road (from Crummer Road to Karangahape Road)	2.4	28.1	32.3	49%
Point Chevalier Road, Meola Road, Garnet Road (Meola Road to West End Road)	1.9	37.3	42.9	49%
Waitematā Safe Routes Richmond Road, Surrey Crescent, Old Mill Road, Garnet Road (from Old Mill to Meola Road)	1.6	38.0	41.2	100%

21. Each project offers an opportunity to deliver long term improvements to sustainable transport, road safety, drainage and power supply in a single construction event. The programme funds are already included in the current capital budget. The renewals and sewer separation work are also fully funded within this year's capital budget (*AT and AC). 51% of funding for Great North Road and Point Chevalier to Westmere projects is from Waka Kotahi.
22. The board formally approved the UCP programme budget in July 2021 (\$139million until June 2024) and gave full delegation authority to the Chief Executive to approve procurement planning and execute remaining construction contracts within the RLTP 2021-24 funding. The latest cost estimates a \$40m delta to the approved programme budget. However this would be largely negated by the delivery pause of Waitematā Safe Routes (estimated at \$38m).

Entered by Board Secretary

Ngā whaiwhakaaro ō te taiao me te panonitanga o te āhuarangi / Environment and climate change considerations

23. The embedded carbon for Point Chevalier to Westmere project was assessed as around 4,500 tCO₂-e, which is equivalent to emissions released by 2,044 light passenger petrol cars driven for one year in New Zealand. For Great North Road the equivalent figures are 1,727 tCO₂-e or 780 light passenger vehicles. The proposed street trees have a positive impact on the ambience, temperature and air quality along the routes. Reducing surface temperature contributes to the longevity of the road pavement by reducing wear and tear in hot weather, while the planting and tree pits contribute to the sponge effect to help absorb and slow down surface water run-off. The surrounding areas are relatively high-density housing within 5km of the CBD and Point Chevalier already has some of the highest levels of walking and cycling in Auckland. Our work with the Community Liaison Groups suggests that many people do not feel that they have genuine transport choices for sustainable low-carbon travel because the roads are not considered safe enough for walking and cycling.

Ngā whakaaweawe me ngā whakaaro / Impacts and perspectives

Mana whenua

24. Mana whenua have been consulted as part of each scheme development during the formal consultation stages via the Central Hub hui. A full consultation report was prepared for each scheme.

Ngā mema pōti / Elected members

25. Schemes were approved by previous local boards in 2021/22. Workshops were held with Albert-Eden and Waitematā local Boards in November 2022 at which the majority expressed support for the schemes. Formal endorsement for the recommended approach is being sought through a report to each local board in February 2023. Local campaigners have also made representations to the Council Transport and Infrastructure Committee in support of the schemes.

Ngā rōpū kei raro i te Kaunihera / Council Controlled Organisations

26. Management is working closely with Watercare to align delivery of the work.

Ngā kiritaki / Customers

27. Each scheme has evolved with active participation of local residents and businesses including three rounds of public consultation and creation of local reference groups that have influenced the designs and helped engage local schools and businesses.

Entered by Board Secretary

28. Work is being coordinated with Vector to move power cables underground. Changes to car parking and loading arrangements have been discussed at length with local businesses to agree an acceptable compromise to the point where most are satisfied with the proposals.

Ngā whaiwhakaaro haumarū me ngā whaiwhakaaro hauora / Health, safety and wellbeing considerations

29. The roads involved are used by walking school buses and cycling trains, and other parents and pupils, for access to several schools and colleges in the area. The area already enjoys higher than average levels of walking and cycling as it is quite self-contained and compact with easy access to local shops and services in nearby Point Chevalier and Grey Lynn villages. Addressing existing concerns about pedestrian safety and school travel is fundamental to each scheme.

Ā muri ake nei / Next steps



30. Assuming committee support, the next steps are:

- Approval to be sought from the Transport and Infrastructure Committee at its 16 March 2023 meeting.
- Assuming approval, proceed to procurement and construction in 2023/24.


Ngā whakapiringa / Attachments

Attachment number	Description
1	Letters received since October 2022
2	AT Board Summary

Te pou whenua tuhinga / Document ownership

Submitted by	Adrian Lord Head of Cycling	
Recommended by	Murray Burt Acting Executive General Manager Integrated Networks	

Entered by Board Secretary

Approved for submission	Mark Laing Executive General Manager Finance	
	Mark Lambert Interim Chief Executive	