Te Tai Tokerau Regional Accessibility Strategy

Summary Document

   

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# Credits and alternative formats

This summary document is also available in the following formats:

* NZSL (New Zealand Sign Language).
* Easy read.
* Large print.
* Audio.
* Electronic Braille – hard copy Braille will be made available upon request.
* Te Reo Māori.

This document was put together by the Councils of Te Tai Tokerau (Northland). When you see the word ‘we’ - it means the following Councils:

* Northland Regional Council (NRC;
* Whangarei District Council (WDC);
* Far North District Council (FNDC); and
* Kaipara District Council (KDC).

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# Introduction

This Strategy gives Te Tai Tokerau a shared vision, values, outcomes, and actions to improve accessibility and the experiences of people with access needs. It will talk about what we can do to make Te Tai Tokerau more:

* Inclusive: If something is inclusive, everyone can take part.
* Accessible: If something is accessible, everyone can use it.

The Strategy also provides a framework for each individual council to develop their own implementation or action plans specific to their district and purpose.

This document is based on the feedback of people with access needs and their whanau. All council staff involved in developing this mahi are very grateful for their assistance.

To read full document please go to [www.nrc.govt.nz/accessiblenorthland](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nrc.govt.nz%2Faccessiblenorthland&data=05%7C02%7Cclaire.wilson%40wdc.govt.nz%7C7dd8bac7ebc942dff80208dc4305ec94%7C1a3c42f215cb40948823ed52566c7544%7C0%7C0%7C638458939931999202%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=K2QU18RqaBSVcttrx6o07CdqUB3YrdF813u5fBnzsgM%3D&reserved=0).

# Who was involved?

In 2020 we ran a survey (the Te Tai Tokerau Regional Accessibility Community Survey) to find out how accessible our districts were. The feedback showed that only 17% of those who responded thought their district was accessible. Based on this feedback it was decided that an accessibility plan was needed.

We asked the access needs community to tell us what an accessibility community would look like and what should be in the plan.

We did this in various ways, including facilitated workshops, online meetings, quickfire surveys, self-directed groups, and feedback booklets.

We also talked with:

* Whangarei District Council’s Disability Advisory Group;
* Whangarei District Council’s Positive Ageing Advisory Group;
* Far North District Councils Disability Action Group.

## Regional Accessibility Strategy Working Group

We brought together a working group made up of people with access needs and Council staff to work through all the information and feedback gathered.

Members of the group included whānau hauā and a Kaiārahi Tikanga Māori (Māori Cultural Advisor).

This group set the vision, values, focus areas and key outcomes, facilitated by Carolyn Watts (Quigley & Watts Ltd).

# Regional Accessibility Strategy Working Group members

We would like to acknowledge and thank our working group for providing their expertise, personal experiences and advice to help shape this strategy.

Carol Berghan, Claire Lewinski, Clara Aperahama-Kopa, Jonny Wilkinson, Jordan Slater, Kim Robinson, Linda Allan and Patti Poa

# Strategy overview

## Vision

### He Ara Whaikaha o Te Taitokerau

He wāhi maioha

He wāhi taurikura

He tūāpapa mō ngā tangata

whaikaha katoa

### A Journey of Strength for Northland

This is a place of welcome

A place that is positive and thriving

A foundation for all people

with access needs

## Goals

### People with access needs:

Are included and treated with respect.

Can easily participate in their communities with their whānau, hapū iwi, friends and family with dignity.

Feel safe.

Can communicate with ease.

Can go where they want to go.

## Outcomes

Lived experience of the disabled is valued and guides accessibility planning and decision-making.

Public places and events are barrier-free.

People with access needs are prioritised in emergency, crisis and disruption plans.

Communication and information is accessible.

Safe and accessible transport.

## Values

Manaakitanga – an inclusive culture of caring about people, placing people first.

Mahi tahi – working in partnership: community and council working towards one vision.

Whanaungatanga – connection, belonging and an inclusive community. We are connected within our communities.

Āhurutanga – creating a safe space for everyone to be themselves – physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually

Guiding Principles

Universal Design.

Te Tiriti O Waitangi.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

## **Focus areas**

Transport in all forms.

Communication, information and services.

Buildings and facilities.

Public spaces and activities (parks, playgrounds, beaches, events, recreation).

Community safety and emergency response.

Community engagement and consultation.

# Key Goal 1: People with access needs can easily participate in their communities with their whānau, hapū, iwi, friends, and family

## Council aims:

* Everyone can safely access popular beaches.
* Provide a range of accessible parks, playgrounds, reserves, and other recreation facilities.
* Our events are accessible to all.
* Our buildings are accessible for everyone.

## Actions:

* Provide accessibility training to internal planning, design and building control teams.
* Ensure all new Council buildings use universal design principles and meet accessibility standards (at a minimum).
* Provide more accessible public toilets and ensure cleanliness. Strive to go beyond the minimum requirements.
* Universal design principles are used to design parks, playgrounds, and reserves.
* Review Council event planning guidelines (for example including quiet times for public events so people with sensory issues can attend).
* Review options to make popular beaches accessible.
* Provide more accessible walking tracks where possible.

## Focus areas:

Buildings and facilities, public spaces, and activities.

# Key Goal 2: People with access needs can go where they want to go

## Council aims:

* Our public transport is timely, safe, and accessible.
* Safe, obvious and step free pedestrian routes.

## Actions:

* Advocate for cohesive regional public transport.
* Ensure new transport infrastructure is accessible.
* Undertake education about mobility parking and shared paths.
* Ensure public car parking, including mobility parking is appropriate and sufficient.
* Ensure resourcing for enforcement of parking conditions.
* Advocate for input from people with access needs into network infrastructure planning.
* Review the condition and design of new and existing pathways and identify any gaps in the process.
* Advocate to central government to allow more flexible funding decisions to bring old footpaths up to the new standards.
* Educate utility providers on their obligations when undertaking groundworks, to ensure all reinstatements (including temporary) result in accessible and safe footpaths.

## Focus areas

Transport and roading.

# Key Goal 3: People with access needs can communicate with ease

## Council aims:

* Our communication and information is accessible.
* We make it easier for people with access needs to communicate with council and access our services.
* We use a wide range of communication methods, ensuring our communication and information is accessible.

## Actions:

* Develop accessible communication guidelines.
* Understand the access needs within each of our communities.
* Ensure everyone can access information independently.
* Train internal designers and customer facing staff on accessibility.
* Include accessibility training in all staff induction.
* Audit website and social media for accessibility.
* Develop shared image library showing real people with access needs in Northland context.
* Make it easy to find out what accessible Council facilities and services are available.
* Review how customer queries about accessibility issues are responded to and prioritised to improve customer satisfaction.

## Focus areas:

* Communication, information and customer services, Community safety and emergency response.
* Community engagement and consultation, Representation, and decision-making.

# Key Goal 4: People with access needs feel safe

## Council aims:

* Civil Defence emergency facilities (including marae and community facilities) are accessible.
* Our emergency, crisis and disruption plans prioritise people with access needs.
* Our infrastructure design is people-centric and prioritises safety and accessibility.
* Social and physical connectivity is promoted via the development of platforms (both digital and other).

## Actions:

* Work with the access needs community in collaboration with emergency management to develop emergency, crisis, and disruption plans.
* Ensure people with access needs are involved in community response plans.
* Advocate for people with access needs at the regional and national level (CD).
* Community Patrols, Māori Wardens, City Safe etc are trained to interact appropriately with people with access needs.

## Focus areas:

* Community safety and emergency response, Buildings and facilities, public spaces, and activities.

# Key Goal 5: People with access needs are included and treated with respect

## Council aims:

* We value the lived experience of disabled people and use it to guide accessibility planning and decision-making.
* People with access needs can take part in all aspects of civic life.
* We are working towards providing accessible workspaces.

## Actions:

* Encourage people with access needs to apply for council jobs.
* Ensure feedback platforms make it easy for people with access needs to provide input and advice to Council.
* Ensure all public meetings are held in accessible facilities.
* Review engagement processes for flexibility and inclusivity.

## Focus areas:

* Community engagement and consultation.
* Representation and decision-making.

**End of information: Te Tai Tokerau Regional Accessibility Strategy | Summary Document**

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