

INVESTMENT & DELIVERY COMMITTEE PAPER

Auckland Harbour Bridge Walking and Cycling Event

In confidence

Meeting Date	15 December 2021
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Purpose

To seek endorsement from the Board for Waka Kotahi to commence planning for a series of walking and cycling events on the Auckland Harbour Bridge to occur from November 2022.

Recommendations

It is recommended the Committee recommends the Board:

- **Endorses** the recommended series of walking and cycling events for the Auckland Harbour Bridge to commence from November 2022
- **Note** that the events are likely to have an impact on the Auckland Transport System and will require a significant communication programme to suppress demand on the day
- **Notes** the risks associated with holding events on the Auckland Harbour Bridge.
- **Notes** the impacts of COVID-19 Traffic Light system on how the event is managed and the potential restrictions

Strategic relevance

The Minister has requested that Waka Kotahi explore whether a walking and cycling opportunity on the Auckland Harbour Bridge could occur over the quiet summer months or a long weekend provided it could be done safely.

Background

Waka Kotahi requested feedback from the Investment and Delivery Committee in November around options for an event on the Auckland Harbour Bridge in response to a request from Minister Wood. The Board has expressed a desire for us to work with partners to make any event equitable. We committed to go back to the Board in December to confirm what was possible.

As a result of our investigations we are confident that walking and cycling events can be delivered to meet these objectives, however event management activities required to provide safe and effective access to and from the bridge, make it unrealistic to deliver events in the coming event season.

We will continue to investigate options to reduce the cost of the event via sponsorships, in the meantime we are working on the assumption that costs for the events will be met from the NTLF.

Key Issues

Covid-19

The Government has set clear direction to keep people safe people under the Covid-19 protection framework, set out in Appendix Three. Under the red-light setting events are limited to 100 people, with a requirement for everyone to have a vaccine passport. This precludes any event taking place under the Red light setting.

Events could take place under the Orange-light setting, with no restrictions on participant numbers, however the protection framework dictates the event would need to be ticketed to manage the requirement for vaccine passports.

Objectives

Our aspiration for the event series is to provide multiple and specific opportunities for all Aucklanders to enjoy safe access across the bridge, regardless of their age or ability, how they travel, where they live or their capacity to pay.

Since our last discussion with the Investment and Delivery Committee in November, we have investigated the feasibility of holding an event in the summer months of early 2022. We have sought guidance from experts in event management of this scale and complexity who advise they would require a minimum of six months planning to ensure all health and safety risks are mitigated.

We are confident we can deliver a safe and enjoyable event series that will leave Aucklanders feeling positive about walking and cycling in their city, from November 2022.

The proposal:

- This will be a Waka Kotahi led initiative, in partnership with the Auckland Council family.
- It will be positioned as an opportunity for all Aucklanders to enjoy access to the iconic Auckland Harbour Bridge to travel on foot or wheel between Auckland city and the North Shore.
- We will open the two east clip-on lanes of the Harbour Bridge to safely accommodate people walking, cycling, scootering or with pushchairs or accessibility devices.
- Access will be between Shelley Beach Road at the city end and Sulphur Beach Road at the North Shore end.
- We will open the bridge for an appropriate period during a weekend day, longer than for previous events such as the Auckland Marathon, to allow people to travel across at their own pace. This will result in additional delays to people travelling in vehicles, however we will undertake a comprehensive communications plan to suppress the demand for travel over the bridge in vehicles.
- It will be free for people to travel across the Harbour Bridge, though more work is required to confirm the details of safe and convenient access.
- The Covid-19 protection framework restrictions for events will determine whether an event is possible, and the treatments required to ensure public safety.
- The costs of the events will be accommodated within the Walking and Cycling Activity Class, unless other funding is identified.
- We will investigate sponsorship opportunities for the events, as well as harnessing or aligning with other planned events or works.

Risks and Mitigations

The most significant risks relate to people using and working on the Auckland Harbour Bridge, though we are confident that with enough time for planning, we can operate a safe system for all users. There will be an impact on people driving over the bridge and across the wider Auckland transport system, which we will seek to minimise through a comprehensive communications and media plan.

Event User and Worker Safety

As the event would take place on a Waka Kotahi asset and would be a Waka Kotahi managed invitation for users, there is a duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work Act to manage risks to the health and safety of workers operating and maintaining the Auckland Harbour Bridge and connecting corridors, those managing the event, as well as event participants, so far as is reasonably practicable. We are confident that we can provide a safe operating environment.

The key risks and mitigations are set out in Attachment 1.

Auckland Transport System Impacts

We propose to close the two eastern clip-on lanes to traffic. These lanes have the capacity for loading and are the easiest to accommodate entry and exit access. It is likely we will close Shelley Beach off ramp which will result in additional pressure on Fanshawe Street. More time is needed to develop the event management plan to establish details of access and the impact on the local transport network.

The proposal is to close lanes to traffic for a longer period of the day than previous events such as the Auckland Marathon, to ensure that people can travel at their own pace. This will have a more significant impact on the wider transport system. Modelling carried out by Resolve Group in early 2021 indicates there would be additional delays from approximately noon to 8pm in the northbound direction between Mt Wellington and the bridge, and in the southbound direction between SH18 and the bridge.

Our experience of traffic impacts during the Marathon and other planned events indicates it is possible to suppress some of the demand for travel through pre-event communications. We propose to develop a comprehensive communications plan to alert motorists to the planned closures and will work with specific user groups such as freight operators and the emergency services to support their operations. In addition, we propose to identify opportunities to host the events on quieter days over the summer period where there is likely to be more limited impacts on the wider system. The communications plan will also advise on the best way to travel to and from the event to minimise reputational risk and improve people's overall experience.

Stakeholder Impacts

We will work with the appropriate partners to develop the proposal to maximise the opportunity for Auckland and ensure there are mitigation plans to manage health and safety concerns of all stakeholders.

Costs

More work is needed to confirm event costs with an event management company; however, the table in Attachment Two includes an estimate of potential costs based on similar activities held in Auckland or on quotes from key suppliers. We will seek to make the events more cost effective by aligning to other events or planned works which will significantly reduce the cost of traffic management.

Confirming an intention to hold events in November will enable us to secure event management staff and suppliers ahead of the busy 2022/23 summer event season and enhance opportunities to manage costs.

We understand the sponsorship market is very constrained this summer, but that there is likely to be interest for the 2022/23 summer season.

Unless funding from outside the NLTP is identified, the cost of the events will be accommodated from the Walking and Cycling activity class, under the Streets for People Programme.

Health & safety, customer/stakeholder & environmental impact

The impact of this decision is considered by Waka Kotahi to be neutral in terms of health and safety, the public and other stakeholders, and the environment.

Related documents

Investment & Delivery Committee paper August 2021, Auckland Harbour Bridge shared path Options Assessment

Attachments

Attachment 1 Risk Assessment

Attachment 2 Costs

Attachment 3 Covid Framework

Attachment 1

Risk Assessment

Risk	Consequence	Risk Treatment
Proposed multimodal shared path adjacent to high-speed traffic lanes.	Vehicle encroachment into active mode space, personal injury.	Installation of steel barrier systems and temporary traffic management which effectively excludes traffic from the event area achieved with an emphasis on physical barrier systems and strategic placement of TTM apparatus.
No existing fall restraint along AHB which is in the form of or meets height requirements of an acceptable solution.	Active mode users fall or are exposed to fall hazard, resulting in personal injury.	Installation of a crowd barrier, which is offset from the AHB balustrade and supported by security guard for the duration of the event.
The gradient of the AHB which persists for long distances, enabling some active modes to gain relatively high speeds.	Active mode users gain speed over a distance and lose control, resulting in personal injury.	Traffic calming measures to mitigate the build-up of speed and possible separation of travel directions. Communication with users on the intent of the event to host a safe speed environment suitable for children.
Shared path users electing to continue along motorway through an active carriageway beyond area of closure resulting in emergency services response, closures and network impacts.	Active mode users entering motorway environment, risk of personal injury and network impacts from Emergency Service response effort.	Installation of fencing and barriers coupled with security monitoring and clear way finding signage.
COVID-19 protection framework restrictions	Event becomes a super spreader event if robust measures are not followed. Mingling at entry and exit points leads to unsafe COVID safety practices Participants don't want to show vaccine passports meaning we can't maintain health and safety requirements.	Ticketed solution requiring vaccine passports. Monitored entry point – likely requiring security personnel
A serious or fatal incident occurs on the shared path	Personal injury, Emergency Services are delayed from attending due to congestion or site access	Develop a joint briefing for Emergency services, including access plan. Investigate supply of medical officers for the event.
People who need to drive across the Harbour Bridge experience frustration	Negative media and reputational damage	Comprehensive communications to clearly articulate the opportunity of the event and suppress the demand for travel by vehicle.
Weather prevents event from going a head – wind, storm	The AHB site is not comfortable for active mode activity in high winds	Develop briefing workstream with Waka Kotahi resources in met service, set up event specific

	(>60kph) and poses risk of falling or loss of control	assessment report. Delay or cancel the event if conditions are not safe.
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There are residual risks, which would still require assessment and possible mitigation.

Residual risk	Consequence	Comment
Items dropping (Direct or indirectly) on or near vessels travelling beneath the bridge.	Personal injury, property damage	Security Guard placement and a pedestrian fence offset from the existing balustrade of the AHB.
Debris entering the shared path from the motorway.	Personal injury	Further consideration of this risk is required, particularly if there is confrontation between shared path users and traffic.
Vehicles could impact the steel barrier system and encroach upon the shared path or move the barrier into the path of cyclists.	Personal injury	Option to reduce adjacent traffic speeds.
An incident or event occurs on the shared path requiring emergency response, such as a crash or assault.	Personal injury	Emergency vehicle access to the location using adjacent AHB lanes. Potential for a dedicated response vehicle for the shared path and planning to be conducted with emergency services on how to access the site.
The area of operations may extend into the 'local road' network via connections, each extent may require an additional event type treatment to ensure safety.	Personal injury, crowd loading on accessways, way finding and ensuring all participants/users have a way of return.	Develop further event planning which considers this risk and produces treatments, such as management of access and path finding.
An incident elsewhere on the network.	Increased congestion on the Harbour Bridge	Incident messaging to reroute vehicles
People who need to drive across the Harbour Bridge experience frustration	Negative media and reputational damage	Comprehensive communications to clearly articulate the opportunity of the event and suppress the demand for travel by vehicle.

Attachment 2

Costs

Activity		Total
Barrier system (Steel barrier)	Establishment, hire, disestablishment	\$151,000
Traffic Management	Implementation, maintenance of closure, disestablishment	\$26,000
Security	Security Guard Operations, crowd control and ushers, crowd barrier establishment and disestablishment	\$47,000
Accommodation Works	Manipulate existing barrier systems to allow access, configure access paths	\$11,300
Operations Support	CCTV Operator and monitoring, Operations Management	\$9,500
Site Cleaning and asset restoration and checks	Litter removal, graffiti or signage removal	\$6,000
Event Management	Event Operations Managers Marquee and fencing hire \$65x3 Ticketing \$50,000-60,000	\$355,000
Marketing	Media \$50,000 Marketing \$50,000 Comms- internal and with partners	\$100,000
Total		\$705,900

Attachment 3

Covid Framework

Events – Certificates required in Red and Orange. Venue requirements also dictate other restrictions	Gatherings – venue requirements dictate whether certificates are required and other restrictions	Other types of venues/sites – specific rules apply
<p><u>Events at Red</u> – all events must use certificates for entry. Restricted to 100 people based on 1m distancing per defined space</p> <p><u>Events at Orange</u> – all events must use certificates for entry. No restrictions.</p> <p><u>Events at Green</u> – no restrictions if certificates are used; capped at 100 people without</p>	<p><u>Gatherings at Red</u> – capped at 100 people if certificates used; up to 25 per defined space without</p> <p><u>Gatherings at Orange</u> – no restrictions if certificates used; up to 50 per defined space without</p> <p><u>Gatherings at Green</u> – no restrictions if certificates used; capped at 100 people without</p>	<p>Specified outdoor ‘non-ticketed’ activities eg <u>market in a park/public parade</u>–the gathering rules apply (see definitions of event and gathering types at each level)</p>