

# TĪRAU

Take a break  
Take in TĪRAU



The South Waikato connection

## CONCEPT PLAN



## Message from Tīrau Community

The Tīrau community is proud to present the Tīrau Concept Plan 2021-2031.

A bustling boutique village known for its corrugated iron artwork and neat vibe!

We believe that Tīrau is the best place to live, work and play.

Centrally located and commutable to main centres such as Tauranga, Hamilton, Rotorua and Taupo, Tīrau organically supports future hopes and aspirations for the wide cross section of community groupings who live and work here. Village charm less than two hours from Auckland!

Come and take a break and 'Take in Tīrau'.



## Message from the Mayor

Council is pleased to present the Tīrau community with a *draft* Tīrau Concept Plan for further feedback. This Plan - the vision, direction and actions - has been developed in collaboration with the Tīrau community through a series of meetings and workshops over recent months.

Council would like to acknowledge everyone who has provided ideas and feedback, with special thanks to the Tīrau Community Board (TCB).

The Tīrau Concept Plan, when finalised through this second feedback process, will feed into the Long-Term Plan 2021-31 (LTP) which Council is currently working on.

Concept plans capture the shared vision of local communities to enable integrated planning for the district as a whole. Local planning ensures that local communities are heard and their aspirations for their towns and wards realised through the LTP process which is where the all-important funding is allocated.

The draft actions in this plan are a collaboration between Council and the community. It is proposed that some activities will be Council led and funded, while others will be led by the community and funded by grants or other sources of income.

Tīrau is the northern most gateway to our district and a town with a unique sense of style which attracts many visitors every year. It is a vibrant visitor hub with an eclectic mix of eateries, designer outlet stores and artisan craft workshops. Tīrau has its own sophisticated identity and the people who live here are passionate with a strong sense of history which is celebrated throughout the town.



## What is concept planning | He aha tenei mea te mahere aria

Concept planning is about local people working together with public, private and voluntary organisations to plan and deliver better services that make a real difference to their lives. It is a process that focuses on developing and achieving long term objectives for improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of a community.



### Economic – to create a thriving and diverse economy

Tīrau displays a unique character that is welcoming and attractive. It is a destination for local, national and international visitors who want to take a break and *Take in Tīrau!*

Famously dubbed the *Corrugated Capital of the World*, visitors should expect a large variety of boutique shops, cafés and restaurants. The core objective here is to create local jobs and get more people to visit, provide opportunities to spend local at community market days, utilise the bed and breakfast accommodation and provide access to local attractions.

In addition, the large-scale industries in the industrial zone give Tīrau a diverse economic sector.

### Environmental – promote a sustainable and nurtured environment

Tīrau is home to many precious environments that people have fostered and cherished for generations. There is a growing concern for and a need to make a significant contribution to climate change. The delivery of this Concept Plan must produce sustainable actions that protect the environment and leave a legacy for future generations.

At a high level, the Reserve Management Plan 2010, is being reviewed this year and will look at how spaces are currently being used. Public consultation in partnership with Sport Waikato will give insights to the recreational needs of the community and determine future open space requirements.

Tīrau wants to ensure that beautiful must-see attractions of the Waikato River, Okoroire Hot Springs and Te Waihou Blue Spring are supported to ensure their sustainability.



## **Social – support connected and safe community**

While the community is supportive, friendly and welcoming, there is a desire to remain connected both physically and socially.

Accessibility is important to many - both young and old. To ensure the community is inclusive, accessibility throughout the community needs to be improved - safer footpaths, walkways and main road safety with pedestrian crossings.

CCTV (Closed Circuit Television) and free Wifi throughout the CBD will keep us connected locally and to the world, while providing improved safety.

## **Cultural – enable our strong cultural identity**

Enhancing the cultural identity of Tīrau runs as a thread through all actions listed.

Any new, large, capital infrastructure projects and strategic plans should include cultural design and detailing that has respect and reinforces cultural values of the community.

Māori and European settlements have contributed to the rich history of Tīrau. Their contribution will be acknowledged through the continuation of published and recorded repositories. This will be vital to the local and visitor experiences.

## **How is concept planning used | Kei hea te mahere aria e noho ana**

- Helps a community to signal to regional and national bodies what is important to the local people so that these aspirations and actions can be integrated into their respective planning
- Helps inform and guide priority projects that the community want to lead and progress
- Signals opportunities for collaboration and partnerships between Iwi, community organisations and businesses
- Can be used to inform Annual Plans, Long Term Plans, District Plans and other Council Plans and Bylaws
- Helps inform new residents of the key projects the community is working on
- Helps give guidance and clarity to funding and grant applications.

## The area the plan covers | Te rohe takiwa o Tirau



Map identifies current District projects.



## What has already been done | Te anga whakamuri

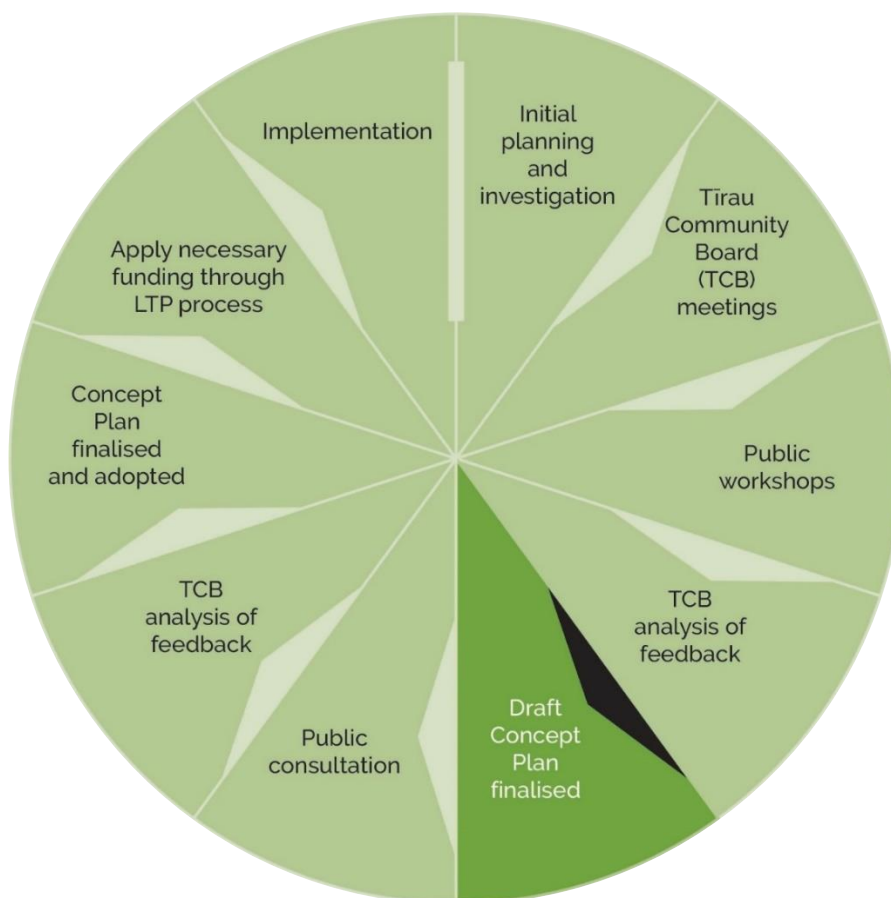
The previous Concept Plan was completed in 2006 and revised in 2008 and 2011. Due to the location of Tirau on major State Highway network, there is a continued need to revise any actions.

With these revised actions, this Concept Plan will continue to bring together the aspirations of Tirau residents and look to support the sustainability of small rural townships with their own identity.

## How was the plan developed | I pehea te waihanga o te mahere

The drafting of the revised Concept Plan has been a Tirau Community Board led and South Waikato District Council supported project, which started in October 2019 and included a series of conversations, meetings and public workshops in February 2020. Key points include:

- The consultation has been a non-technical process so that people felt comfortable to participate and contribute
- Drafting of this plan has included a review of existing reports and research available
- The desired outcomes represent a true and authentic community voice.



## Tīrau profile | Te Kotaha Tīrau

Tīrau is a thriving village of approximately 700 people. The wider rural Tīrau area has a population of approximately 2,150. It is set amongst some of New Zealand's most fertile farmland.

Early Māori history refers to Tīrau being a wonderful place to catch the Kereru (native pigeons). The birds used the many Tī Rau (cabbage trees) in the areas as overnight resting places to rejuvenate themselves amongst the lush native trees and lands. That's why Tīrau is the perfect place to stop, rest and revitalise yourself.

In 1989 local resident Henry Clothier had a vision for Tīrau to be the home of a range of antique and craft shops, and popular pit-stop and shopping. His passion was to bring life to Tīrau.

Today, Tīrau has made a remarkable transformation as a vibrant and popular destination. It boasts a *Big Sheep* wool gallery and the *Big Dog* information centre. Where else in the world will you see a corrugated Sheep and Dog – only in Tīrau.

A proud village that is safe and a great place to live for young and retiring families. Another big factor is Tīrau is dog-friendly meaning you can take your dogs out to places where you go in and around Tīrau. Centrally located to support one and a half to two hours travelling distances to main city centres plus enjoying local tourist attractions such as Waikato River, Okoroire Springs and Te Waihou Blue Spring.

The main road boasts boutique-style art and craft stores as well as a variety of refreshment cafés which are enjoyed by hundreds of people every day when they are travelling throughout regions of the North Island.

Take a break - Take in Tīrau.



## Our economic profile | Tātou kotaha ohaoha

Tīrau has an optimal location advantage on State Highway One, which will be further enhanced with the completion of the Waikato Expressway in 2021. With over 12,000 vehicles travelling through the village daily, a significant part of its economy is built on visitors stopping to utilise public conveniences, enjoy the wide range of food and beverage choices and indulge in boutique shopping. Alongside the visitor economy is local service industries and large-scale national processors (dairy/flour) and an industrial zone with opportunity for growth. Understanding the specific growth aspirations of the community is critical to ensuring that appropriate and timely infrastructure investment takes place to support growth; both commercial and residential. Opportunities exist to leverage the location advantage on state highways and the key turnoff for Rotorua bound visitors and tourists.

We need to ensure that housing development is facilitated appropriately to cater for the requirements of existing and future residents. The population of Tīrau has grown by 2.7% per annum, from 2013 to 2018 and in 2018 stood at 780 people, the largest population since 1976<sup>[4]</sup>. Development should be aligned to the vision of Tīrau and designed to enhance the quality of life for the entire local community. Attracting new residents and businesses to Tīrau is a critical element in growth planning for the district, especially in attracting a highly skilled workforce to enable local companies to grow and thrive.

The South Waikato District has experienced strong and sustained economic growth, with GDP growth of 10% from 2015-2019. During the same period employment has increased by 6% and productivity has increased by 4.2%, compared to 3.1% for New Zealand. Unemployment fell by 23% during this period overall, with a 20% reduction in 15-24-year olds who are not in employment, education or training (NEET)<sup>[1]</sup>. Population had reached 25,100 across the district by December 2019.

More recently the local economy has taken a significant hit as a result of COVID-19, in line with the rest of New Zealand. The numbers of people in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance has increased by 24% in November 2020<sup>[3]</sup> compared to December 2019. The impact on the district has been lower than many other parts of New Zealand and the Waikato.

The population of the district is expected to grow to 38,310 by 2053<sup>[2]</sup> which will require substantial investment in growth related infrastructure (water/roading etc). There is a growing requirement for new housing within the district, from social, through progressive and onto market-based supply. Council is working with each community to better understand and facilitate its growth aspirations and how best to manage this growth alongside economic, environmental and social aspirations.

South Waikato District Council and the South Waikato Investment Fund Trust are working closely with Toi-Ohomai Institute of Technology to widen the scope, of tertiary courses and trade training delivered within the district. \$10.8m government funding for the development of a new \$14m tertiary training hub has been approved. This will have a major impact on training and the creation of job opportunities for our community in the future.

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<sup>[1]</sup> Infometrics District Profile, December 2019

<sup>[2]</sup> Natalie Jackson Demographics Ltd, May 2019

<sup>[3]</sup> Ministry of Social Development, June 2020

<sup>[4]</sup> Statistics New Zealand, April 2020

The establishment of the Generation Programme with the Central North Island Wood Council in late 2020, as well as the development of a digital and entrepreneurial hub to reduce the digital divide, should offer pathways to employment and business start-ups utilising digital skills.





## What our community has said | Nga korero a ta matou hapori

Residents identified strengths and assets that make the Tīrau community unique and a great place to live. In order of response, the top six strengths/assets were identified as:

1. Town centre character – unique and distinctive – Corrugated Capital
2. Small population / boutique style feel
3. A wonderful place to live, work and play
4. Safe / close community
5. State highway network to major centres such as Hamilton / Tauranga / Rotorua
6. Close proximity to tourist activities with Waikato River, Okoroire Hot Springs and Te Waihou Blue Spring.

Residents also feedback on areas for improvement. In order of response, our community have asked for improvements in the following areas:

1. Signage and adequate off-street parking
2. Traffic Management Plans for safer pedestrian crossings
3. Streetscape Plan to improve landscaping and attractiveness of Tīrau Main Street with safer footpaths.
4. Community led model for purposes of tourism information services, business liaison, and library and community hub for everyone
5. CCTV/WiFi cameras within the Tīrau area
6. A turning bay be implemented from State Highway One onto Hillcrest Street.

In terms of the future of Tīrau, the community were asked how they would like to see Tīrau in ten years' time. Main themes included:

1. Creative lighting along State Highway One through the Tīrau township as a unique characteristic to connect all towns – the South Waikato Connection
2. Reinforcing our village feel by encouraging art and craft businesses to town
3. Future linking of the lower and upper businesses of Tīrau with a cohesive look to shop fronts to engage the continuation of the corrugated iron theme
4. A drop-in centre/area where our youth can gather
5. Continued development at Tīrau Domain as a community recreational space that brings together residents and visitors to enjoy the natural resources, public facilities and intergenerational spaces.

## The Partnership Approach | Te huarahi whakahoahoa

This plan cannot be achieved by one organisation or individual working in isolation. Instead, a partnership approach will ensure that there is collaboration with relevant agencies and funding partners to get the best possible outcomes. By developing a partnership approach, it puts the community at the heart of the plan.

It is acknowledged that there are already existing partnerships with South Waikato District Council. However there needs to be other partnerships so to deliver positive change and fulfilling community objectives. Implementation of this plan must align with partners to add value and to be effective.

### South Waikato Investment Fund Trust (SWIFT)

In 2014, the Council established the South Waikato Investment Fund (SWIF) Trust for the purpose of increasing employment and economic growth in the South Waikato District. The Trust manages a fund which is available for economic development projects in the South Waikato. The Trust recognises the importance of Tourism in the South Waikato's economic development and the important role Tīrau play in that tourism offering.

### The Waikato River Trails

The Waikato River Trails is proud to be a member of the New Zealand Cycle Trails network.

The Waikato River Trails opened officially in November 2011 and are managed by the Waikato River Trails Charitable Trust. The Trust was formed in 2006 to develop a network of trails along the Waikato with the aim of bringing visitors to the South Waikato.

The trails are located in the heart of the South Waikato and extend from Atiamuri Village in the south to the southern end of Lake Karapiro in the north. The trail is broken into five sections, each one named after the lake that the trail is connected to.

### Ministry of Youth Development

The Ministry of Youth Development - Te Manatū Whakahiato Taiohi - encourages and supports young people, aged between 12 and 24 years, to develop and use knowledge, skills and experiences to participate confidently in their communities.





## Our Priorities | A matou kaupapa matua

To realise our vision, we have identified six principles for our community and partners to focus attention on:

1. Our people
2. Future utilisation of spaces for community use
3. Infrastructure planning for safe roads, footpaths, parking
4. Safe community
5. Promotion of Take a Break – Take in Tīrau
6. Being relevant in regional economic development plans and initiatives

### 1. OUR PEOPLE

Tīrau residents deserve to live in a community that is safe and caring to ensure they feel a true sense of belonging. Playgrounds and park spaces and our town community hall play an important part in creating friendships and connection.

Our community believes that we need to advocate in areas of wellbeing that will protect our current and future residents of Tīrau. The feedback from our community has been about having an identity, acknowledging history and planning for the future.

#### The outcomes we are seeking:

- Our people understand that they live in a friendly and safe place which is rich in history and natural resources.
- Our people believe their contribution is authentic and has a valued connection to Tīrau and the world.
- Our people are involved in influencing, shaping, designing and contributing to the future of Tīrau.
- The installation of CCTV will ensure public safety as a preventative measure.

### 2. FUTURE UTILISATION OF SPACES FOR COMMUNITY USE

Tīrau residents have expressed a desire to provide well maintained recreation spaces and facilities for community use as well as sharing these facilities to local national and/or international opportunities e.g., artists, musical performers, international speakers and acts.

Given that Tīrau experiences growth during the weekends and holiday periods, it is also important to retain adequate open green space for recreational use and not succumb to sacrificing recreational green space for development.

#### The outcomes we are seeking:

- Consistent level of service maintained for the upkeep of recreational spaces.
- The specific needs of older people are identified in the utilisation of recreational spaces, such as walking tracks and intergenerational playgrounds.
- Investigate better utilisation of current buildings for use as Tīrau library, Tīrau i-SITE and a community hub for young and elderly residents
- Tīrau public swimming pool is a wonderful asset to the community and continues to be maintained
- The future decision of the current halls - Tīrau and Tapapa - as the landscape of the district.

### **3. CONTINUED PLANNING FOR SAFER ROADS, FOOTPATHS AND PARKING**

In 2016 Council undertook a Tīrau Transport study to assess the transport issues and opportunity along State Highway One. The purpose of the study was to understand current and future constraints related to the movement of people and vehicles along and across the corridor.

The project included a signage strategy, along with parking, speed management, loading zones and pedestrian crossings. To date side road parking and off-road parking with signage has been completed.

#### **The outcomes we are seeking:**

- Consistent level of service is maintained with footpath quality, turning bays and speed management.
- Improving the State Highway One pedestrian crossings southbound.

### **4. SAFER COMMUNITY**

Public safety is paramount to Tīrau. The use of closed-circuit television (CCTV) and/or security cameras are useful security tools for businesses, to deter unwanted behaviour and reduce crimes. CCTV can also provide other benefits such as supporting Police prosecutions and traffic management.

#### **The outcomes we are seeking:**

- CCTV to be installed at the top of Hillcrest Street and State Highway One

### **5. PROMOTION OF TAKE A BREAK - 'TAKE IN TĪRAU'**

Tīrau is a great place to set up business especially in the food and beverage, art and tourism industry. Or you can buy a house here and commute to work in one of the main centres, knowing you've got a relaxing rural environment to return home to.

The strong small-town community provides the perfect, relaxing lifestyle where fishing, swimming, hiking and cycling are all accessible activities right on your doorstep.

#### **The outcomes we are seeking:**

- To showcase our local art and craft stores as well as our boutique stores
- Continued tourism opportunities linked to lakes, rivers, walking, cycling between Waitomo Caves and Rotorua
- Providing visitors with an environment featuring abundant native flora and fauna, little pollution or waste and continued attention to recycling
- Providing visitors with safe access, open spaces, seating and public conveniences
- Tīrau coordinates its tourism offerings with other complimentary activities in the district and that these are promoted local, regionally and across the i-SITE network.



## 6. BEING RELEVANT IN REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND INITIATIVES

Formally established 6 July 2018, Te Waka is a business-led and governed organisation established to drive economic growth in the Waikato.

Te Waka is an economic development agency that is working to deliver on some high-level objectives for our region:

- Lift economic performance across the Waikato region
- Attract, retain and grow investment, talent and business across the region
- Champion and provide one voice for economic and business needs and opportunities across the region.

They work in partnership with existing economic development, iwi, business, and government and community organisations to get things done and to create opportunities that will lead to jobs, prosperity and sustainable economic growth for everybody, thereby improving wellbeing for all communities.

The Council participates in this project with a view to achieving tangible actions for the South Waikato District.

Advocating the competitive advantage of Tīrau, identifying how Tīrau can leverage this collaborative initiative and proactively seize opportunities that arise should be a focus.

### The outcomes we're seeking:

- The assets and interests of Tīrau are well represented.
- That Tīrau has a voice at the regional table that is well informed of the vision for Tīrau
- Tīrau is perceived by others as a great place to visit and live.



## Action plan

These actions have been specifically identified to progress the vision and outcomes desired for Tīrau. They are intended to guide action but will likely evolve as Tīrau continues to evolve.

The lead organisation is the first organisation listed in the table.

TCB: Tīrau Community Board

Council: South Waikato District Council

MYD: Ministry of Youth Development

SWIFT: South Waikato Investment Fund Trust

Iwi: Raukawa

No.	Action	Lead organisation(s)	Indicative timeframe
1.	<p>A commitment to support ages 0-24:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect with Ministry of Youth Development to upskill community leaders regarding effective youth engagement and youth development.</li> <li>• Develop Tīrau Youth Strategic Plan.</li> <li>• Improvement of current playground.</li> </ul> <p>Investigate the possibility of skate park, pump track, dirt bike track, basketball hoops.</p> <p>Investigate the possibility of intergenerational playground ie, for families and elderly.</p> <p>Investigate the possibility of small sound shell (like Tokoroa Youth Park).</p> <p>Investigate the possibility of campervan parking.</p>	TCB to seek advice from MYD and other youth providers to support the development of a youth strategy.	2020-2025
2.	<p>A revised Streetscape Plan to ensure actions such as – replanting of trees, footpaths, creative lit-up light posts on State Highway One is the priority as per the previous LTP Plan and is required in the new LTP Plan 2021-2031.</p>	TCB to work alongside Council.	2020-2025

No.	Action	Lead organisation(s)	Indicative timeframe
3.	Identify areas for future growth of residential developments to meet future housing needs.	Council – Economic development.	2021-2023
4.	Property Utilisation Programme (PUP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Future utilisation of council-owned properties</li> </ul>	Council has started working on the PUP to support the community as to the future of all council-owned properties across the South Waikato District.	2020-2023
5.	Identify opportunities to better utilise existing Industrial zoned land to support business attraction and growth.	Council – Economic development.	2021-2023
6.	Review of Reserve Management Plan (RMP) 2010 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently being reviewed to incorporate in the LTP 2021-2031 Plan.</li> <li>Bylaw Changes.</li> </ul>	Council's Parks & Reserves Team is the owner of the review under the Reserves Act 1977. Notification open for public consultation will start 22 July.	2020-2021
7.	Identify district tourism package opportunities.  Promotion of Take a Break – 'Take in Tīrau' to encourage new businesses and families to the area.	TCB to investigate the current tourism opportunities to support platforms through existing channels for promotion by the regional tourism operator and assess how to tap into existing channels to promote Tīrau. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuous update of Tīrau website.</li> </ul>	2020-2021
8.	Planned Tīrau Events co-ordinated to collaborate with local, national and international artists, musical performances and acts to continue branding Tīrau. Quarterly market weekends with local craft and arts with music and food components to provide social opportunities.	TCB to create yearly event calendar and plan for events.	Continuous



No.	Action	Lead organisation(s)	Indicative timeframe
9.	<p>Tirau is diverse and inclusive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Māori and European History to be showcased when identified in Tirau.</li> <li>• Meet with local iwi, hapu and marae to seek clarity on the history of Māori in this area.</li> <li>• Council will support the cultural values of the communities when significant council projects are identified.</li> <li>• Whakapapa is recorded and published via online repositories and throughout information signage throughout the village.</li> <li>• Cultural community events.</li> <li>• Mapping and connecting agreed historical sites of significance.</li> </ul>	<p>TCB / historians / iwi / Council / will work collectively to collate information.</p> <p>TCB to investigate online portal from Tirau website to store and record history.</p>	Continuous

## The regional context - Te horopaki o te rohe nui

While concept plans must be driven by local people, aligning with regional strategies will help partners integrate the actions into their own business plans.

Tīrau is part of the South Waikato District Council and the Council develops a Long-Term Plan (LTP) every three years, each plan spans ten years ensuring it can link with activities and decisions of the past, but keep iterating its future, based on new information and activities.

While the LTP provides the overarching direction for the district, each individual community can capture aspirations and implement their own actions, through a Concept Plan.

In addition – there is a need to consider Waikato Wellbeing Project launched in August 2019 to provide expert advice, support and overall vision, direction and voice for the future of Tīrau and the South Waikato District.

