



**Auckland
LIGHT RAIL**
Bringing us closer

Summary of Public Engagement

How we engaged with people

Between July and August 2021, we asked for Aucklanders' views about the Auckland Light Rail project. We asked questions that link to the key outcomes of the project, to understand what is important to communities along the route and all Aucklanders.



print, radio, bus back, billboard, bus shelters and digital advertising achieved high reach across all demographic groups



62,000
brochures delivered

translations into **10** languages



21,520
clicks on social media posts and digital adverts

ethnic media to connect with people with English as a second language



9,688
visits to project website



14 community events

63 stakeholder events

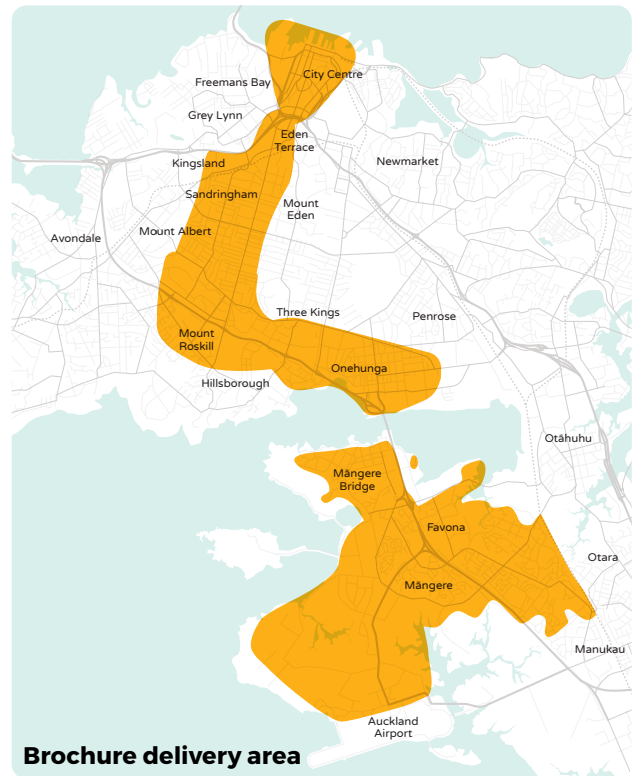
7 e-newsletters sent to up to

1,648 subscribers



2,700+

feedback responses received



Released under the Official Information Act 1982

How we received feedback

We heard from residents and businesses...



...and from key stakeholder groups

A listening session was held in each corridor community (Māngere, Onehunga, Mt Roskill, Eden Valley and the City Centre). We invited business owners, school principals, members of residents associations, community and environmental groups, churches, sports / recreation clubs, local boards, and community services groups.

Targeted stakeholder workshops included representatives from advocate and interest groups representing business, community, transport/urbanism and vulnerable users.



COVID-19 changed how we engaged and collected feedback

COVID-19 Alert Level 4 lockdown during the last two weeks of our engagement period meant we couldn't meet in person, so we moved our engagement online and were contactable via email and the 0800 phone number. We:

- held 10 stakeholder workshops, 9 meetings and 5 presentations
- sent 2 e-newsletters to our key stakeholder and subscriber list of 1,648 people
- boosted our digital and social advertising to promote our online feedback form, and ways to contact the team
- posted on project partner Facebook pages and Twitter accounts
- encouraged interest groups, advocates, elected members and other key stakeholders to remind people to share their views before 1 September 2021.

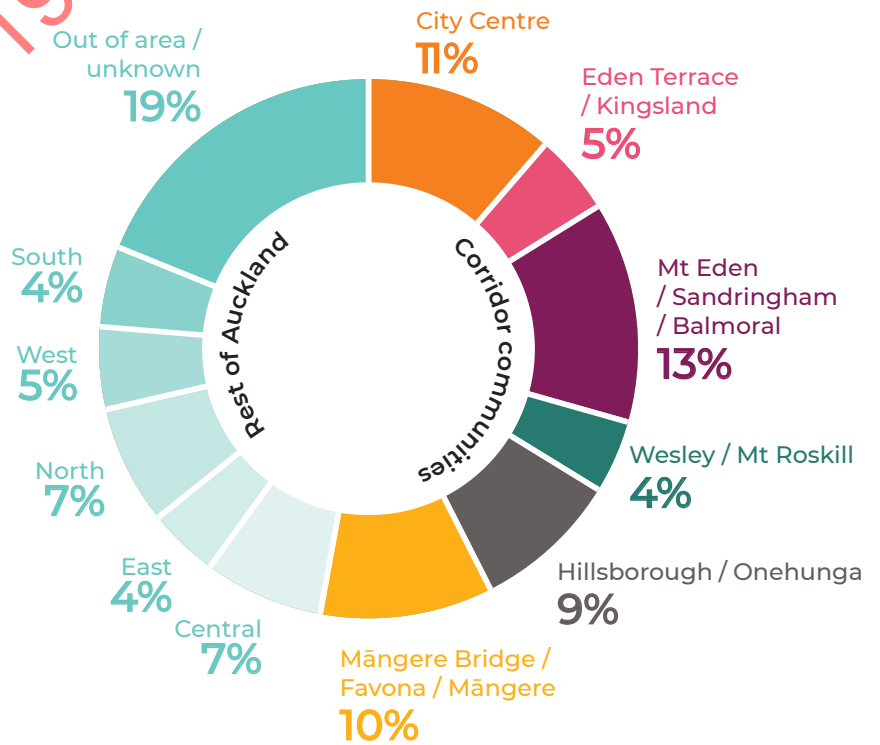


Māngere listening session, 14 July

Who we heard from

Views from across Auckland

We received feedback from people right across the region with over half (53% or 1,452 people) telling us they live in a corridor community.



Sandringham drop in session, 5 August

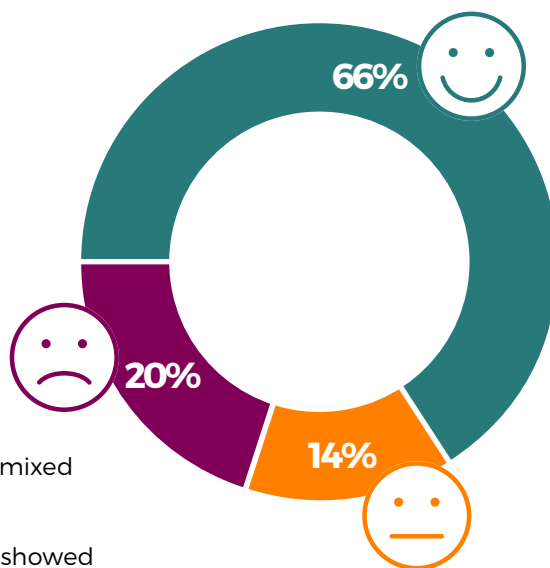
Feedback was gathered from over 115 key stakeholder groups and advocates, through listening sessions, workshops, one on one meetings and written submissions. We heard from:

- Residents Associations
- Business Associations
- Large businesses
- Community groups
- Churches, community facilities and trusts
- Elected members and MPs
- Environmental groups
- Transport advocacy groups
- Peak body groups
- Advocacy groups
- Education facilities
- Utility service providers
- Auckland Council advisory panels and groups

What we heard

Aucklanders want light rail

More people we heard from support light rail than those who don't (66% or 1,823 people voicing support).



A further 14% were supportive but had concerns, or provided mixed feedback. The remaining 20% said they oppose the project.

The corridor communities and South Auckland communities showed the strongest support overall (ranging between 68%–82%).

People in North and East Auckland indicated the most concern or opposition. 29% of submitters from North Auckland and 34% of submitters from East Auckland did not support the project, compared to a favourable response from communities along the proposed corridor. Some people in these communities objected to the proposal because they thought that their area should receive light rail first. People in the eastern suburbs also mentioned that they felt their area was regularly underserved by transport projects.

AREA	SENTIMENT		
	Support	Do Not Support	Mixed
Māngere Bridge / Favona / Māngere	82%	7%	11%
Eden Terrace / Kingsland	79%	14%	7%
City Centre	78%	14%	8%
Wesley / Mt Roskill	78%	16%	6%
Mt Eden / Sandringham / Balmoral	70%	21%	9%
South Auckland (not in corridor)	70%	21%	9%
Hillsborough / Onehunga	68%	17%	15%
Central Auckland (not in corridor)	64%	24%	12%
West Auckland (not in corridor)	60%	22%	18%
North Auckland (not in corridor)	56%	29%	15%
Place of residence not provided	53%	27%	20%
East Auckland (not in corridor)	50%	34%	16%

“We want Auckland to be a modern city, with more homes for everyone, walkable communities, and less reliance on cars.”



66% of people overall support the Auckland Light Rail project.

Key themes were:

Enabling a better transport system increases access to affordable homes

People largely said this project will be the start of unlocking the city. The main reason for this relates to how light rail can enable more development of housing. 1,018 people (37%) told us they support increasing housing density together with a better transport system. Aucklanders are enthusiastic about the flow on effects of intensification that a light rail route will enable, including its potential to reduce sprawl and unlock opportunities for first home buyers.

This project will make Auckland a more liveable, healthier city

People currently not located in the corridor or growth areas or who own their own homes, also support intensification because they can see how it will benefit others in their communities. This is by having more access to housing, better connectivity between areas, and more options for employment. Many people see that when housing and transport go hand in hand, it can reduce the need for lengthy commutes. This decreases pressure on the transport system and improves community wellbeing.

Improved access for everyone

844 people (31%) said they would use the light rail line for a mixture of accessing work and study, as well as recreation. People identified a variety of destinations along the route, from downtown on the weekends, to Dominion Road restaurants, and as a much needed connection for South Auckland. People also advocated for access for micro-mobility and for people with disabilities to be able to travel independently.

Less dependence on cars will make Auckland a more pleasant and safer city

817 people (30%) have a vision for Auckland as connected up by a multi-modal transport system, where significantly less road priority is given to cars. This enables more space for pedestrians, cycling, and for communities to experience connection by having easy access to a variety of travel modes. 453 people (16%) commented that Auckland will benefit from reduced congestion when light rail takes cars off the road.

More vibrant communities

This vision of being better connected to the places we enjoy came through clearly in the feedback from both the supporters of light rail, and those who are not convinced about the light rail proposal. People felt that vibrant communities and thriving town centres throughout Auckland depend on access to reliable, connected public transport.

“I am supportive, but not entirely convinced.”



14% of people were neutral or gave mixed feedback. While largely supportive of the project, they expressed concern about some aspects.

Key themes were:

Affordability and reliability are vital

Some support was given on the condition of inexpensive fares and affordability as a priority (313 people or 11%), as cost is a barrier for some people. Some comparisons were made between current train fares and parking, petrol, and other car maintenance costs and if the trade off is a slightly higher cost for more reliability, people will still choose to take their cars.

Cycleways and cycle links are important too

There were reminders from some people (286 people or 10%) that cycleways and cycling infrastructure are necessary to enhance the public transport network, and we shouldn't build one without the other. It is important to these respondents that cyclists will be able to connect using the new line. This is either with cycle lanes along, and connecting to the line, or that the carriages should be accessible for people travelling with bikes.

Will not be done right

181 people (7%) had concerns about the potential for project management issues. The experience of frequent cancellations on the train network, construction dragging out, blown out budgets, and lengthy, uncertain disruption are the main reasons some people are concerned the project will 'not be done right'. There are also fears that the process would not be transparent.



Otago Market, 24 July



“I am not convinced that light rail is right for Auckland.”



20% of people said they opposed the project.

Key themes were:

Heavy rail first

The biggest objection to light rail was that some people felt investment is urgently needed in Auckland's heavy rail system first (191 people or 7%). Heavy rail as a priority is shared by respondents who have mixed sentiment. This is likely regarding concerns around the negative perception of Auckland trains. 87 people thought that extending the heavy rail line from Puhinui or Onehunga to the airport was a simpler solution.

Congestion can be solved by improving the roading system

Some people want Auckland's transport system to stay as business as usual. 165 people (or 6%) think Auckland should focus on improving roads and motorways to increase car capacity, largely as a strategy to deal with gridlock and increasing congestion.

The cost of disruption will be too high

167 respondents (6%) are concerned about the potential cost of this project, including the financial disruption to local communities that will be caused by construction. 110 people believe light rail will cause more congestion and safety issues if it competes with other traffic on Dominion or Sandringham Roads. 53 people had concerns about how local businesses and landowners needs might be addressed.

Transport problems can be solved by improving the existing network

144 people (5%) want attention on making the existing roading infrastructure fit for purpose, by taking away traffic calming and speed humps which impede their ability to drive and for traffic to flow. 123 people (5%) believe that improving the bus system should be sufficient and 90 people (3%) prefer electric buses for this.

It doesn't benefit me

154 people (6%) didn't see how the location of the proposed light rail would benefit them as they live and work in different areas of Auckland and will be unable to use the line for work, school, or recreation (136 comments).

Other key themes



Environment

Decreasing carbon emissions is important to me

1,392 people (51%) said that reducing Auckland's carbon emissions is very important to them. People told us that they are supportive of the positive potential benefits that light rail can bring, by offering a rapid transit option that takes cars off the roads.

I am not convinced that light rail will have an impact

75 people (3%) told us they question the accuracy of claims light rail can help Auckland reduce its carbon footprint, mainly as it is too early to quantify complex emission reductions.



Access and Integration

Connected up public transport network

817 people (30%) told us that their key vision was for public transport and active modes to be connected up, in order to create a pedestrian and bike friendly modern city.

Ease of access

613 people (22%) think that light rail will increase the ease of travel across town, both as a new line with new destinations and also by adding another transport option to the wider network.

I'd love not to drive everywhere

537 people (20%) are eager to not have to use a car to get around Auckland. They commented that it would be great to be able to ditch the car and to get around to different suburbs in the city without having to rely on private transport. 361 people (13%) want a future with fewer cars in Auckland overall.

Will give relief to an increasingly congested city

Concerns about increasing congestion across Auckland is high and 453 people (16%) said that when light rail takes cars off the road it will benefit the whole city.



Otara Market, 24 July

The feedback we received showed strong support in line with key project outcomes, such as ensuring public transport enables a more sustainable and accessible way for Aucklanders to get around, as well as unlocking development potential and creating thriving community hubs.

How light rail will be used

People indicated they would access a mix of destinations, including places of work, study, and recreation. Many said it would benefit their current commute. Others said they would definitely use light rail to get to the airport.

Our online survey asked:

"Will you use light rail?"

73%
of the people
who answered this
question said YES



Mt Roskill War Memorial Park, 14 August

Experience

The prevailing message from people that support light rail is that they want a service that is reliable (80%).

People also want convenience, in distances to stops and a 'turn up and go' frequency you can count on. The speed and reliability of the service will also be key to a positive experience of light rail for some people.

These people want a service that will get them to their destination as reliably (467 people or 17%) or faster (319 people or 12%) than travelling by private vehicle. People use public transport when they know they can rely on their chosen mode to take them from A to B on time, and some Aucklanders told us that their cars are currently the only option that guarantees this.

For 436 people (16%) it is important that the experience of being on board light rail is accessible, safe, and comfortable. This includes for people using wheelchairs, and scooters, as well as being able to take bikes on board. For others it meant being protected from harm, or having space to work or read. Some comparisons were made to the stop start nature of buses being uncomfortable and a deterrent to using public transport.

Urban and Community

1,018 people (37%) support density / intensification along the route.

It will help me / my children buy a home and reduce sprawl

People commented that light rail would help reduce sprawl at the city edges, connect people to more job opportunities by developing existing areas, and open up much needed housing stock for first home buyers.

I would want to live near the light rail

144 (5%) people said that light rail would attract them to live along the corridor and could also enable them to choose to live further from the city centre.

Preferences

Some preferences about mode and route were indicated, but not significantly:

- 108 people (4%) said they supported surface light rail because they think it will be cheaper to build and safer for people using it.
- 100 people told us they would prefer underground/ light metro because it will be faster and more reliable.
- There were more comments made in support of Dominion Road (83) than Sandringham Road (23), potentially because people are more familiar with this route being considered in the past. People commented that they would travel just to dine on Dominion Road. Others said they thought it was the more sensible option because this road is more built up and has more businesses or places people want to go. A few people commented that it would be a faster, more direct route between Māngere and the city centre.

We heard from stakeholders

We held listening sessions and workshops with key community and interest groups. The project opportunities and challenges they identified reflects wider public feedback.

Opportunities | Challenges



Environment

- Light rail builds on public transport improvements across Auckland, helping people envision a **cleaner, greener city** with more travel choice, fewer cars on the road, and reduced emissions.
 - **Urban renewal** along the light rail corridor can increase and enhance the city's green spaces.
 - By promoting greater **environmental awareness** and enhancing the natural environment along the corridor, light rail can strengthen communities' love for, and connection to, the land.
- Light rail should set **environmentally ambitious** construction targets, such as minimising emissions through reduced concrete use and by protecting stormwater systems and waterways from construction run-off.

Released under the Official Information Act

Opportunities | Challenges



Access and Integration

- Better access to transport can enhance **physical and social connections** to community and cultural facilities, places of employment and education, healthcare, retail and entertainment.
- **Increasing connections** between communities is an enabler of social, economic, educational, and cultural activity.
- Light rail is viewed as an **equitable** transport option – inclusive for people of all ages and abilities.
- Through integration with existing transport networks, light rail can enable **seamless journeys** across the city.
- Greater transport choice can **increase the reliability** of journeys along the corridor and across the city, and decrease reliance on cars.
- The **affordability** of using light rail will affect whether people choose it over other forms of transport.
- Corridor communities' diversity should be recognised through a commitment to **universal access**.
- To maximise its benefits, light rail must be **well integrated** with a multitude of existing transport networks, including bus, train and walking and cycling routes.



Experience

- With frequent stops and street level connectivity, modern trams are perceived as a **safe option for women**.
- Light rail must be **safe and equitable**, during construction and operation, with consideration given to children, wheelchair users and people on bikes and scooters.
- People outside of the 'walkable catchment' need **safe access** to light rail.
- The form light rail takes, whether surface level or underground, should reflect **diverse feedback** from communities regarding what they feel is safer.

Opportunities | Challenges

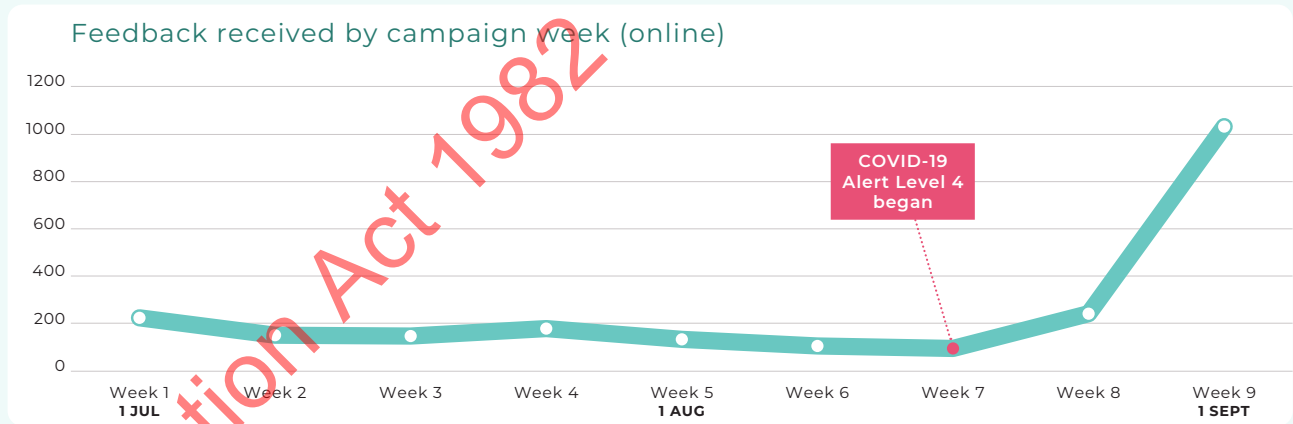


Urban and Community / Culture

- A **catalyst for growth**, light rail can stimulate economic and social investment around stations; enhancing town centres, enabling more housing and benefiting business.
- **Job opportunities** generated in light rail design, construction and its subsequent operation can benefit corridor communities. The increased ease of travelling between employment hubs benefits Auckland.
- Communities love and value their cultural diversity. Light rail can incorporate and **showcase local culture** within construction and design, through early and ongoing community consultation and engagement.
- Through ongoing **partnership** with Mana Whenua, light rail can preserve, connect to, and enhance culturally significant areas and landmarks and achieve broader outcomes for Māori.
- Storytelling through design recognises the **cultural significance** of places such as Māngere Town Centre, Ihumātao, Ambury Regional Park, Tararata Stream (Māngere) and Maungawhau (Mt Eden).
- Construction disruption is a challenge for corridor communities, particularly businesses. Light rail delivery needs a strong **business disruption management** plan and a well resourced and accessible compensation package.
- Light rail and associated urban development should consider concerns about **gentrification** in communities like Māngere. Existing communities' needs should be prioritised.
- Places of **civic and heritage value** along the corridor should be protected. Communities perceive risk to buildings and homes along Sandringham Road, Dominion Road and Queen Street.
- Light rail should have a **visual and aesthetic appeal**, overcoming concerns that it will not be attractive.
- Light rail's **'return on investment'** and the problems it solves should be understood by everyone.

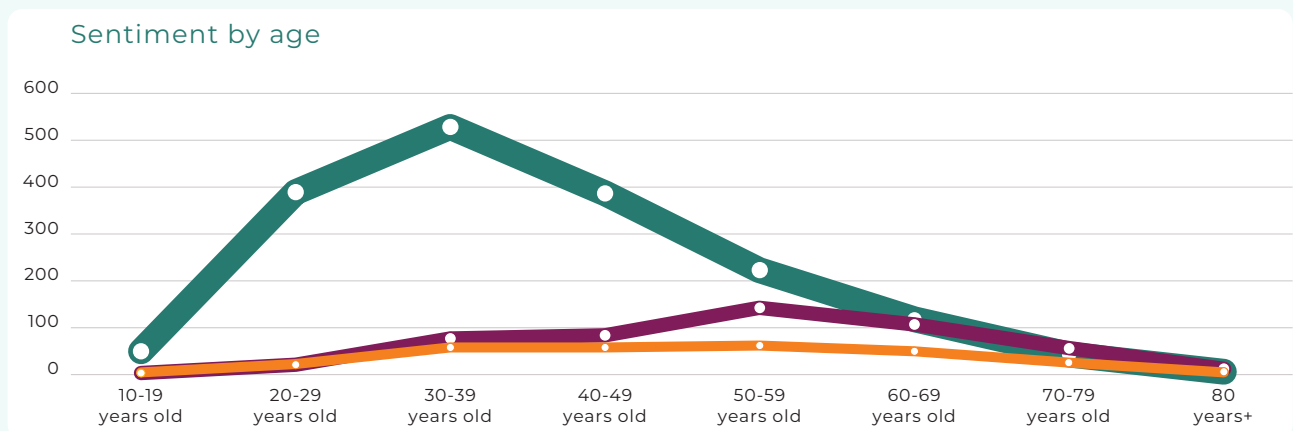
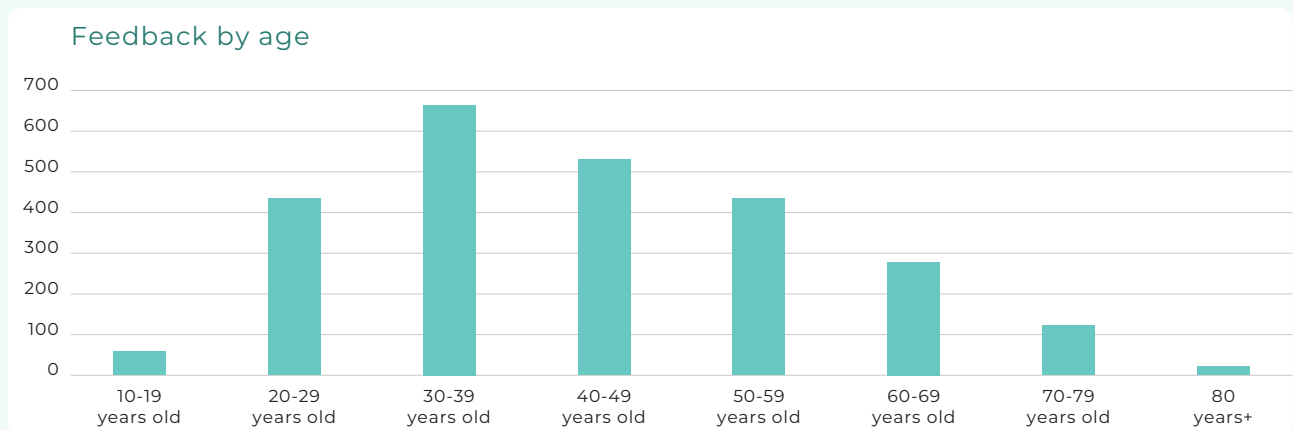


Engagement during COVID-19



There was a dramatic increase in the number of forms filled in online in the last two weeks of our campaign, corresponding with lockdown.

Feedback by age



Support

Do Not Support

Mixed



Summary of Public Engagement

Stakeholders

Groups we heard from

Feedback was gathered from over 115 key stakeholder groups and advocates, either through listening sessions, workshops, one on one meetings, or in writing.

3 large businesses

- Auckland Airport
- Britomart Group
- Eden Park

4 utility service providers

- KiwiRail
- Spark
- Vector
- WaterCare

11 business associations

- Dominion Road Business Association
- Heart of the City
- K Road Business Association
- Māngere Town Centre
- Newmarket Business Association
- Onehunga Business Association
- Puketāpapa Business Voice
- Parnell Business Association
- Sandringham Business Association
- South Harbour Business Association
- Uptown Business Association

45 elected representatives

- Local Boards
- Councillors
- MPs

4 residents associations

- City Centre Residents Group
- Eden Park Neighbours Association
- Eden Park Residents Association
- Favona Residents Association

6 educational facilities

- AUT
- MIT Otara
- MIT Manukau
- Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Māngere
- Te Wananga o Aotearoa
- University of Auckland
- Corridor primary and secondary schools

12 advocacy groups

- Auckland Council Youth Advisory Panel
- Bike Auckland
- Campaign for Better Transport
- Environmental Defence Society
- Generation Zero
- NZ Transport 2050
- Public Transport Users Association
- Rail Enthusiasts Society
- The Sustainability Society
- Urban Auckland
- Women in Urbanism
- Wynyard Quarter TMA

9 peak body groups

- Auckland Business Forum
- Auckland Chamber of Commerce
- Civil Contractors New Zealand
- Employers and Manufacturers Association
- Heavy Haulage Association
- Infrastructure NZ
- NZ Airline Pilots Association
- NZ Automobile Association
- Property Council of NZ

13 community groups

- Connected
- I am Māngere
- Māngere-Ōtāhuhu Interfaith Youth Collective
- ME Family
- Onehunga Community Patrol
- Onehunga Kotahi
- Pacific Island Presbyterian Church
- Roskill Chinese Group
- Sandringham Project in Community Empowerment
- Te Runanga o Ngāti Whātua Public Health Unit
- Time to Thrive to Stay Alive
- The Asian Network Inc
- The Indian Association

6 vulnerable user groups

- Auckland Council Disability Advisory Panel
- Auckland Transport: Public Transport Accessibility Group
- Be Lab
- Blind Low Vision NZ
- CCS Disability Action
- Deaf Aotearoa

4 environmental groups

- Friends of Maungawhau
- The Onehunga Enhancement Society
- Tree Council
- Manukau Harbour Restoration Society