

## Southern Corridor Improvements project update

### The Southern Corridor Improvements project is now complete

In October 2015, the project was officially opened by then Transport Minister Simon Bridges and then Mayor Len Brown, who turned the first sod. That sod-turning kicked off the 9.5km Southern Corridor Improvements (SCI) Project extending between Manukau and Papakura.

Since then, the project has completed:

- an additional southbound lane from Manukau to Papakura
- an additional northbound lane from Papakura to Takanini
- the full upgrade of the Takanini Interchange including the widening of Great South Road
- the replacement and/or widening of 26 bridges along the 9.5km stretch
- the new 4.5km Southern Path alongside the motorway from Takanini to Papakura
- the new Te Mara o Hine footbridge across the motorway between Hingaia and Pahurehure
- new noise walls and landscaping
- upgraded lighting using new low-spill, energy efficient LED lighting
- resurfacing motorway lanes within the project area with a low-noise porous asphalt to reduce road noise.

The project has opened up a range of unique benefits not only for motorists, but also for local communities. With travel time savings delivered between Manukau and Papakura during peak times, and significant safety improvements along the motorway and at Takanini Interchange, locals have more time to spend at home or out on the new Southern Path. The Southern Path connects the communities of Takanini, Conifer Grove, Papakura, Karaka and Hingaia together and reconnects people to the waterways of the Pahurehure Inlet.



Left: Then Minister of Transport Hon Simon Bridges and then Mayor Len Brown turn the first sod in October 2015



Below: The Southern Path inaugural ride following its official opening on 21 May 2021

*'We just wanted to say a big thank you for a great job on the newly opened pathway beside the Southern Motorway. We went as a whanau today and really enjoyed ourselves along with the many others we passed and met along the way. It was great to see people out on two legs, wheels, in prams, on bikes and in wheelchairs. The weather was a bit rough but it didn't put people off!'*

Rebecca Bamfield

# Reconnecting people through design

The project's urban design vision was to reconnect the waters of the Pahurehure Inlet with surrounding communities and landscapes.

Mana Whenua have particularly strong associations with the Pahurehure Inlet, its associated tributaries and shorelines, built over a 1000-year history in the area. This area has been used for generations because of the abundant kaimoana, fertile land for gardening, strategic location for transportation and for trade between iwi.

Now the Southern Path opens the area up once again to provide greater transport choices, but also an area where people can socialise, enjoy recreational activities and learn about the area's rich history.

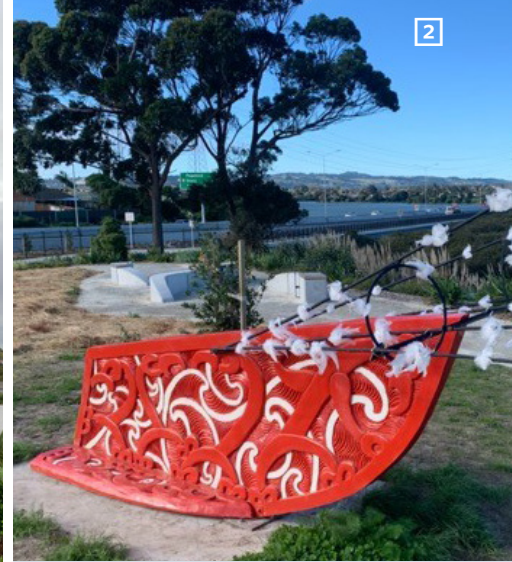
This includes at Takaanini Point, a small peninsula of land within Pahurehure Inlet, that is now accessible to the public for the first time since the Southern Motorway was constructed between Takanini and Papakura in the mid-1960s.

Both the Southern Motorway and the Southern Path are dotted with stunning artworks by local iwi, linking history with community and landscape. A selection is shown here.

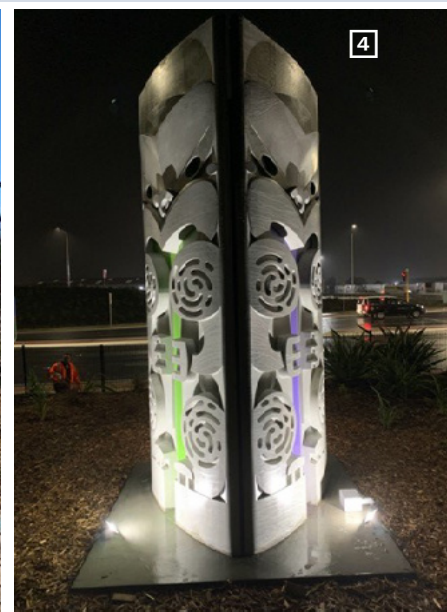
The Pou (images 3 and 4) was erected in honour of Ihaka Takaanini, Chief of Te Ākitai (c.1800-1864) after who the suburb of Takanini is named. Ihaka Takaanini was the son of Te Ākitai chief Pepene Te Tihi and the great grandson of Kiwi Tamaki, paramount chief of Te Ākitai.

Many early records refer to Ihaka as Wirihana, which is also the name he gave to his eldest son, Te Wirihana Takaanini. 'Wiri' in South Auckland derives its name from a contraction of Wirihana. To this day, the Wirihana and Takaanini names are still used by the Te Ākitai descendants of Ihaka and Te Wirihana Takaanini.

The steel sculpture (image 5) represents Uenuku, god of rainbows, the deity of Ngāti Te Ata. The intent of the sculpture is to lift the spirits when seeing it. It represents good fortune and prosperity, welcoming those travelling northbound past it, while sending good wishes to those travelling south.



These carved timber waka stern and prow (1 and 2) were created by Ngāti Tamaoho and are both located at Takaanini Point.



Te Ākitai Waiohua designed this stunning three-sided concrete Pou with obsidian eyes. The Pou and adjacent anchorstone with plaque are located beside Great South Road at Takanini Interchange



Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua designed this notable 8m steel sculpture placed in the Puhinui wetland beside the Auckland Botanic Gardens and visible from the motorway

# Southern Path and Te Mara o Hine footbridge

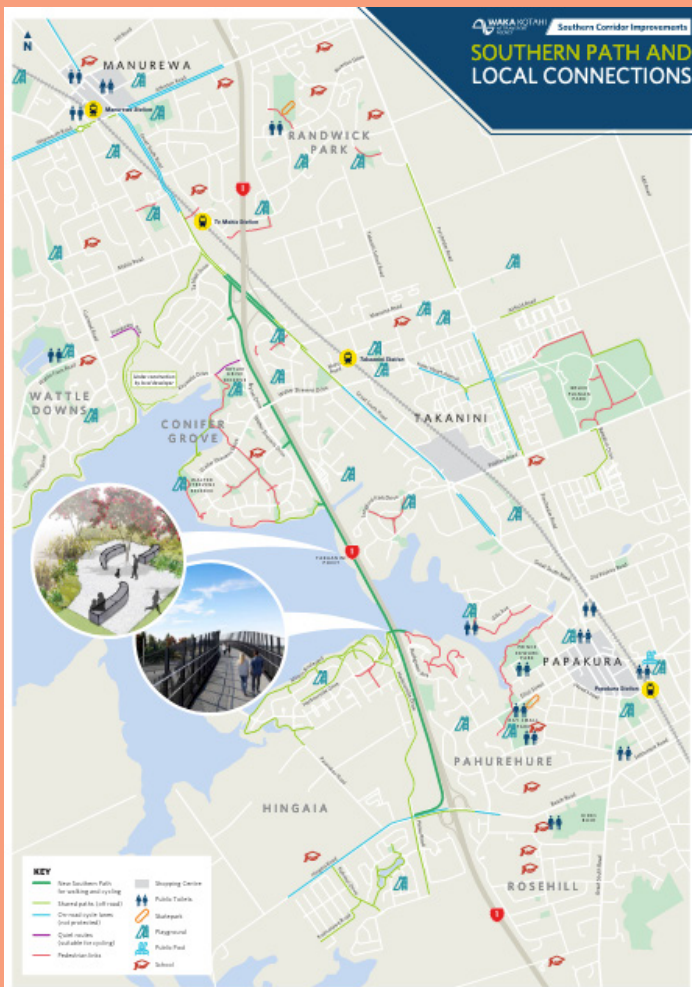
The Southern Path, a new link in Auckland's walking and cycling network, runs between Great South Road at Takanini Interchange and Hingaia Road at Papakura Interchange and includes the landmark new footbridge over the motorway between Pescara Point (Hingaia) and Rushgreen Avenue (Pahurehure).

Mana Whenua have gifted the name 'Te Mara O Hine' to the new footbridge, which means 'The Garden of Hine'. Hinewai was an ancestor of Waiohūa who was locally renowned for her expansive gardens and for feeding the people.

The bridge's curved shape reflects the natural contour of the coastal environment below it, while the overall design of the bridge takes the skeletal form of a tuna (eel) and includes a scale-type pattern (referred to as niho-niho) within the balustrade design.

The map below shows how the Southern Path connects into the local walking and cycling network.

**View a larger version of this map**



## Takanini Interchange

The upgrade of the Takanini Interchange to address capacity and safety issues has been at the heart of the Southern Corridor Improvements Project. Eleven of the project's 26 bridges are located within the interchange, making it a complex transport intersection to build while still keeping the Southern Motorway operating above and Great South Road below.



Takanini Interchange under construction - looking south, 19 November 1963 (Credit Alexander Turnbull Library Ref:WA-61078-G)



Takanini Interchange 11 November 2015, just prior to the start of works



The completed upgraded Takanini Interchange – looking south, 27 May 2021

## It takes a village

Since its inception, there have been over 1000 people involved in the design and construction of the project, each contributing their unique skills to produce the final outcome.

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency Project Manager Kevin Stevens says, 'The Southern Corridor Improvements Project will always be remembered by those who built it for its unique challenges and the safety and capacity improvements delivered for motorists, the environment and the local community, including the transformational Southern Path.'

Our original Project Manager, Chandra Perera, unfortunately passed away in 2018. In recognition of his work and enduring legacy, a memorial for Chandra is located at Takaanini Point.



Some of the project team in October 2018