

To Ahuroa residents:

The good news is that Ahuroa Road is now number 4 on the AT priority list and will be sealed entirely. AT expect that this work will be undertaken between 2018-2021 provided there is sufficient funding.

It is the allocated extension road sealing budget amount that is critical to the future outcome.

Priority 1 (Silver Hill Road) and priority 2 (Monowai Road) should be completed under the current budget through to 2018. This current budget was originally \$1.4m per annum but was increased to \$3.4m per annum for 2015-2018 by the additional targeted transport levy on rates.

Priority 3 is Wellsford Valley Road which is 4Km long will cost about \$4m

Priority 4 is Ahuroa Road which is 9Km long will cost about \$9m

Therefore, for Ahuroa Road to be completed, with simple mathematics:

At \$1.4m per annum it will take 9 years, completion in 2027.

At \$3.4m per annum it will take 4 years, completion in 2022. (continuance targeted transport levy)

Under the current budget, all other roads in Ahuroa will not be sealed within our lifetime.

In previous correspondence with various leaders I have concluded that:

Auckland Transport claim they are controlled by Auckland Council and will seal the Rodney Roads if they are allocated the funds by Auckland Council. I do feel though that AT influence the budget towards their priority inner city projects CRL (City Rail Link), Public Transport and Road congestion.

Auckland Council Executive (staff) prepare the budgets for the Auckland Council Finance committee but claim they have no controlling influence.

Rodney Local Board is a strong advocate for sealing Rodney roads but are not allocated nor control any of the road transport budget.

Rodney Councillor, Greg Sayers, is very strong advocate for sealing Rodney roads but only has a single vote (one of twenty) on the Auckland Council Finance committee that ratifies the budget.

The Mayor, Phil Goff, has the strongest influence in creating the budget but it will need to be ratified by a majority vote from all Councillors on the Auckland Finance committee.

This year I decided to target the finance and budget decision makers in making them aware that Ahuroa and Rural Rodney deserve a far better improvement in road infrastructure for the rates we pay. Rodney pays about \$70 million pa of that Rural Rodney \$34 million pa. So, directly challenging them to allocated \$10m per annum road extension road sealing. This was via emails pointing out the financial facts and our lack of services.

Here is what Mayor Phil Goff responded:

“ ... I would like to see progress made on this front.

As you are aware, however, demand for upgraded services vastly exceeds the funding we have available to meet them. We will have to tackle the problem progressively as funds allow. ...”

Here is what Deputy Mayor Bill Cashmore responded:

“... we are working with the crown on better funding options. There will be announcements shortly. There wont be anything directly for sealing but projects taken of pour books gives us flexibility for other projects. Honestly though a lot of that will be sucked by population growth. We need to tell a positive Rodney story that is based in fact and is compelling. ...”

“ ... Not opposed to sealing roads at all. Just need the budget. Rodney is a net recipient of rates funding. Greg has the figures. ...”

As per their replies, raised awareness but certainly no commitment.

There were positive responses and suggestions from Allison Roe, Greg Sayers and Desley Simpson.

So where to from here ...

The Long Term Plan (LTP) is being reviewed and now is the time to lobby for an increased road sealing budget. Emailing all Auckland City Councillors will be the most effective communication.

It has been suggested that I might request to present in the “Public Input” time at a Finance & Performance Committee meeting in April or May.

Regards

Glen Ashton