

18. STYX RIVER DEVELOPMENT AT MAIN NORTH ROAD

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The purpose of this report is to inform the Shirley Papanui Community Board of proposals related to Regents Park Reserve that have come about through the widening of Main North Road where it crosses the Styx River, and to obtain their support in principle for the proposal subject to community consultation.

BACKGROUND

Transit New Zealand and their consultants are currently in the planning stages for the widening of Main North Road to four lanes between Radcliffe Road and Redwood. This includes the widening of the bridge over the Styx River, the development of a cycleway and footpath along the eastern and western edges of the new road and the relocation of the bus stop to just north of Styx Mill Road / Main North Road intersection. This will not only improve vehicle movement between Redwood and Belfast but also pedestrian movement along this stretch of road.

The Styx River in this location is fast flowing and an important trout spawning area. The best views of the river can be obtained from the bridge.

The widening of Main North Road will extend into the existing reserve. Working closely with Transit New Zealand has enabled us to maximise the opportunities in this locality.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROPOSAL

Objectives for the proposal originate from the City Plan and the Styx Vision 2000 – 2040 document. They are as follows:

- Enhance the views of the river by providing a safe and easily accessible viewing platform.
- Provide a pleasant place to pause (sitting area) on the pedestrian link between Redwood and Belfast.
- Highlight the bridge and Styx River corridor from Main North Road.
- Convey information about the Styx River through the use of environmental artworks.
- Add to the visual identity and landscape legibility of the Styx River through the use of 'sticks' that will occur as artworks along the Styx River corridor.

DESCRIPTION

The widening of Main North Road will extend approximately 12 metres beyond the existing road edge into Regents Park Reserve and over the Styx River via an extension to the existing Styx River bridge. This land, although physically part of the reserve, is zoned for roading purposes. The Parks and Waterways Unit has worked closely with the City Streets Unit and Transit New Zealand to maximise the opportunities that this development provides. The proposal includes a wooden viewing platform that provides excellent views of the Styx River and a pleasant seating area for people walking between Redwood and Belfast. The Styx River corridor will be highlighted from Main North Road through more planting, the use of artworks and fence design. The northern portion of the existing reserve consists of a grass area with perimeter planting. It is currently fenced off with no public access either into this part of the reserve or to the rivers edge. It is proposed to plant the grass area with native plants including some very large native tree species. In the long term, this area will not only provide an important landmark along Main North Road but also provide a secluded roosting area for wetland birds and habitat for bush birds.

The prominence of the Styx River Corridor will be further enhanced through fence design and artworks. Rather than slope the ground from the new road into the reserve, Transit New Zealand want to retain their development within the designated motorway corridor. This will require the construction of a retaining wall that will vary in height along the reserve boundary. At its greatest point there will be a fall of approximately 4 metres. In order to comply with Building Act requirements a fence will be required along much of the boundary between Main North Road and the Reserve. An entrance will be provided into the southern portion of the reserve where the reserve is level with the road.

Tall metal poles (approximately 3 metres to 6 metres high) will also highlight the presence of the Styx River in this location, add to the 'sticks' theme along the Styx River and provide environmental interpretation. The fall in the Styx River from its source (Nunweek Park) to here will be reflected in the height of the poles. They will also indicate the water levels for the different storm events (50, 100, 500 year storm events).

Please refer to the concept plan and drawings in the appendix.

CONSULTATION

The proposal is on the agenda for the next meeting (1 October 2002) of the 'Artworks in Public Places subcommittee'. Transit New Zealand support the proposal in principle and are currently reviewing the proposal in more detail. The community have yet to be consulted.

IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of the proposal will be timed to take place at the same time as the widening of Main North Road. It is anticipated that road widening will take eighteen months to complete, beginning towards the end of this financial year.

FUNDING

Fence construction will be funded by Transit New Zealand. The viewing platform and poles will be funded by the Parks and Waterways Unit out of next years existing Reserve Development Budgets. Estimated cost of the viewing platform is \$15,000 and the poles \$12,000.

CONCLUSION

This proposal will be another important development towards the implementation of the Styx Vision 2000/2040. It will highlight the Styx River in this location, provide a safe and pleasant viewing area of the Styx River, as well as provide a place to pause when walking between Redwood and Belfast.

NATURAL + PEOPLE + ECONOMIC STEP ASSESSMENT

#	CONDITION:	Meets condition ✓✓0*	HOW IT HELPS MEET CONDITION:
The Natural Step			
N3	Protect and restore biodiversity and ecosystems	✓✓0*	Added planted will mitigate for the loss of planting associated with widening of Main North Road.
The People Step			
P2	Full potential developed	✓✓0*	The artworks will add to people's understanding of the natural environment.
P4	Culture and identity protected	✓✓0*	The development will add to peoples sense of place and relationship with the Styx River Ecosystem.
P5	Governance and participatory democracy strengthened	✓✓0*	The community will have an input through the consultation process.
The Economic Step			
E1	Effective and efficient use of all resources	✓✓0*	Savings will be had through the construction occurring at the save time as widening of Main North Road.
E2	Job rich local economy	✓✓0*	It will provide work opportunities for local businesses (eg artworks).

Staff

Recommendation: That the Shirley Papanui Community Board support the proposal in principle subject to community consultation.

Chairperson's

Recommendation: That the officer's recommendation be adopted and that this item not go to the Artworks in Public Places Subcommittee until the Board has discussed it.