



WAIKATO-TAINUI / WATERCARE STRATEGIC WORK PROGRAMME 2024 - 2029



Working Group
Pipiri 2025

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Cover: Aratitia, Waikato River
Above: Whakamaru, Waikato River

Introduction

Purpose and vision

Waikato-Tainui (Te Whakakitenga o Waikato Incorporated), and Watercare share a relationship spanning over 30 years and reflected in key relationship agreements:

- Memorandum of Understanding (1998);
- Deed of Memorandum of Relationship (27 November 2009, 27 October 2011);
- Agreement in Principle (2016);
- Kawenata Whakawhanaunga (November 2020); and
- Kawenata Whakawhanaunga (2023).

The overarching aim of this work programme, is to drive social, cultural, environmental, and economic priorities that unite the parties through initiatives that contribute to the wellbeing of the Waikato River, and the communities of Waikato and Taamaki Makaurau.

Guided by Te Ao Maaori principles and inspired by global excellence, the work programme supports an agreed set of aspirations and commitments.

Objectives

Waikato-Tainui:

- Uphold our unique relationship with the Waikato River.
- Restore and maintain the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River.
- Reduce reliance on the Waikato River for water supply.
- Strengthen our relationship with Watercare, addressing issues constructively.
- Progress a cooperative and collaborative relationship with Auckland Council.

Watercare:

- Support the restoration and protection of the Waikato River's health and wellbeing, in line with Te Ture Whaimana.
- Build and maintain a positive relationship with Waikato-Tainui.
- Seek Waikato-Tainui support for consents including: Consent 960089 (expires 1 May 2032) and Hunua Consents (expire 11 October 2035 and 30 June 2047).

Whakawhanaunga

An enduring relationship

In the spirit of partnership, 'whakawhanaunga' highlights the importance of relationships and the process of building meaningful connection through shared experiences and mutual understanding.

Together, we envision world-class water and river management, seamlessly integrating Te Ao Maaori to foster collective pride. Recognising the Waikato River's significance to Auckland and Tuakau's water supply, we share a deep commitment to its wellbeing in an all-of-river approach.

This presents a unique opportunity—not just as the foundation for key projects, but as a catalyst for wider collaboration over time. While challenges will arise, our common interests will keep us moving forward, striving for meaningful success.

Waikato-Tainui

Waikato-Tainui is one of the largest iwi in Aotearoa with 90,000+ tribal members and assets, lands and investments valued at around \$2.4 billion.

Established in the Waikato region, the tribe traces its ancestry to the Tainui migration canoe that brought Polynesian settlers to Aotearoa approximately 800 years ago.

Governed by Te Whakakitenga o Waikato, a tribal parliament comprising representatives from 68 marae and an eleven member executive board Te Arataura, the tribal group is guided by Whakatupuranga 2050.

The 50-year intergenerational strategy focuses on tribal identity and integrity, success in education, and socio-economic independence. It promotes a vision of self-determination, growth, and sustainability for its people and communities.

In the last five years the tribe has distributed \$190.4 million to advance social, cultural, environmental and economic initiatives, \$8.3 million specifically for environmental stewardship.

Waikato-Tainui holds a deep connection to the Waikato River which is central to its identity, culture, and history.

The tribe's Te Mana o te Awa framework ensures that the health and wellbeing of the river's water and ecosystem is protected, and human health needs are provided before enabling other uses of water.

Through one of the tribe's treaty settlement mechanisms, a further \$6 million is prioritised annually and administered by the Waikato River Authority, to fund projects that contribute to an 'all of river and catchment' approach to wellbeing.

>> 90,000+ tribal members

>> \$2.4B in assets, lands and investments

>> \$190.4M charitable distributions 2019 - 2024

- \$14.3M for environmental stewardship and Waikato River wellbeing initiatives

Watercare

Watercare is Aotearoa's largest water utility responsible for supplying safe and reliable water services to Auckland communities and approximately 1.7 million people.

Balancing infrastructure improvements, sustainability, and operational efficiency, ensures reliable water services even under challenging conditions like droughts.

Aucklanders use an average of 440 million litres of water per day. Maximum peak usage has been 567 million litres. The water is sourced from a mix of rivers, dams, and groundwater.

Whilst consent parameters allow for Watercare to take 300 million litres per day from the Waikato River when needed, most water is sourced from dam reservoirs.

The exact proportions vary from season to season depending on factors like water storage levels, forecast rainfall, and treatment plant capacity.

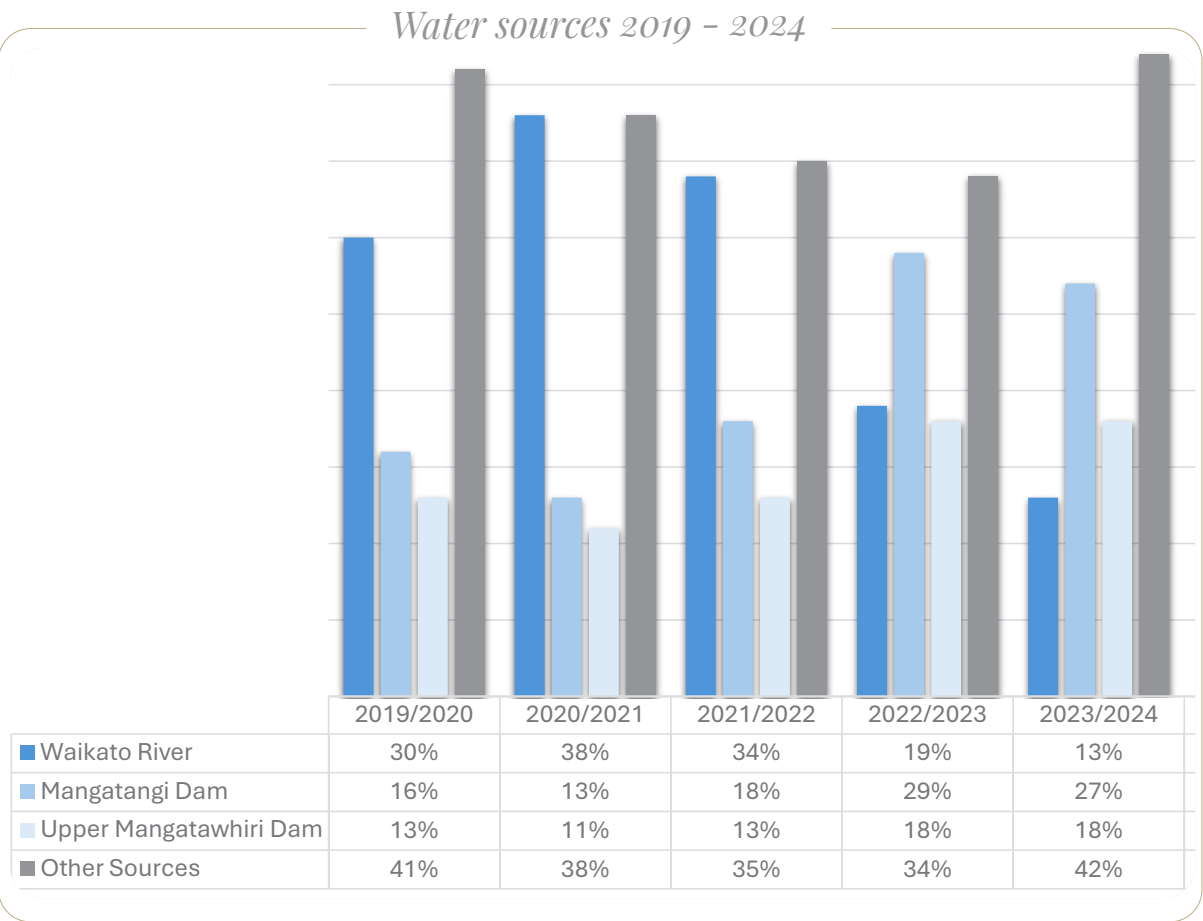
The Waikato Water Treatment Plant at Tuakau and the Wastewater Treatment Plant at Pukekohe, are two key facilities involved in water management activities related to the Waikato River.

The Tuakau plant focuses on treating water from the river to supply safe drinking water, while the Pukekohe plant manages wastewater treatment and discharge.

"Every day, our team treats and delivers around 440 million litres of drinking water to Aucklanders..."

"The river is vital to Auckland and its growth. Working with Waikato-Tainui enables us to take an intergenerational view of what's required to restore and protect this water source, as well as give back to the river that sustains so many."

Jamie Sinclair, Acting Chief Executive (Oct 2024)



Te Awa o Waikato

The river of flowing water

The Waikato River is the longest river in Aotearoa stretching 425 kilometres through the North Island.

It originates from the eastern slopes of Mount Ruapehu joining the Tongariro River system, and flowing through Lake Taupoo.

For Waikato-Tainui the river holds profound cultural and spiritual importance reflecting their identity, heritage, and connection to ancestors.

The tribe recognises the diversion from Te Awa Tupua-Whanganui with headwaters into Lake Taupoo that acknowledge the mauri or life force that flows into the Waikato River.

From Taupoo the water creates Huka Falls and continues northwest to the Waikato plains, eventually heading out to the Tasman Sea from Te Puuaha o Waikato, Port Waikato.

The awa has shaped the landscape and sustained generations becoming a cornerstone of Maaori wellbeing, stories, historical events, settlements and battles.

The river is the fundamental beneficiary of the tribe's 2010 Waikato River treaty settlement and prioritised in related co-governance agreements including Te Ture Whaimana, the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River.

Considered a living entity with its own mana (prestige) and rights, it's sacred waters play a vital role in the history of this country and Waikato-Tainui is committed to protecting it for everyone.

Water services are essential for the health and wellbeing of all people and Watercare is committed to working with Waikato-Tainui to take a lead responsibility to reduce reliance on the river and improve environmental stewardship.

In considering the growing demands and pressures on the river and its ecosystem, oversight and working groups are concerned with how best to deliver water services to communities, by managing resources wisely, and recognising the value of water as a shared and renewable asset.

This requires everyone in Aotearoa to think about water as a taonga, a precious natural resource that needs to be looked after, rather than a commodity pushed to its limits until it is gone or can no longer survive.

There is a collective drive to restore and preserve the balance between water, the environment, and the people.

Focus areas prioritise initiatives that move away from simply extracting or discharging water, to solutions that consider the broader impacts on communities, ecosystems and cultural values.

KEY:

- Water-storage dam
- Metropolitan network
- Head office
- Waikato network

Water treatment plant

- 1 Wellsford
- 2 Warkworth
- 3 Snells Algies
- 4 Helensville
- 5 Muriwai
- 6 Waitakere
- 7 Huia
- 8 Huia Village
- 9 Ardmore
- 10 Papakura
- 11 Bombay
- 12 Pukekohe
- 13 Cornwall Road (Waiuku)
- 14 Waiuku
- 15 Victoria Avenue (Waiuku)
- 16 Waikato

Wastewater treatment plant

- 1 Wellsford
- 2 Omaha
- 3 Warkworth
- 4 Snells Beach
- 5 Waiwera
- 6 Orewa
- 7 Helensville
- 8 Army Bay
- 9 Rosedale
- 10 Denhurst Drive (Muriwai)
- 11 Owhinake (Waiheke)
- 12 Beachlands
- 13 Māngere
- 14 Kawakawa Bay
- 15 Kingseat
- 16 Clarks Beach
- 17 Waiuku
- 18 Pukekohe

Strategic Work Programme

Who, what, how, when

This work programme provides structure around key projects, and is designed to align people, resources, actions, and timelines.

OVERSIGHT GROUP

- Four senior governance representatives (2 x Waikato-Tainui, 2 x Watercare).
- Meetings are held annually (or as agreed).
- Quorum is three members. Decision-making is by consensus.

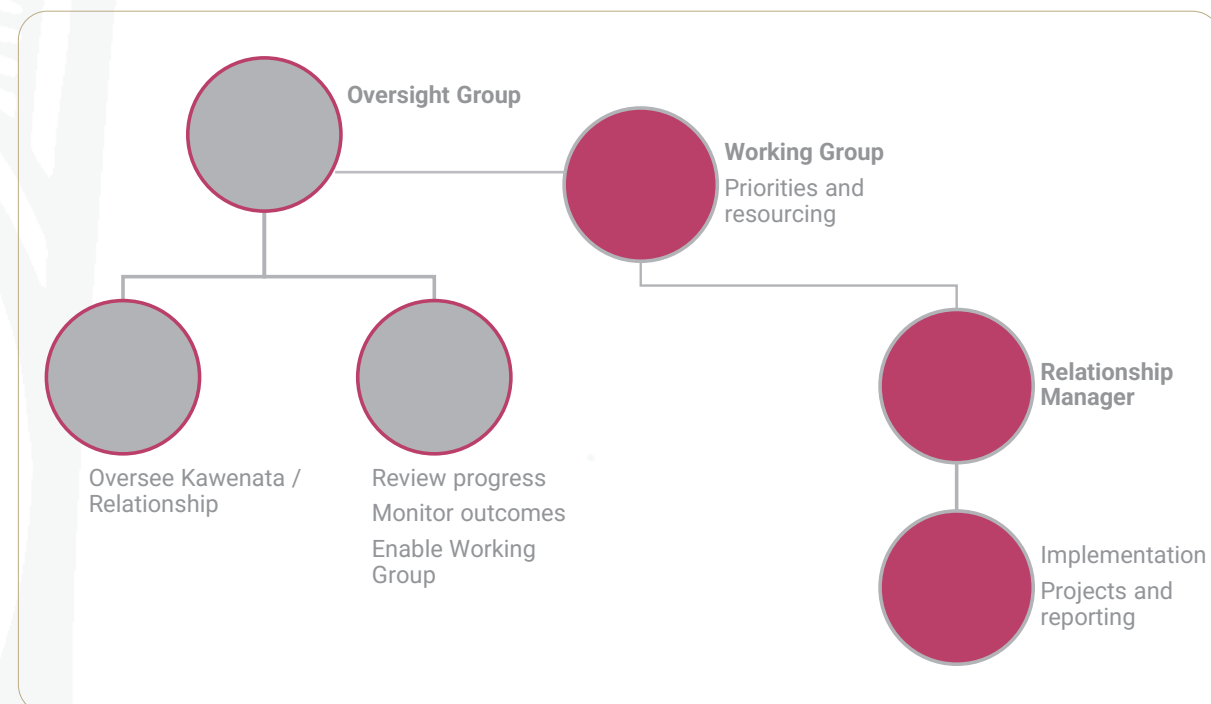
WORKING GROUP

- Six senior representatives (3 x Waikato-Tainui, 3 x Watercare).
- Meetings are held quarterly (or as agreed),
- Quorum is four members (2 x Waikato-Tainui, 2 x Watercare).

- A Chair and Deputy Chair are appointed. Each serve a one or two-year term and are responsible for decision-making and approving budget allocation.

OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

- Implementation of 5-year Working Group Plan overseen by a Relationship Manager. Includes monitoring and reporting against milestones and deliverables.
- Relationship Manager is recruited by, and based with Waikato-Tainui.



"Naa too rourou, naa taku rourou ka ora ai te iwi."

"With your food basket and my food basket, the people will thrive"

FUNDING STRATEGY

The funding strategy is a working document to assist with decision-making and prioritisation.

Under kawenata arrangements, Watercare contributes \$1 million annually to support research on water quality, the health of the Waikato River, and its impact on Waikato-Tainui and surrounding communities including Tāmaki Makaurau. The fund can also be used for projects that mitigate the effects of water take over 20 years.

As a condition of its 20-year resource consent, Watercare is committed to a further \$2 million annually to river restoration efforts through the Waikato River Authority's Clean-Up Trust (WRA).

<https://www.watercare.co.nz/home/about-us/latest-news-and-media/we-activate-waikato-consent>

Contributions began in January 2024.

Funding requirements for projects are estimated and require a full project scope during implementation to ensure feasibility.

The time-honoured proverb above places an emphasis on the fiscal value of collaboration and shared contributions to optimise results.

The funding strategy is about considering opportunities with an "and/and" approach, by securing additional resources to support implementation, and leaning in on other strategic partners to participate.

Once approved, funding will be made available to implement the work programme in compliance with the appropriate internal controls.



Karaapiro, Te Awa o Waikato

5-Year Working Group Plan

Focus Areas

Waikato-Tainui and Watercare are committed to working together to achieve a set of strategic outcomes under the following focus areas:

>> TE MANA O TE AWA

Tooku awa koiora me oona pikonga he kura tangihia o te maataamuri. The river of life, each curve more beautiful than the last.

Focus on establishing research and monitoring of the Waikato River's health, including the effects of water abstraction and discharge. Where appropriate, research and monitoring conditions will be incorporated into relevant consents.

>> REDUCED RELIANCE

Ki te ora te wai, ka ora te whenua, ka ora te tangata. When the water is healthy, the land and people are healthy.

Focus on reducing the reliance on the Waikato River by exploring alternatives like purified recycled water. Public support for both potable and non-potable recycled water is key to integrating solutions that ensure a sustainable, resilient supply.

>> WATER SUPPLY

Te Ara Whakatupuranga 2050 - advancing cultural, social, and economic wellbeing.

Focus on ensuring an allocation of potable water to Waikato-Tainui in order to help meet water needs and achieve broader objectives relating to the health and wellbeing and cultural, social and economic development of Waikato-Tainui.

>> TAHUA KAUPAPA

"Without research there can be no development. Without development there can be no research."
Sir Robert Mahuta, Waikato-Tainui Leader

Focus on Waikato-Tainui and Watercare developing research on water quality and the health of the Waikato River and its communities including Taamaki Makaurau. Projects that mitigate the effects of Watercare's water extraction over 20 years are a priority alongside the collaborative coordination of work planning.

>> ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Te Ara Whakatupuranga 2050 - advancing cultural, social, and economic wellbeing.

Focus on Watercare notifying Waikato-Tainui of investment opportunities and offering a fair chance for the tribe to participate. A priority is Watercare supporting Waikato-Tainui to develop water infrastructure, and also recognising and considering Waikato-Tainui businesses in procurement, aiming for 5% Maaori-owned sourcing by 2025.

Focus area

Te Mana o te Awa

"Tooku awa koiora me oona pikonga he kura tangihia o te maataamuri.

"The river of life, each curve more beautiful than the last"

Focus on establishing research and monitoring of the Waikato River's health, including the effects of water abstraction and discharge. Where appropriate, research and monitoring conditions will be incorporated into relevant consents.

Our approach focuses on raising awareness and deepening understanding to encourage collaboration and decision-making that drives the achievement of aspirational and meaningful long-term outcomes.

Over decades, a spectrum of information and standardised data has been used to give visibility on the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River.

The goal is to build a larger picture by enabling the capture of Maaori knowledge, and normalising traditional, place-based data collection practices.

Of significance, enhanced awareness and understanding will lead to decisions that protect and promote intergenerational wellbeing.

PROJECT PRIORITIES

Project priorities are aligned with Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato aspirations.

- >> Restoration of river health - addressing degradation caused by human activities, and ensuring the river can sustain life and prosperity for future generations.
- >> Cultural connection - upholding the spiritual, cultural, and historical significance of the Waikato River.
- >> Community collaboration - promoting shared responsibility among stakeholders, local communities, industries, and government agencies.
- >> Sustainable management - practices that balance environmental, social, and economic priorities while reducing harmful impacts.

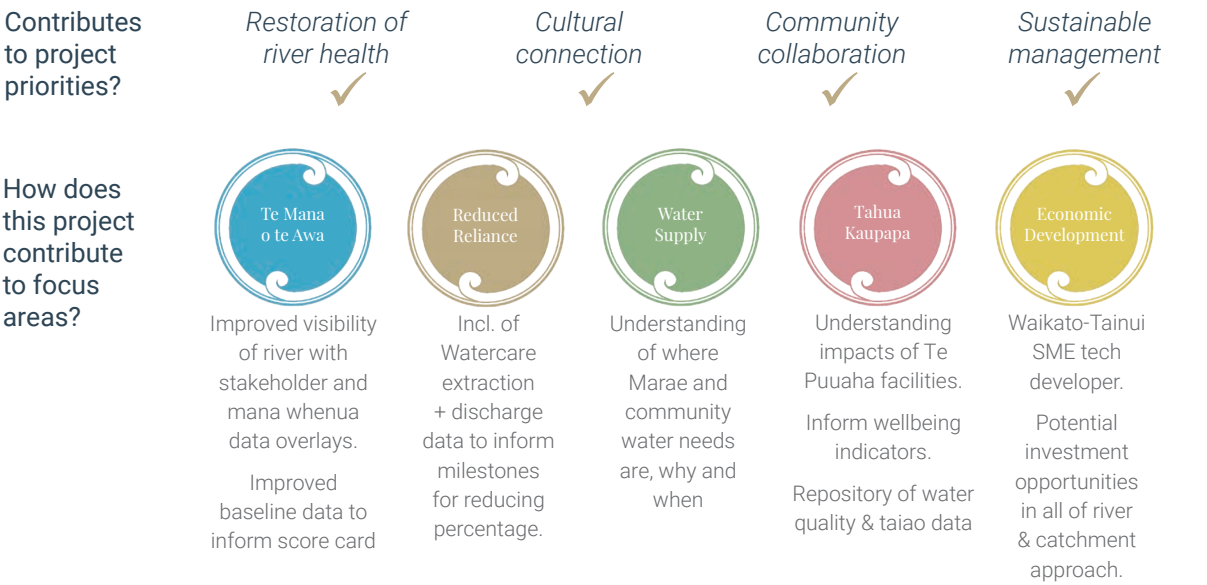
Lead Project – Strategic Project 1

He Piko He Taniwha He Rongo

At every bend of the Waikato River is a kaitiaki monitoring her wellbeing.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE	OUTCOMES	INVESTMENT ESTIMATES
Bring together all kaitiaki to co-develop a real-time digital footprint of the Waikato River integrating: <ul style="list-style-type: none">StreamMap/Spatial Data Map PlatformTuuhono/Maatauranga Maaori PlatformStreamDash/Environmental Monitoring Dashboards, andRongo/Digital Kaitiaki Observation App	Baseline Score Card to inform decision-making. Compliance with consented parameters and community expectations. Monthly, annual, five-yearly reporting on progress. Integration of maatauranga Maaori with western science - wider cultural indicators. Performance tracking against Freshwater Management Units and other standards. Mana whenua informed wellbeing indicators to prioritise monitoring and research programmes. Improved data to balance water supply economically and manage assets better, resulting in reduced operational costs. Increased diversity of views and perspectives enabling audiences to use the data.	Scoping Phase - 3 months \$150k Action Phase - 6 to 9 months \$780k Testing in Field - 3 months \$90k Implementation - \$80k Ongoing Maintenance 2 years to implement Total: \$1.1M - 1.5M Year 3+ funding to be sourced from various avenues including Waikato River Authority (WRA).
HOW WILL THE PROJECT ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVE?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Establish a shared digital platform for Te Riu o Waikato, initially focused on monitoring water take and discharge activities at Te Puuaha o Waikato.Overlay of council, industry, CRI and other data sets.Facilitate mana whenua access, data collection and sharing via a Te Ao Maaori monitoring framework.Develop a real-time digital footprint of Te Puuaha with scalability to extend to the Whangamarino catchment and further in Year 3 to enable an 'all of river' approach to data visualisation.		

STRATEGY = FY 2025 & 2026: Build the Pilot. Mobilise kaitiaki (e.g. mana whenua, council, industry, CRIs). Develop + build data sets. Prioritise monitoring parameters. **FY 2027:** Plan to progress to an all of ecosystem approach *ki uta ki tai* - from mountain to sea, for the whole of Te Awa o Waikato.



Strategic Projects 2

Restoration and Research Programmes

Restoring, maintaining, preserving and protecting our river

<p>STRATEGIC PROJECT 2A</p> <p>Kahikatea and Wetland Restoration, Haywards Landing, Tuakau</p> <p>Mitigation to the Water Abstraction Consent</p> <p>OBJECTIVE</p> <p>Enhance the ecological integrity of the landscape and fishery habitat. Achieve an agreement to transfer.</p> <p>HOW WILL THE PROJECT ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVE?</p> <p>Aligned to "as land was taken, so should it be returned", Waikato-Tainui have provided a revised landscape concept design to integrate ecological restoration + enhance fishery habitat. Investigate the opportunity to transfer the Kahikatea Stand to mana whenua to ensure ongoing stewardship, preservation, and protection, alongside sustainability goals.</p> <p>STRATEGIC PROJECT 2B</p> <p>Pond and Land Restoration</p> <p>Former ponds, stream and wetland at Parker Road, Pukekohe</p> <p>OBJECTIVE</p> <p>Rehabilitate former ponds, surrounding land, and connected waterways to enhance ecological resilience.</p> <p>HOW WILL THE PROJECT ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVE?</p> <p>A five-year restoration strategy will improve the ponds and lands with a focus on revitalising the area between the treatment plant and the awa. Watercare will embed + manage a maintenance + protection plan aligning with its biodiversity + stewardship policy.</p>	<p>OUTCOMES</p> <p>Enhanced biodiversity</p> <p>Improved water quality</p> <p>Sustainable fisheries</p> <p>Strengthened climate resilience</p> <p>Cultural revitalisation and increased community participation</p> <p>Community stewardship</p> <p>Fulfills commitments made to mana whenua by successive leadership groups</p>	<p>INVESTMENT ESTIMATES</p> <p>Funding to be sourced from various avenues including WRA.</p> <p>Implementation to be sequenced based on consent conditions.</p>
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Contributes to project priorities?

Restoration of river health

Cultural connection

Community collaboration

Sustainable management

Strategic Projects 3

Whakawhanaunga Programmes

Building meaningful connection through shared experiences and mutual understanding

<p>Watercare Induction & Modules</p> <p>Launch and embed as BAU, a suite of learning modules and activities.</p> <p>OBJECTIVE</p> <p>Raise awareness, educate, and inspire changes in behaviours and actions around the importance of water.</p> <p>HOW WILL THE PROJECT ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVE?</p> <p><u>Implement learning modules:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mana Whenua Engagement: focus on values, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Te Mana o te Wai, framework & toolkit, Te Rua Whetuu function.• Kawenata Whakawhanaunga covers Kiingitanga, Waikato-Tainui journey, settlements, relationship arrangements, Te Ture Whaimana, Tai Tumu Tai Pari Tai Ao. <p><u>Implement learning activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Te Tira Hoe o Waikato - board to board induction. Launch in Year 1, then every three years for incoming boards.• Te Mana o te Wai Campaign - the 'Importance of Water' through visuals, videos, + messaging. Partner with schools, communities + iwi, using Maatauranga Maaori-informed resources to promote water efficiency, literacy + best practices. Emphasise waterway health, share data, incl. diverse perspectives + celebrate progress.• Waikato River Contribution - integrate + promote Waikato puuraakau (stories) and maatauranga (knowledge) about the awa across Watercare platforms, signage and other communications collateral. <p><u>Operational Planning</u></p> <p>Collaborate to strengthen policy settings + key planning instruments to enable sustainable water governance to enhance core services + deliver outstanding outcomes for all communities.</p>	<p>OUTCOMES</p> <p>Foundational efforts that uphold the spirit of the Kawenata relationship - strengthened and enduring.</p> <p>Bi-cultural leadership - strategic partnership development (iwi & industry).</p> <p>Raised awareness of roles and functions.</p> <p>Enhanced cultural understanding including putting organisational values into action.</p> <p>Improved communications including water literacy and engagement with wider community.</p> <p>Regulatory Compliance - upholding obligations under settlements, legislation, policy frameworks & ethics.</p> <p>Increased leadership demonstrated through the kawenata enabling advocacy and submissions to policy reforms that impact water.</p>	<p>INVESTMENT ESTIMATES</p> <p>Design and launch modules, initiatives, resources.</p> <p>\$200k</p> <p>To be embedded as BAU in operational budget/s.</p>
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Contributes to project priorities?

Restoration of river health

Cultural connection

Community collaboration

Sustainable management

Focus area

Reduced Reliance

"Ki te ora te wai, ka ora te whenua, ka ora te tangata."

"When the water is healthy, the land and people are healthy."

Focus on reducing the reliance on the Waikato River by exploring alternatives like purified recycled water. Public support for both potable and non-potable recycled water is key to integrating solutions that ensure a sustainable, resilient supply.

Our approach focuses on understanding current water supply practices, particularly as they are impacted by seasonal changes.

This includes looking across the world to see what other countries do to address water scarcity and improve sustainability of natural resources.

A priority has been placed on understanding the process to turn potable and non-potable water into purified recycled water, and learning about other alternative water supply technologies.

The goal is to expand our collective knowledge on current and emerging innovations in future planning and strategies for water and land use, while deepening our understanding of and response to climate change.

This will lead to decisions that ensure that we are prioritising investment and developing the right policies to improve water resilience and ensure best practice.

PROJECT PRIORITIES

Project priorities are aligned with Watercare's principles of sustainability, environmental stewardship and resilience.

- >> Sustainable management - ensuring efficiency of water services. Focal points: reducing water wastage, promoting water conservation, and adopting innovative technologies to source supply.
- >> Environmental Stewardship - reducing the environmental impacts of infrastructure.
- >> Resilience - future-proofing and planning for long-term challenges like population growth and climate change, for future generations.
- >> Community Collaboration - engagement with communities and mana whenua to incorporate local values and aspirations into planning.

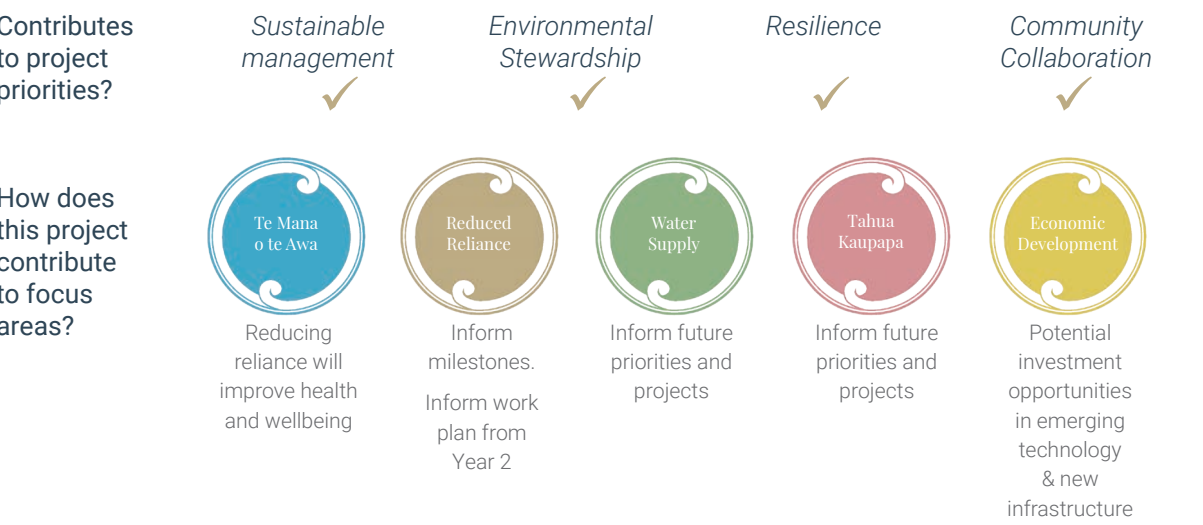
Strategic Project 4

He Puukenga Wai Workshops

Where rivers converge, people gather to exchange ideas

PROJECT OBJECTIVE	OUTCOMES	INVESTMENT ESTIMATES
<p>To explore strategies, technologies, and innovations for the following focus areas: alternative water sources, recycled water usage including cultural challenges around reuse, leakage reduction and efficiency improvements</p> <p>HOW WILL THE PROJECT ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVE?</p> <p>Workshops - knowledge sharing and learning with experts introducing technologies, case studies, water efficiency and literacy, and Q&As.</p> <p>Include technology showcases, collaborative problem-solving - adapting technology to a Marae or rural challenge, and indigenous knowledge integration - traditional vs emerging.</p> <p>Tribal knowledge + climate-related insights to guide strategy development with subject matter experts.</p> <p>Participants: Waikato-Tainui Taiao Forum members and key Watercare employees.</p> <p>Participation in the Metropolitan Servicing Strategy for Taamaki Makaurau.</p>	<p>Enhanced understanding</p> <p>Feasibility</p> <p>Improved water resilience and long-term sustainability</p> <p>Global and local partnerships alongside community engagement</p> <p>Road maps - implementation support and policy enhancement</p> <p>Indigenous integration and culturally aligned solutions</p> <p>Potential for economic growth</p> <p>Reduced environmental footprint</p>	<p>Costs to host workshop</p> <p>\$100k - \$140k</p> <p>Budgeted in BAU, no cost to Working Group</p>

STRATEGY = FY 2026: Host the workshops. Engage Waikato-Tainui Taiao Forum members + Watercare staff to help inform the next steps of the plan. **FY 2027:** Implement the plan.



Focus area

Water Supply

Te Ara Whakatupuranga 2050

Advancing cultural, social, and economic wellbeing.

Focus on ensuring an allocation of potable water to Waikato-Tainui in order to help meet water needs and achieve broader objectives relating to the health and wellbeing, and cultural, social and economic development of Waikato-Tainui.

Our approach is to support Waikato-Tainui Marae to have access to reliable, clean and safe water sources. This includes Marae obtaining classification as water suppliers to comply with new drinking water rules and standards.

This workstream aims to support water supply needs, as well as grow the capability of Marae whaanau to operate and maintain their systems.

We are also exploring water allocation and storage to support tribal outcomes, and the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River.

When considering the commercial opportunities that water supply and storage presents, we are looking for ventures that best align with the aspirations of kawenata arrangements.

PROJECT PRIORITIES

Project priorities are aligned with Te Ara Whakatupuranga 2050, Taiao Resilience.

- >> **Grow our Marae** - the strengthening and adaptability of infrastructure with an emphasis on self-sufficiency, compliance and operations. Securing use rights and access to water supply.
- >> **Grow our People** - focus on education and empowerment, to improve understanding and behaviours around water efficiency and literacy.
- >> **Kaitiakitanga** - supporting whaanau to exercise their role as active kaitiaki.
- >> **Resilience** - supporting Marae with climate change preparedness and adaptation planning.

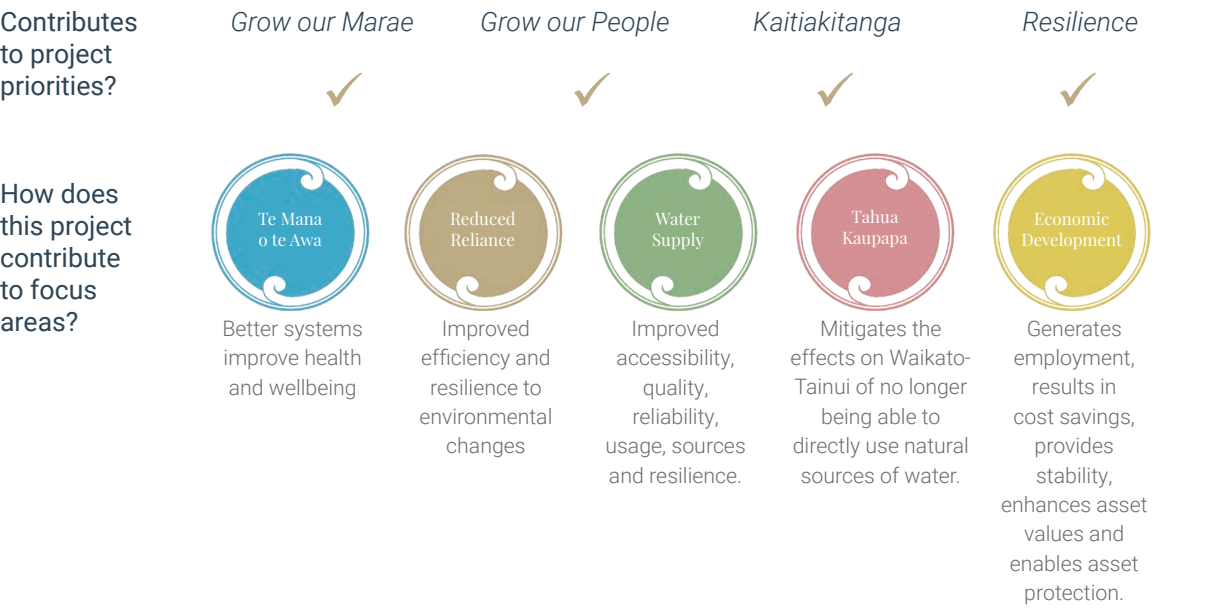
Strategic Project 5

Marae Water and Wastewater Systems

Self-sufficient and compliant systems for community services

PROJECT OBJECTIVE	OUTCOMES	INVESTMENT ESTIMATES
Establish self-sufficient and compliant water and wastewater services systems for Waikato-Tainui Marae to enable community services including civil, emergency, crises + disaster response.	Improved infrastructure Enhanced water resilience Empowered Marae and whaanau Environmental restoration Cultural and community strength, preparedness to support in times of need. Collaborative planning and knowledge sharing opportunities that add value to Marae and the wider community. Equity and accessibility Compliance with drinking water rules and standards - classification	Costs TBC Funding to be sourced from various avenues including WRA. Implementation to be sequenced based on consent conditions.
HOW WILL THE PROJECT ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVE? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advance next steps which include: design, implementation, operations, training, reporting and ongoing practical support planning.• Resources and guidance will help whaanau and marae to adapt to, and mitigate environmental changes enabling active kaitiakitanga by equipping them with tools and knowledge for sustainable water management.		

STRATEGY = FY 2026: Review the work already completed by Lutra and Flow, draft next steps and seek budget approvals. **FY 2026/2027:** Implement.



Strategic Project 6

Water Supply

Up to 25,000m3/day of potable water

PROJECT OBJECTIVE To have water supply between Watercare and Waikato-Tainui by December 2025. HOW WILL THE PROJECT ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVE? <ul style="list-style-type: none">Terms of Agreement finalised including point supply.	OUTCOMES Established partnership Municipal development opportunities Ability to pilot water storage Economic growth Mana motuhake - self determination Environmental sustainability	INVESTMENT ESTIMATES BAU, no cost to Working Group
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STRATEGY = FY 2026: Implement a terms of reference that will enable Waikato-Tainui to self-govern and provide water supply to a tribal economy. Utilise to enable programme planning.

Contributes to project priorities?	Grow our Marae	Grow our People	Kaitiakitanga	Resilience
	✓	✓	✓	✓

Strategic Project 7

Pilot Water Storage

Building resilience through storage solutions

PROJECT OBJECTIVE To support Marae communities impacted by water scarcity and supply challenges. HOW WILL THE PROJECT ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVE? <ul style="list-style-type: none">Establish Waikato-Tainui as a municipality.Investigate and draft water storage solutions for Huntly, Meremere and Rotowaro sites.Start Up - Business case/s.	OUTCOMES Support to vulnerable communities + charitable events Addressing water scarcity and poverty challenges Municipal dev. opportunities incl. agri support, emergency preparedness, rainwater harvesting, industry efficiency Economic growth Mana motuhake - self determination Environmental sustainability	INVESTMENT ESTIMATES BAU, no cost to Working Group TBC - costs to progress recommendations from business case/s
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STRATEGY = FY 2026: Set Waikato-Tainui up to be able to self-govern and provide water supply to a tribal economy. Include business case/s for water storage. Draft next steps and seek budget approvals.

Contributes to project priorities?	Grow our Marae	Grow our People	Kaitiakitanga	Resilience
	✓	✓	✓	✓



Opening of the Upgraded Wastewater Treatment Plant, Pukekohe 2023

Focus area

Tahua Kaupapa

"Without research there can be no development. Without development there can be no research."

Sir Robert Mahuta, Tribal Leader, Waikato-Tainui

Focus on Waikato-Tainui and Watercare developing research on water quality and the health of the Waikato River and its communities including Taamaki Makaurau. Projects that mitigate the effects of Watercare’s water extraction over 20 years are a priority alongside the collaborative coordination of work planning.

This strategic work programme embodies the spirit of collaboration by looking in all directions for solutions.

Our approach is to ensure that there is research and development to support the five key focus areas including Te Mana o te Wai, reduced reliance, water supply, and economic development.

Through kawenata arrangements, efforts prioritise water quality exploration and system innovation.

Initiatives aim to improve the health of the Waikato River, surrounding ecosystems, and communities, while advancing mitigation strategies for water take. Research findings will help shape a proven, innovative work plan tied to sustainable progress.

With access to Watercare's expertise and resources, and active participation from Waikato-Tainui kaitiaki and practitioners, the programme achieves success by fostering partnerships, improving resilience, and supporting kaitiakitanga (environmental stewardship).

PROJECT PRIORITIES

Research and development tethered to innovation, problem solving and advancing education and knowledge.

- >> Education and knowledge - includes new and advanced technologies, enhanced learning methods, scientific understanding, and access to information.
- >> Sustainability - grow our consciousness and exercise kaitiakitanga with initiatives that help set standards for environmental conservation, renewable energy, and sustainable practices.
- >> Health and wellbeing - advancing holistic research and initiatives that balance the impacts of imbalance of water, environment, and people.
- >> Economic growth - supporting a tribal economy and communities through innovation and initiatives that drive economic development.

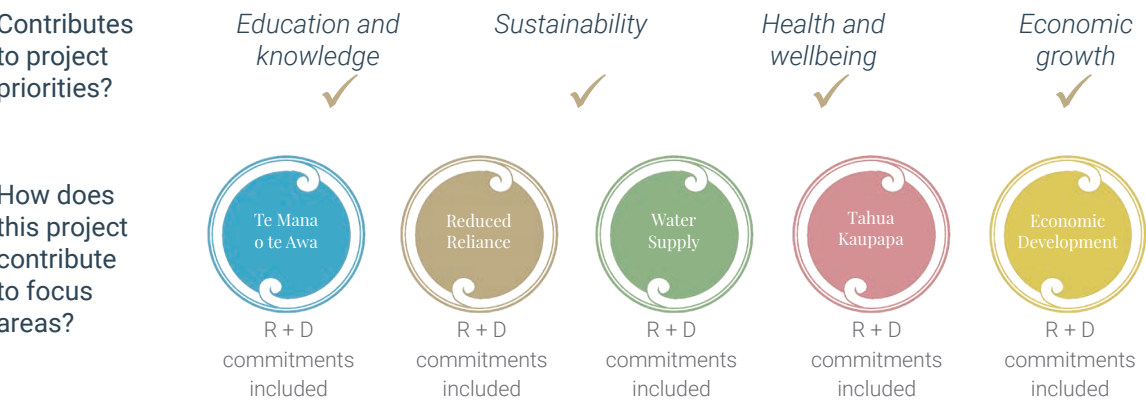
Strategic Project 8

Te Kete Maatauranga

Building capacity by filling the basket of knowledge

PROJECT OBJECTIVE	OUTCOMES	INVESTMENT ESTIMATES
Develop a Research and Development (R+D) programme for all five focus areas, framed around identification, research and mitigation.	Resilience building	\$500k from Working Group for five-year period
HOW WILL THE PROJECT ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVE?	Enhanced educational pathways and future leaders	
Pull all relevant R + D related activities, into one work programme.	Skilled workforce development incl. a line of sight from school and adult learning, to specialty tertiary development and industry placement.	
Focus education and employment opportunities: Implement Watercare graduate and internship initiatives alongside cadetships, apprenticeships, tertiary scholarships, and sponsored university study. Pilot will be guided by the Waikato-Tainui Tai Tumu Tai Pari Tai Ao education workstream focused on pathways to tertiary and industry.	Improved water monitoring	
Watercare expertise: access to Watercare’s laboratory services, guidance and advice on regional and international water and wastewater matters.	Strategic collaboration	
Centre of Excellence for Lower Waikato Catchment: In partnership with the tribe's College for Research and Development, establish community-based programmes focused on water quality improvements, monitoring,+ reporting.	Empowerment of communities	
	Excellence in research and development	

STRATEGY = FY 2025/2026: Integration phase to bring together various workstreams across all focus areas of the work programme. Develop 'a line of sight' (who, what, when, why), and to track progress. This includes reviewing what Waikato-Tainui and Watercare are already working on under their organisational business plans. **FY 2026:** Implementation phase - a collective Tahua Kaupapa Research and Development Work Plan will be finalised, and budget reviewed to acknowledge resourcing, and for reporting purposes.



Strategic Project 9

Te Kounga o te Wai

A 20-year commitment to ecological health

<p>PROJECT OBJECTIVE</p> <p>Deliver a pilot for an integrated water quality remote sensing programme for the Waikato River - commencing with a set of initial sensors.</p> <p>HOW WILL THE PROJECT ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVE?</p> <p>By combining satellite data with continuous water quality measurements from continuous monitoring devices.</p> <p>Approach supports the detection and spatial mapping of key water quality parameters such as total suspended solids (TSS), chlorophyll-a, and cyanobacteria using machine learning algorithms calibrated against field sensor data.</p> <p>The combined dataset will provide near-real-time insights into river health, extend coverage between monitoring sites, and enable scalable digital reporting across strategic cultural and ecological nodes along the awa.</p>	<p>OUTCOMES</p> <p>Improves data contributing to Strategic Project 1 - He Piko He Taniwha He Rongo.</p> <p>Bridges gaps in spatial and temporal monitoring.</p> <p>Embeds machine learning models grounded in local sensor calibration.</p> <p>Enables maatauranga Maaori-informed digital storytelling of water health indicators across time and space.</p> <p>Partnership and collaboration with global technologies.</p> <p>Directly linked to Strategic Project 1, He Piko He Taniwha He Rongo as a source of data.</p>	<p>INVESTMENT ESTIMATES</p> <p>Included in the funding allocated for Strategic Project 8 - Te Kete Maatauranga</p> <p>Aim to commence development of pilot in 2025.</p>
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STRATEGY = FY 2024 & 2025: Develop the Pilot including monitoring parameters. Build the data.
FY 2026: Plan to progress to an all of Te Puuaha approach.

Contributes to project priorities?	Education and knowledge	Sustainability	Health and wellbeing	Economic growth
	✓	✓	✓	✓
Also contributes to Te Mana o te Awa project priorities?	Restoration of river health	Cultural connection	Community collaboration	Sustainable management
	✓	✓	✓	✓



Waikato River Intake Point, Tuakau

How does this project contribute to focus areas?



Improved visibility of river with data overlays.

Improved baseline data to inform score card

Public and community health safety, awareness and understanding.

Supports environmental protection efforts.



Clearer understanding of impacts to inform water resilience and sustainable practices.



Understanding of where Marae and community water needs are, why and when



Understanding impacts of Te Puuaha facilities on the river, environment and people.

Inform wellbeing indicators.

Repository of water quality & taiao data



Cost efficiency (optimising treatment, purification + infrastructure maintenance.

Buy in from stakeholders to support efforts.

Improvements contribute to tourism, recreation and fisheries opportunities

Focus area

Economic Development

Te Ara Whakatupuranga 2050

Advancing cultural, social, and economic wellbeing.

Focus on Watercare notifying Waikato-Tainui of investment opportunities and offering a fair chance for the tribe to participate. A priority is Watercare supporting Waikato-Tainui to develop water infrastructure, and also recognising and considering Waikato-Tainui businesses in procurement.

Our approach focuses on understanding and preparing for upcoming and prospective investment opportunities.

This includes an understanding and awareness of the suitability of tribally owned land to support water infrastructure needs.

Waikato-Tainui will leverage its extensive databases of businesses and suppliers for procurement purposes.

To empower its members and maximise their chances of success, Waikato-Tainui will work with Watercare to implement processes that best align with Watercare's enterprise model.

PROJECT PRIORITIES

Project priorities are aligned with Te Ara Whakatupuranga 2050.

- >> Growing our people - support the growth and innovation of members through social procurement and iwi business partnerships.
- >> Economic resilience - maximise value by improving access to diverse resources, and securing benefits through optimal terms and costs. A key objective is to attract investments by showcasing financial efficiency and collective collaboration.
- >> Whenua strategy - promote the growth of the tribal estate to manage and restore natural resources.
- >> Mana motuhake - empower Waikato-Tainui to achieve self-determination by owning, managing and investing in municipal water infrastructure.

Strategic Project 10

Puna Pakihi Incubator

Nurturing a business hub for entrepreneurial growth

PROJECT OBJECTIVE

To create a dedicated space for procurement and development opportunities that supports business growth, innovation, and sustainability. Identify co-investment opportunities for water infrastructure.

HOW WILL THE PROJECT ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVE?

- Mentorship & training: experienced mentors, workshops + resources.
- Build pipeline - from puna pakihi, direct to opportunities. Incl. advanced notice, policy advocacy, procurement plan - to facilitate connections with industry leaders and key personnel.
- Funding: potential to apply for seed funding, grants, and access to capital, to help overcome financial barriers.
- Market validation: products/services - market fit and scalability.
- Cultural integration of customs and values, and aligned support systems.
- Explore partnership with Waikato-Tainui College to promote innovation and commercialisation of new ideas.

OUTCOMES

Business growth and success
Economic resilience
Innovation ecosystem
Cultural empowerment
Stronger networks
Empowered and enabled tribal economy

INVESTMENT ESTIMATES

BAU, no cost to Working Group

STRATEGY = FY 2024 & 2025: Host the workshops. Target Waikato kaitiaki and Watercare staff that can inform a set of recommendations, for the Working Group to prioritise next steps and planning.
FY 2026: Implement the plan.

Contributes to project priorities?

Growing our people
✓

Economic Resilience
✓

Whenua strategy

Mana motuhake

Relevant projects detailed under focus areas:
Water Supply and Tahua Kaupapa.

How does this project contribute to focus areas?



Priorities integrate cultural values & ensure environmental balance.
Economic gains enable more environmental projects.



Innovation, diversification & sustainable practices are all tethered to economic development and resilience.



Direct economic benefits.



Direct economic benefits.



Potential investment opportunity in emerging technology and new infrastructure

Working Group

Pipiri 2025

Doc No.

Version: v4

