

WAIRARAPA FIVE TOWNS TRAIL NETWORK



SOUTH WAIRARAPA
DISTRICT COUNCIL
Kia Reretahi Tātau



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WHAT IS THE WAIRARAPA FIVE TOWNS TRAIL NETWORK PROJECT?

The Wairarapa Five Towns Trail Network is an ambitious project to develop almost 200km of recreational trails for walking and cycling, linking Martinborough, Featherston, Greytown, Carterton and Masterton.

The goal is to grow community wealth through developing outstanding trail-based experiences, and to provide for improved liveability and health outcomes for residents and visitors alike.

From beautiful rivers, towns and villages, culture and heritage, to world class food and beverages, Wairarapa offers untapped potential for a unique visitor experience.

The vision for the network is:

‘Wairarapa Five Towns Trail Network is recognised as a must-do in Wairarapa – the best way to experience and connect with our people and places.’

The project aims to bring to life the vision of an internationally recognised network of trails for locals, visitors, and tourists that showcases the region’s attractions, our people, and our stories.

The Wairarapa Five Towns Trail Network aligns with the Wellington Regional Trails Framework and the Wairarapa Economic Development Strategy, and was developed from a concept conceived by the Five Towns Trails Trust to connect Wairarapa’s towns.

The project is now being led by Wairarapa Trails Action Group (WTAG). WTAG members include South Wairarapa, Carterton and Masterton District Councils, Greater Wellington Regional Council, Department of Conservation, Destination Wairarapa, and a number of Wairarapa-based trails trusts.

Photo: James Jubb



THE MASTER PLAN – A GUIDE TO DEVELOPING THE NETWORK

A master plan for the Wairarapa Five Towns Trails Network has been developed by TRC Tourism. This was jointly funded by the three district councils and the Trust House Foundation.

The plan outlines how the network can become a reality over the next 10 years and beyond. It is available at: www.fivetownstrail.co.nz.

Development of the master plan is only the start of work. The estimated cost of the network is around \$32 million.

The master plan will enable applications for external funding, including Government and private sector grants. Most funding will be sought from these external sources rather than ratepayers.

An example of such external funding is the \$1.3m provided for construction of the walking and cycling suspension bridge over the Tauherenikau River as part of the Government’s support of “shovel-ready” infrastructure projects.

THE PROPOSED NETWORK

The master plan provides an indication of potential trail routes – these are indicative only. There will be discussion with landowners and engagement with communities, section by section, and final routes will be also be subject to other improvement projects, such as bridge upgrades and roading improvements.

The master plan provides for a series of more than 90km of Signature Trails, and more than 100km of Experience Loops and Trails.

These will link in with existing and proposed trails including the Greytown Rail Trail, Remutaka Cycle Trail, Tauherenikau Bridge Trail, Masterton's recreational trails, and the proposed WaiP2K Trail (Pūkaha to Kawakawa Connection) and Wairarapa Moana trails.

Signature trails are a small number of outstanding trails that attract visitors and achieve recognition for the region as a trail destination. These will form the backbone of the network connecting the region's five towns.

The proposed signature network comprises:

- Featherston to Greytown
- Greytown to Carterton
- Carterton to Masterton
- Greytown to Martinborough
- Featherston to Martinborough

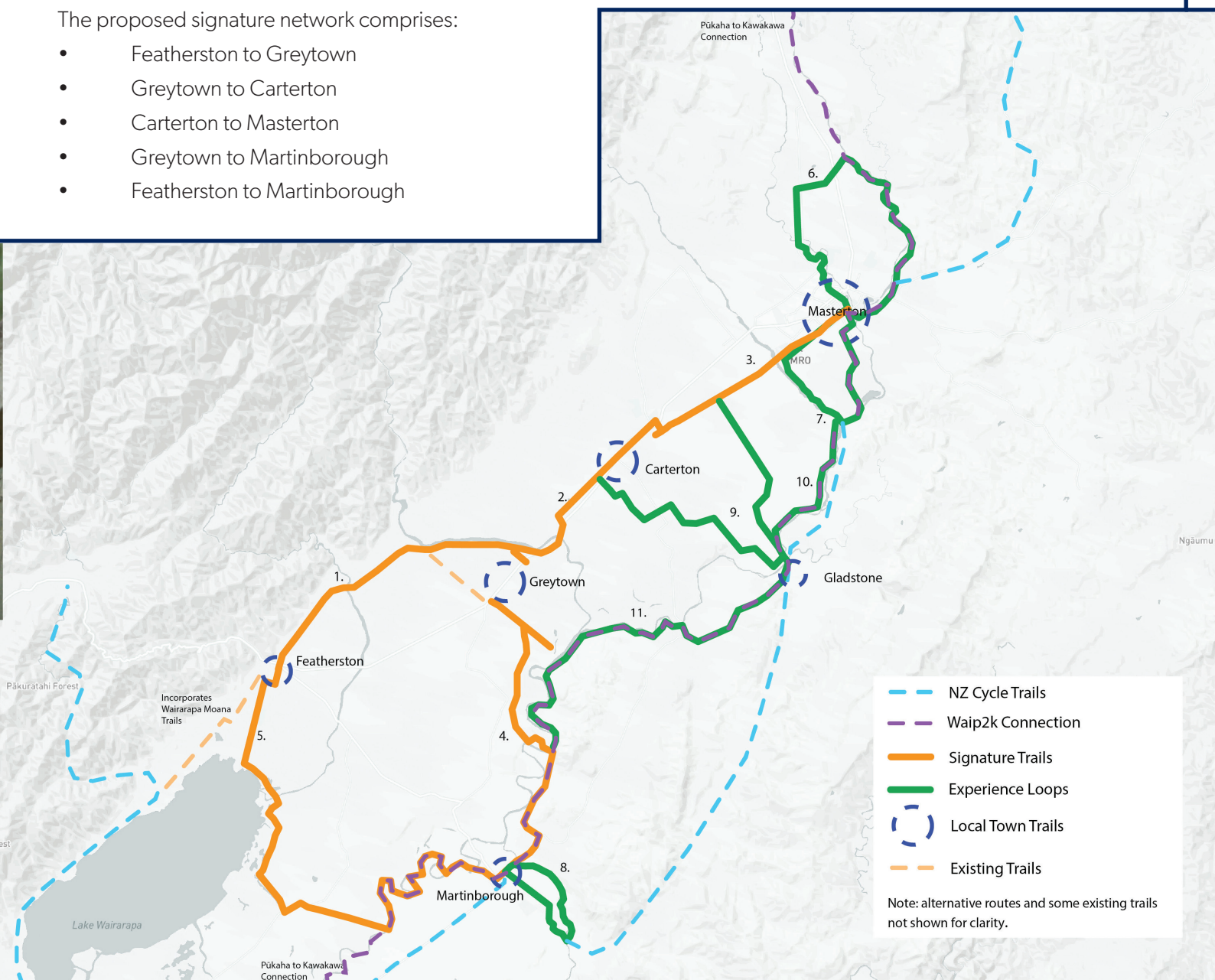
Experience Loops and Trails will complement the Signature trails with a series of trails that showcase local features, attractions, and landscapes.

Proposed Experience Loops and Trails:

- Masterton to Ōpaki loop
- Masterton Rivers loop
- Carterton to Gladstone loop
- Martinborough Vineyard loop
- Waingawa to the Cliffs trail
- Gladstone to Morrisons Bush trail

Local trails, although not specified in the master plan, are important to local communities and tourism, and can be incorporated into the network on a case-by-case basis.

The trails are intended to be accessible to a range of users, separate to public roads, safe, and with an easy gradient, and having several points of interest on route, including refreshments and toilet stops.





BENEFITS

Recreational trails offer a diverse range of benefits to communities and the environment. These include community wellbeing, education, increased appreciation of heritage and culture, as well as economic benefits.

The Covid-19 lockdowns have highlighted the need for safe, accessible routes for individuals and families. The master plan estimates that as many as 210,000 users a year can be expected in the first years of the network becoming operational.

Spending in the Wairarapa as a result of the trails network is estimated at \$21m a year in its early stages, with nearly 100 jobs generated. These numbers are expected to increase as the network expands.

WANT TO GET INVOLVED OR FIND OUT MORE?

WTAG is now considering the most appropriate governance structure for the project.

We are committed to ensuring the views of our community, including iwi, landowners, and other interest groups are taken into account when making decisions.

Route planning and design for each section will be carried out on a staged basis, including talking and working with landowners, community engagement, and collaborative planning.

If you would like to be involved with the next stages of the project, or find out more about what is proposed, please email your name and contact details to: info@fivetownstrail.co.nz

Visit: www.fivetownstrail.co.nz

