



Our link to a healthy future

New Plymouth Mountain Bike Club Long Term Plan 2018-28 Submission.

Background

The New Plymouth Mountain Bike club has been in existence for over 25 years. The Club has three locations, Rotomanu Jump Park, Busing Forest, and Mangamahoe all on NPDC land that is managed by lease agreements with the Club.

The main mountain bike park is at Mangamahoe which has approximately 30km of cross country single direction mountain bike tracks. Over the last 5 or so years there has been huge progress at the park. In particular, during 2017 approximately 7km of new tracks were built with \$120,000 of funding provided from the TSB Community Trust and NZCT. The professionally built tracks have really added to the park and greatly enthused our supporter base. This is evident by the increase in our membership from 340 in 2016 to **725 in December 2017** an increase of **113%**. This would make the club one of the largest sports clubs in Taranaki if not the largest. The increase in use of the park has been also confirmed by the 4 mountain bike counters the club has had installed on some of the trails since January 2017 (refer to trail data shown at the end of our submission).

It should also be noted that the bike park is free to use and many other members of the Taranaki community use the park. Therefore, total users of the facility would be well over a thousand. It should also be noted that the mountain bike tracks are also used by walkers and runners. For example, the Taranaki trail run event was held at the park during January with over 500 entrants.

While we have been fortunate to receive funding the majority of tracks have been built by volunteers and this amounts to thousands of hours of work.

The cost for a kilometre of new track varies between \$20K-\$30K and therefore the Club has built and maintains a community asset worth approximately **\$750K**.

Relationship with the Council

The Mountain Bike club has a productive relationship with the Council's Property and Parks team. We work closely to ensure any contractors are properly approved and events are notified and well run.

Our next Challenge

Due to our success, our next challenge is to maintain and keep the tracks in the Park to a good standard for both enjoyment and safety of the riders. This is where we would like to form a partnership with the Council. The club is taking a number of initiatives to help maintain the trails including the following:

- There is a monthly working bee.
- We have a trail adoptee program where club members adopt a trail and help to maintain it.
- We have a trail sponsorship programme. Currently this amounts to approximately \$5K per annum. This is used for spraying and buying materials to fix and maintain tracks.

While the initiatives above are going well, the Club still needs some extra support to make sure the entire network is kept to an acceptable standard that will continue to attract riders to the Park from both within Taranaki and from the rest of the country. The Club would therefore like to request the Council allows for in the plan to employ an additional “half person” in the Parks business unit whose role would be maintaining tracks at Mangamahoe. The work programme for this person would be agreed to with the Parks Manager and the Mountain Bike Club. We believe this would cost approximately \$30k per annum.

Alternatively, a budget sum of \$30k to \$40k could be provided to pay a contractor, to complete a similar role. The work program for such a contractor would be agreed between the Parks Manager and the Mountain Bike Club.

What Other Districts do

In preparation for this submission, we have asked similar sized Councils what they contributed towards mountain biking. Councils contacted included Palmerston North City, Taupo, Whangarei and Nelson. The funding for mountain bike trail maintenance ranged from \$10K to \$40K per year. Nelson has \$550K in their LTP for track development.

Economic Impact

A number of economic impact studies have been completed on Mountain Biking. A very recent study (February 2018) by Berl on the Nelson District, indicates **\$17.1 million** of new and retained spending will occur annually as a result of Mountain biking in the Nelson – Tasman region. The total economic impact in ten years’ time will be **\$39.5 million** in GDP and employment of 538 FTE’s.

Refer to the link below for further information on the study.

<https://www.nelsonmtb.club/news/economic-benefits-of-mountain-biking-for-nelson/>

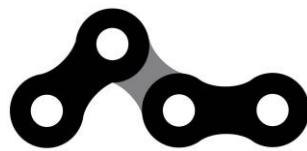
Why should the Council support this Request?

The following are the key reason for the Council to support this request:

- It is perfect alignment with a Lifestyle Capital. In fact without an attractive mountain bike facility it would be difficult to call ourselves a Lifestyle Capital.
- Due to the huge efforts of the Club over recent years, the Community now has an excellent asset, which benefits a wide range of the community from 5 years old to 75 years old. It is vitally important this asset is maintained to a high standard.
- It is becoming part of the Taranaki tourism offering. Voted Number 5 by Kathmandu for rides in the North Island. It is therefore important to have the park maintained to a high standard.
- As indicated above the are significant Economic benefits for a region that has a strong Mountain Biking offering.
- It is important for the Council to act fairly and equitably. Other sports with far less membership or participation receive funding from the Council and some sports significant funding.
- As part of an active growing community it is recognised that the District requires a well-managed mountain bike park.
- **It is a very low cost but high impact.** The key impacts are associated with health, family connection and vibrancy through mountain bike tourism.

Summary

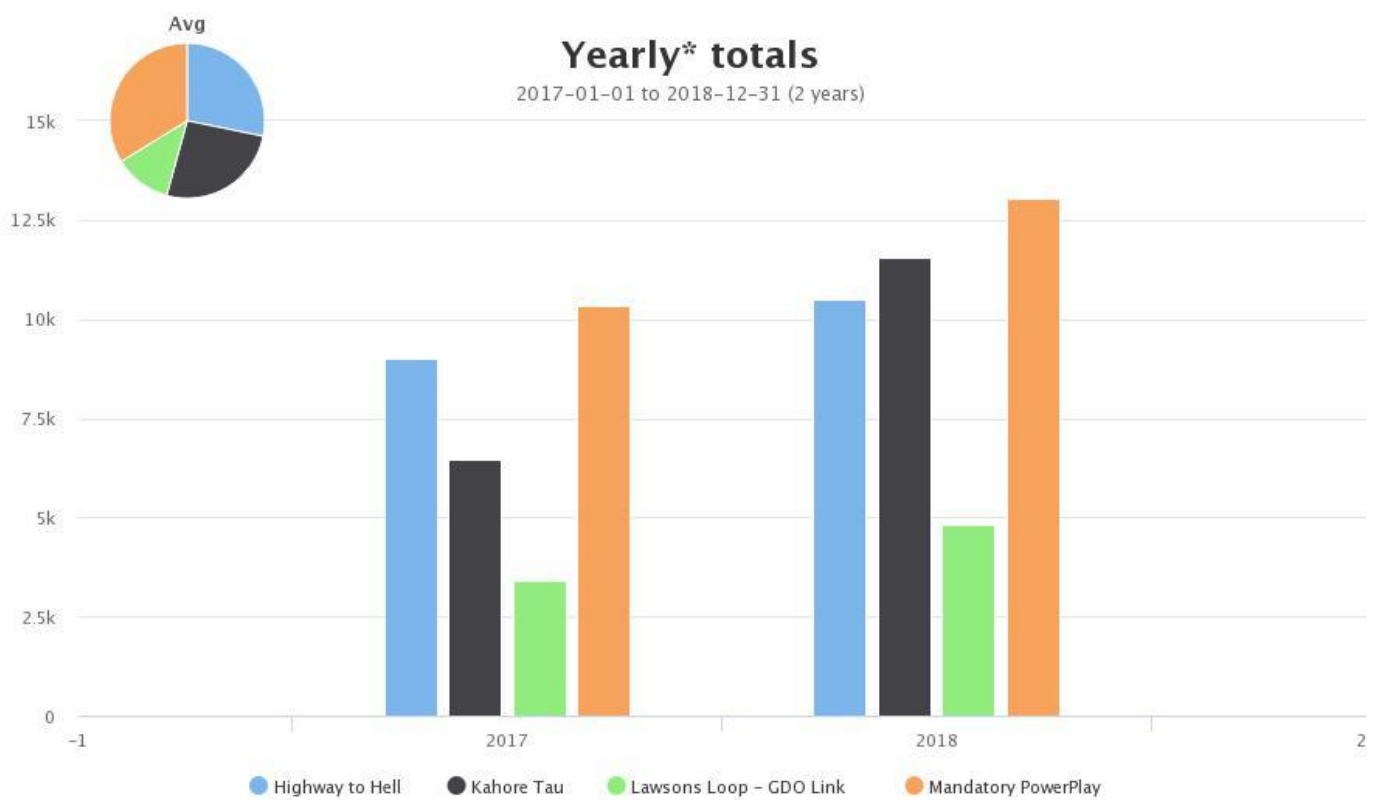
In summary we hope we have clearly articulate the strong benefits for the Council to provide a modest sum to help foster the development of the Mangamahoe Mountain Bike Park. The Park will truly be another reason why people will visit or choose to live in Taranaki, and the whole district will benefit from the Economic impacts associated from a well-developed and maintained Mountain Bike facility.



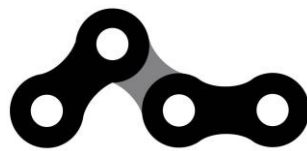
**NEW PLYMOUTH
MOUNTAIN BIKERS**

Our link to a healthy future

Trail Data:



Actual and projected trail use per year from four sites within the Mangamahoe MTB Park. The smallest predicted growth is 16%, the biggest is 78% growth and the average increase is 40% in trail use.



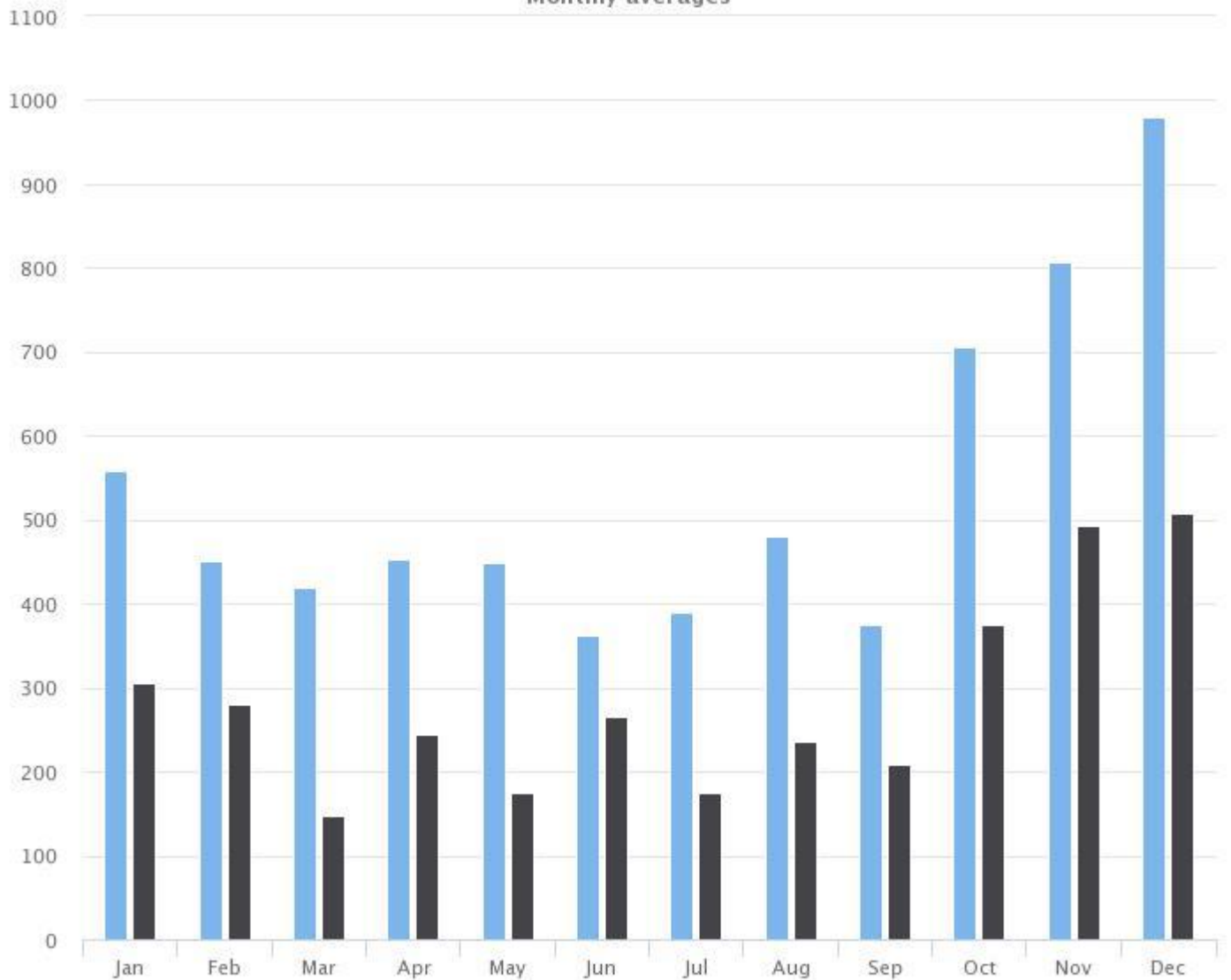
**NEW PLYMOUTH
MOUNTAIN BIKERS**

Our link to a healthy future

Months of the year

2017-01-20 to 2017-12-31

Monthly averages



Site Name	Average	Median	STDV	Min	Max
Kahore Tau	536.1	453.0	186.1	362.7	980.0
Lawsons Loop - GDO Link	284.7	255.5	113.7	148.0	508.0

Increasing trail use throughout the year shown as new trails are built.