

***The youth of today will inherit the Rodney of tomorrow
and we want to know what you want it to be like.***

***That's why at Rodney District Council,
we're listening to you.***

What's this Strategy About?

The purpose of this Youth Strategy is to identify what the young people in Rodney want and need from their Council and to say how the Council plans to help young people in Rodney.

What do we mean by “Youth?”

When we talk about young people in this strategy, we mean people between 12 and 24. This is the same age range as the Ministry of Youth Development use, and the definition of youth used in the 2002 Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa.

What's been happening in New Zealand?

The Government developed the **Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa in 2002**. This Strategy helps the Government, local councils and other agencies to decide what the kinds of services and resources they provide to young people.

Other major projects that have impacted on youth development and youth work at a national level since the 4Uth strategy was introduced in 2004 include:

- The establishment of the **National Youth Workers Network** in 2005.
- The publication of **"Real Work"**, the most comprehensive national survey of the youth work sector ever carried out in New Zealand in 2006
- The introduction of a **National Certificate in Youth Work**, (a work based training qualification for youth workers), in 2007.
- The commissioning of **"Youth '07"**. A comprehensive national survey of secondary school students the initial findings of which were published December 2008.
- The drafting of a **Code of Ethics for Youth Work in Aotearoa New Zealand** which was released for consultation and feedback in 2008.

These initiatives all emphasise the importance of youth welfare and participation on the current and future wellbeing of our communities and society.

What's been happening in the Council?

There have also been several significant developments within Council since 2004 which relate directly to the way Council engages with Youth and Youth service providers. These include the “Rodney District Council Community Development Framework (2006)”, and the “Rodney Social Wellbeing Strategy” (2008.) Both of these documents contain sections specifically relating to youth participation and wellbeing.

These documents identify Council's primary role as being a facilitator, funder, advocate or planner of youth oriented events and services rather than as a direct service provider.

2008 saw a significant increase in the range and level of funding allocated to youth service providers across the district and the creation of a new Youth Development Officer role within Council.

The Council also consulted on what was important to our community and the goals that we, as a community, want to work towards. Six objectives or ‘community outcomes’ were identified from this process which are shown on the following page.

Council realises that we need to work with a range of other agencies such as the local Schools, Sport North Harbour, Child Youth and Family, NZ Police and Waitemata District Health Board and others to achieve these outcomes. We also recognise the many roles that young people themselves have in this process.

Vision Rodney

Rodney's Community Outcomes:

1. **Prosperous**

We will have a growing and resilient economy based on a wide variety of businesses that fit our character.

2. **Vibrant**

We have a range of recreational and cultural facilities and events across the district and we encourage creativity and diversity.

3. **Distinctive**

The character of our townships and country will be maintained and enhanced through excellent urban and rural planning and the intelligent management of growth.

4. **Connected**

Rodney has the infrastructure and services needed for its residents, business and visitors.

5. **Safe and Healthy**

We have a sense of community and we provide for the emotional and physical well-being of our people.

6. **Clean and Green**

We value, protect and enjoy the natural environment.

Reviewing the Youth Strategy

In 2008 the first formal review of the 4Uth Strategy was initiated.

The initial review of the strategy examined four areas:

1. An internal review of the Council's performance on youth related issues since 2004.
2. A review of the statistics and what they can tell us about how well youth in Rodney are doing.
3. Feedback from youth and youth service providers on the effectiveness and value of the strategy to date.
4. Feedback from youth on their present needs values and priorities.

The results of this review were presented to the Council in February 2009. A copy of this report is available on request.

4Uth 2009

As a result of the discussions with youth, the following six desires were identified:

- 1. Young people want to participate in and influence the future shaping of their communities.**
- 2. Young people value their social environment and want to be active and safe.**
- 3. Young people want things to do and places to hang out.**
- 4. Young people want to be able to get around the district safely.**
- 5. Young people value their natural environment and want it to be kept clean and accessible.**
- 6. Young people want access to education, employment, career and other opportunities and services.**

The Strategy: Our Vision for Youth in Rodney

This section sets out a vision for how Council can work together with the young people living in Rodney to help them achieve their best and be a vital part of our community.

Within each of the Goals, the strategy identifies:

- *What you said you want the Council to do*
- *What Council is already doing*
- *What Council will do in the future*
- *What you can do*



1. Young people want to participate in and influence the future shaping of their communities

What you said you want the Council to do:

From consultation with young people, you said that the Council should:

- Provide more ways for youth to join in with local government decision-making and projects.
- Find more ways of letting youth know what is going on in the Council.
- Communicate and connect with youth directly and in ways that they can relate to.
- Recognise the diversity that exists amongst the youth of the district.



What the Council is already doing:

- Providing support for local youth forum in South Kaipara and the Hibiscus Coast.
- Beginning to consult directly with youth on significant projects.
- Administering Rodney Youth accounts on Facebook and Bebo.

What the Council will do:

- Develop protocols and guidelines to ensure youth consultation occurs at all levels of Council decision making.
- Create and maintain a youth oriented web presence that provides information to youth and opportunities for youth to share their thoughts with the Council and other young people.
- Facilitate local and district wide fora for youth to meet and discuss issues affecting them.
- Develop closer relationships with student councils and youth fora across the district.
- Explore options for connecting with youth more effectively through digital technology

What you can do:

If you're a young person aged between 12 and 24 you could help make a difference by:

- Writing letters and submissions to the Council on issues that affect you.
- Keeping an eye out in the local paper and in schools for council information and updates.
- Letting your local paper know what's going on.
- Getting involved with youth service providers.
- Starting debate on youth issues within schools, institutes and workplaces.
- Nominating other young people to represent local youth groups on student councils, youth forum and council committees.

2. Young people value their social environment and want to be active and safe

What you said you want the Council to do:

From consultation with young people, you said that the Council should:

- Support and promote youth services and events that have a proven record of providing safe and supervised social environments for youth.
- Work closely with Police to keep the community safe.
- Address safety issues at Council facilities and when designing our towns.

What the Council is already doing:

- Employing a Safer Community Team Leader.
- Employing a Youth Development Officer to support youth service providers across the district.
- Administering a Community Grants Scheme.
- Signed a Memorandum of Understanding with NZ Police to work for a safer community, target youth issues and strengthen neighbourhood support.

What the Council will do:

- Ensure the Community Development team has a youth focus.
- Work in partnership with the NZ Police to reduce youth exposure to drugs and gangs and to maintain a safe environment.
- Work collaboratively with social development and service agencies to advocate for services that address the needs of our young people.
- Support youth service providers in enabling safe social environments for young people.
- Support the inter-school working group to organize a district wide Youth Festival



What you can do:

If you're a young person aged between 12 and 24 you could help make a difference by:

- Keeping yourself safe and look after your friends.
- Talking to us or the NZ Police if you have safety concerns about the places where you hang out.
- Getting involved in community initiatives and events.

3. Young people want things to do and places to hang out.

What you said you want the Council to do:

From consultation with young people, you said that the Council should be:

- Working on making our towns more youth friendly.
- Making sure that youth have places to hang out that are accessible and safe.
- Promoting greater tolerance towards and support for youth within Council and the wider community.

What the Council is already doing:

Encouraging businesses like Snowplanet, and go-carting to come to Rodney.

- Implementing the Council's Arts Strategy, which includes creating opportunities for young people to engage in the creative industries.
- Incorporating people-friendly places within town centre and village development projects.



What the Council will do:

- Ask youth their opinions when developing parks, reserves and other community facilities.
- Investigate ways to improve, develop and add to our facilities eg libraries, leisure centres, skateparks, showgrounds, sportsfields to ensure that there are youth friendly spaces and places.
- Work with Economic Development Agencies to encourage businesses that meet youth needs to come to Rodney.
- Help plan events and let youth know about events by posting them on our 4Uth website once it is developed.
- Promote positive images of young people to our community by supporting events that showcase youth and through the media.

What you can do:

If you're a young person aged between 12 and 24 you could help make a difference by:

- Organising events in your local areas.
- Contacting the Council and talking to us about planning an event and let us know of any that we can put on the 4Uth website once it is developed.
- Making suggestions to the Council or your local business association about possible activities.
- Treating other people and their property with dignity and respect.

4. Young people want to be able to get around the district safely.

What you said you want the Council to do:

From consultation with young people, you said that the Council should:

- Provide or advocate for the provision of accessible and affordable public transport across the district.
- Provide well maintained and safe walkways and cycleways.

What the Council is already doing:

- Employing a Road Safety Coordinator who works with other groups such as SADD.
- Being member of the Auckland Regional Transport Authority (ARTA), which plans and prioritises strategic public transport solutions regionally.
- Developing a Walking and Cycle Strategy to ensure that pathways and cycle lanes are included in the Council's infrastructure planning.

What the Council will do:

- Advocate to ARTA and the regional council for public transport systems that are affordable and reach more people.
- Encourage safe transport routes for young people, including ways to and from school.
- Prioritise the objective of increasing walking and cycling for travel between home, work and schools.
- Maintain and upgrade our roads to make them safer.
- Ensure footpaths are well lit at night.



What you can do:

If you're a young person aged between 12 and 24 you could help make a difference by:

- Driving safe and sober, and working with your local SADD group to reduce youth drink driving.
- Telling the regional council about the public transport you want.
- Utilising the public transport that is available already.
- Speaking up when they see unsafe practices.
- Following the "Don't drink and drive" message.

5. Young people value their natural environment and want it to be kept clean and accessible

What you said you want the Council to do:

From consultation with young people, you said that the Council should:

- Encourage youth to interact with nature and responsibly use our outdoor environment.
- Find ways for youth to be involved in the protection of our districts natural assets.

What the Council is already doing:

- Improving access to our beaches and reserves, eg Orewa Esplanade and Helensville Riverbank Walkway.
- Promoting recycling and waste reduction policies in schools and communities.
- Facilitating conservation groups through programmes such as Wai-Care.
- Letting youth know they can get involved in environmental initiatives via the RDC website.



What the Council will do:

- Encourage youth to come up with initiatives that promote and protect the natural environment.
- Continue to provide good access to our beaches, parks and open spaces.

What you can do:

If you're a young person aged between 12 and 24 you could help make a difference by:

- Getting involved in conservation groups and initiatives.
- Keeping beaches clean and disposing of your rubbish responsibly.
- Asking your local school what they do to look after the environment.
- Having your say on community and planning issues.

6. Young people want access to and support into education, employment, career and other opportunities and services

What you said you want the Council to do:

From consultation with young people, you said that the Council should:

- Advocate for improved public transport to allow youth living in Rodney to access training and employment opportunities that are only available in Auckland.
- Advocate for more occupational training courses and modern apprenticeships to be offered locally.

What the Council is already doing:

- Financially supporting the Rodney Economic Development Trust to develop business opportunities and youth skill development within Rodney.
- Working with Work and Income to look at employment opportunities.
- Providing scholarship funding to each public college.



What Council will do:

- Work with other government agencies and business groups to promote youth training and employment opportunities within Rodney.
- Advocate to ARTA and the regional council for public transport systems that are affordable for students.
- Encourage other groups and youth organisations to find out what services youth need or would like to know about.
- Liaise with local schools to find more ways for youth to get involved in community issues and then advocate and facilitate that involvement where we can.
- Work with appropriate agencies to promote health-related youth matters.
- Work with Economic Development agencies to encourage youth oriented businesses to establish in Rodney.

What you can do.

If you're a young person aged between 12 and 24 you could help make a difference by:

- Asking us about how you can get involved in local issues.
- Talking to career advisors about education, employment and training opportunities.

What happens next?

This Youth Strategy aims to guide the Council's response to addressing youth issues in the district.

The Council will develop an action plan each year to make sure things happen. The action plan will include more specific initiatives and projects to be implemented by the Council.

The Strategy will be reviewed every three years based on feedback received from youth and proactive consultation processes.



Keeping in touch

We welcome your comments and feedback about the implementation of this strategy.
You can write to us any time at:

4Uth
Rodney District Council
Private Bag 500
Orewa

You can also leave your feedback on line on the Youth Strategy page in the Councils Website at www.rodney.govt.nz. Or you can email us at 4Uth@rodney.govt.nz or fax it to 09 426 7280.