

Dear Bxxxxxxxx, Bxxxxx, and Oxxxx

I am writing with grave concern about the failing state of the roadside drainage network of Waitakere and Rodney Local Board areas. Maintenance of outer area roads, both sealed and unsealed, in these local boards is grossly inadequate to non-existent, and this is leading to a fast approaching tsunami of capital costs.

I am currently waiting for a response from AT to an information request about how many metres of machine-based drain cleaning have taken place in the last 24 months. I am anticipating it's virtually none.

In many places, our roadside drains have been neglected for so long that the open swale has silted up, with grass establishing over the top. With no structure to channel the water flow, the road seal's edge itself becomes the de facto guiding structure. Then erosion from the water flow eats away at the carriageway subbase.

The newly eroded material then accumulates in ad hoc places where the water crosses the road and, in this case, scours out the Regional Park car parking facilities.



In this case, damage to the car park has been repaired four times in the last 12 months, but no action has been taken to address the underlying cause. It is happening again after only 20mm of rainfall over 12 hours.



I suggest Auckland Council's Full Facilities Department and Regional Parks' General Manager should bill AT and/or the new Transport Infrastructure Delivery Directorate for the consequential costs their budgets are incurring as a result of this roadside drainage failure!



At the opposite end of the road section shown in the first picture, a drain swale still exists but has been filled with rocks. I observed a Regional Park Ranger reshaping and cleaning the drain to assist water flow. These efforts are greatly appreciated but futile as one-off isolated actions.

The end result is an ever widening drain that undermines the supporting shoulder of the carriageway, and an ever narrowing carriageway as the road markings keep being replaced incrementally closer to the centre line.



Maintenance is not optional upkeep, it's an ongoing negotiation with water, and neglect just means nature wins by default. This insidious cost of the loss of understanding in how we manage our environment is cumulatively enormous.



Our failure to manage and maintain stormwater on our road network is also leading to huge one-off capital costs and transport service disruptions.

The convenient narrative is to blame dramatic one-off storm events, rather than admitting it's years of small, unmanaged trickles that are doing the real structural damage underneath.

This leads to reactive patchwork temporary repairs rather than proactive maintenance. In this photo, a hot-mix bund has been placed to prevent water ingress and further subsidence, subsidence which would not have occurred if the existing drains had been properly maintained for their intended purpose of keeping water away from this area.

And bunds are a poor and temporary fix. They simply redirect stormwater downstream, often amplifying the problem elsewhere along the network, and offer very limited operational durability.

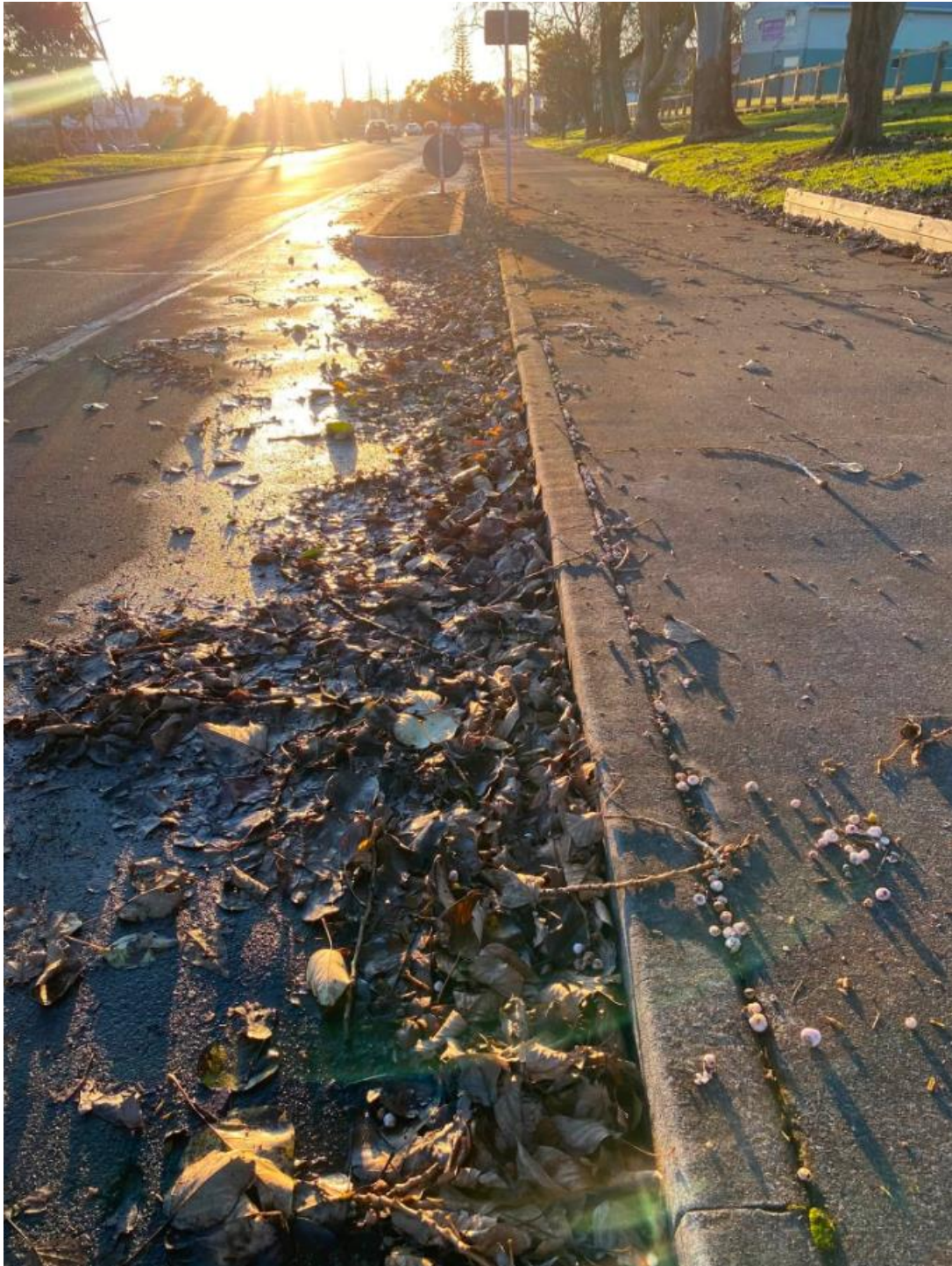
The lack of regularly scheduled maintenance teams working across our routing network is why small trickles and blockages go unseen and remain the primary cause of unnecessary future capital costs.

The photos below show the onset of roadside land subsidence, with the second photo depicting surface water flowing directly into movement cracks, which everyone knows is the worst possible scenario and guarantees future collapse.



I have reported this to Mr Bernie Sheary, Contract Manager, Western Road Maintenance, and I understand he has visited the site.

These problems are not confined to the outer rural or semirural areas, they are present across our Northwest Road Network, including urban and even commercial centres. Every day, social media posts from the area feature images and complaints stemming from public frustration over maintenance neglect.



I am looking forward to collaborating on the strategic short and long-term planning and structure of the new Transport and Infrastructure Delivery Directorate.

To start, **I am requesting a group drive around the West and Northwest to examine the unintended consequences of this institutional failure.**

Cr Ken Turner