

Draft Proposal | March 2024

Auckland – A Repair City

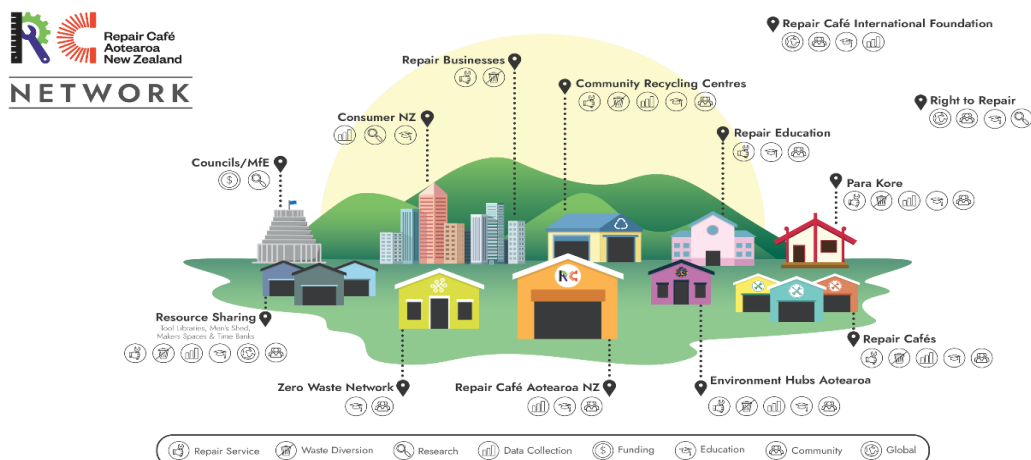
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INTRODUCTION

Repair is a cornerstone of the circular economy and plays a vital role in reducing waste and promoting sustainability in cities. [Repair Café Aotearoa NZ](#) (RCANZ), a member of the International Repair Café Foundation, has been championing repair in Aotearoa since 2020. We empower communities to engage in repair, offering solutions for everyone – from budget-conscious to those seeking to extending the lifespans of their belongings. The activity of repair fosters environmental responsibility, strengthens neighbourhood connections, and builds community resilience. Repair Cafés serve as a gateway to introducing concepts such as the circular economy and product design for durability and reparability.

RCANZ grew out of the successful Auckland Council WMIF initiative ‘Repair Café Auckland’ (2019 People’s Choice Award at the Auckland Zero Waste Awards). We currently support over 50+ pop-up Repair Cafés operating across New Zealand, with over 30+ running monthly. We offer resources like the Repair Café Handbook Aotearoa¹ to guide communities in setting up their own cafes, and we’ve joined the International Repair Alliance, collecting vital repair data. In recognition of our national impact on waste reduction behaviour change, RCANZ was awarded the Waste Management Industry Association of New Zealand’s (WasteMINZ) Awards for Excellence in Behaviour Change (2023).

Repair Café Aotearoa NZ has been building a New Zealand-wide network over the past three years, connecting with different sectors and overseas repair networks (see the Repair Network Aotearoa ecosystem depicted in the infographic below). We are in the final stage of becoming the Repair Network Aotearoa Charitable Trust.



¹ [How to set up your own repair cafe in Aotearoa](#)

THE REPAIR CITY MODEL

This proposal draws inspiration from the European Repair City model², a collaborative effort involving cities, NGOs, social enterprises, and research institutions across Europe. Their focus on infrastructure development, fostering repair businesses, and raising public awareness aligns perfectly with Auckland Council's zero-waste aspirations.

RCANZ has initiated communication with the European network to learn from their experiences and adapt a model that leverages existing infrastructure in Aotearoa. Collaboration and transparency are core principles in our approach, ensuring we honour all stakeholders and lead with integrity. RCANZ is committed to adapting this model for the Aotearoa context, fostering a national culture of repair through collaboration and knowledge sharing.

POSITION AND CHAMPION Auckland as a Repair City

Building on the existing work of Repair Café Aotearoa NZ (RCANZ), which already aligns with many aspects of the European Repair City model, we propose collaborating with dedicated Auckland Council staff to develop an implementation plan for establishing Auckland as a Repair City. This aligns perfectly with Auckland Council's commitment to moving up the waste hierarchy and creating repair options, as outlined in the Draft Waste Minimisation and Management Plan (WMMP) 2024³.

By establishing Auckland as a Repair City, Auckland would position itself as a leader in the circular economy, promoting resource conservation and product longevity. The implementation of a "Repair City" also gives Auckland an opportunity to further align with the vision to become the most liveable city. This leadership, and standing on the world stage, would leverage RCANZ's expertise and experience in facilitating repair initiatives, fostering collaboration among stakeholders, and promoting a national culture of repair.

TRANSFORMING Auckland into a Repair City

To position Auckland as a leader in the national Repair City movement, we propose the following actions:

- **Feasibility Study:** Conduct a feasibility study to explore adapting the European Repair City model to Auckland's specific context.
- **Dedicated Staff:** Recommend appointing Council Staff who work towards zero waste and climate adaptation to lead the Repair City initiative.
- **Councillor Champion:** Identify a panel of Councillors on the planning & environmental panel that influences the WMMP to champion the Repair City initiative, raising awareness and securing necessary support.

² [Repair Network for cities](#)

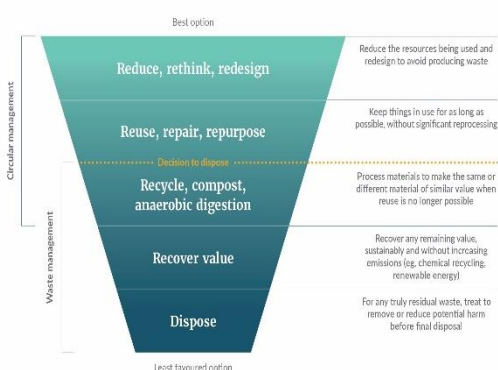
³ [Draft Waste Management and Minimisation Plan \(WMMP\) 2024](#)

COLLABORATION for Success

The concept of a Repair City perfectly complements RCANZ's mission to promote a culture of repair. By supporting repair infrastructure, businesses, and initiatives, a Repair City fosters a more sustainable future. Moving up the waste hierarchy⁴ toward reuse and repair aligns with the Auckland Zero Waste and the Draft WMMP 2024 goals. RCANZ's experience and established networks make it uniquely positioned to play a key role in helping Auckland become a leader in the national Repair City movement.

To establish a comprehensive and effective Repair City programme for Auckland, RCANZ proposes collaboration with a variety of key stakeholders who bring invaluable expertise to the table. By working together with these stakeholders, we can create a comprehensive and effective Repair City programme for Auckland.

- **Mana Whenua:** Engaging with Mana Whenua is essential. Their guidance will ensure the Repair City initiative respects and incorporates Te Ao Māori principles. This fosters a more inclusive and culturally sensitive programme that benefits all Auckland residents.
- **Para Kore ki Tāmaki:** This leading Māori Zero Waste organization empowers communities throughout Auckland to reduce waste. Their initiatives may include promoting repair practices that respect taiao (the natural world) and its finite resources.
- **Repair Café Aotearoa:** Their extensive experience in establishing and operating Repair Cafés/initiatives and Right to Repair campaign would be crucial in building Auckland's repair infrastructure, providing residents with accessible repair services.
- **Consumer NZ:** Collaboration with Consumer NZ would facilitate easier access to information on repairable products. This empowers consumers to make informed choices, potentially extending the lifespan of their belongings and contributing to a more sustainable future.
- **WasteMINZ:** WasteMINZ's waste reduction expertise would be essential for the programme. They can help measure the Repair City initiative's impact on waste reduction and identify areas for further improvement, ensuring the programme's effectiveness.
- **Reuse Aotearoa:** Collaboration with reuse organizations, in particular spare parts collections but also packaging can unlock powerful synergies between reuse and repair initiatives. By working together, we can maximize resource conservation efforts in Auckland, promoting a more circular economy.



⁴ [Te-rautaki-para-Waste-strategy, p.15](#)

10 concrete actions to guide your city towards repair

This proposal, inspired by the European 'Repair City' model⁵, offers **10 concrete steps** to scale up repair initiatives and maximize their reach across Auckland. The Repair City model complements existing repair and zero waste initiatives in Auckland.

1. Advocacy for Right to Repair
2. Promote city repair initiatives and make professional repairers more visible
3. Introduce repair to younger generations
4. Organize or support a Repair Café or a repair event in the city
5. Put repair in the spotlight during International Repair Day
6. Facilitate repair at Community Recycling Centres (CRC) in the city
7. Provide financial incentives for citizens to choose repair
8. Create a city repair platform
9. Guide citizens towards the best repair solutions
10. Monitor and communicate about the impact of repair in the city

1. Advocacy for Right to Repair

RCANZ can provide Auckland Council with insights and best practices gained through initiatives such as the successful "Make it our Right to Repair" petition (2021)⁶ and our recent submission and oral submission (August 2023)⁷ to the Environment Select Committee. This knowledge sharing would be invaluable in informing Auckland Council's approach to the Right to Repair.

RCANZ proposes co-designing a comprehensive advocacy programme with Auckland Council. This programme would clearly outline a shared vision for the Right to Repair in New Zealand. By working together, RCANZ and Auckland Council can achieve greater impact by presenting this programme to key decision-makers and policymakers.

Additionally, RCANZ strongly encourages Auckland Council to endorse the Right to Repair Manifesto currently being drafted by the RCANZ-led 'Right to Repair Coalition Aotearoa'. This manifesto will outline key commitments for Aotearoa New Zealand, and its promotion can be amplified through relevant networks like [C40 Cities](#), of which Auckland is a member.

⁵ [Repair Network for cities](#)

⁶ [Make it our Right to Repair petition, 2021](#)

⁷ [Make it our Right to Repair submission, 2022](#)

2. Promote city repair initiatives and make professional repairers more visible

ENGAGE with Hanga Aro Rau – Manufacturing, Engineering and Logistics Workforce Development to determine scope for the creation of training qualifications designed to grow the workforce of repair engineers, aligned with the Resource Recovery qualification that is already available. Specifically, give a stronger voice to Māori business and iwi/hapū development.

3. Introduce repair to the younger generation

INTEGRATE repair into school curriculums and host regular Repair Cafés at school facilities. Collaboration with Sustainable Schools and Repair Café Aotearoa would allow children, parents, grandparents, and teachers to learn simple repair skills, product design principles, and participate in hands-on repair activities across generations and skill levels.

ESTABLISH a comprehensive e-waste management system in schools that incorporates repair and spare parts collection options for students. This not only promotes responsible e-waste disposal but also provides students with valuable opportunities to learn about device disassembly and potential component reuse.

PROMOTE the development of **repair training programmes** in Auckland.



4. Organize or support a Repair Café or a repair event in the city

Numerous established **Repair Cafés in the Auckland region** would welcome collaboration with their local board members. These cafes offer valuable repair services to the community, and council support can further enhance their reach and impact.

The first-ever 9-day **Repair Festival** organized by Repair Café Aotearoa is scheduled for September 2024. Council support for this inaugural event can significantly contribute to its success and pave the way for it to become an annual celebration of repair in Aotearoa.

5. Put repair in the spotlight during International Repair Day

International Repair Day, held on the third Saturday of October each year, provides a unique opportunity to raise public awareness about the importance of repair. Auckland Council can contribute to this effort by:

- **Supporting the Aotearoa Repair Summit:** The annual Aotearoa Repair Summit, organized by Repair Café Aotearoa NZ convenes on International Repair Day. By supporting this key event, Auckland Council can demonstrate its commitment to the Right to Repair movement and engage with stakeholders working towards a more sustainable future.
- **Participating in Repair Events:** Encouraging and facilitating participation in Repair Cafés and other repair-focused events held across Auckland on International Repair Day can further amplify the message and empower residents to embrace repair.



6. Facilitate repair opportunities at Community Recycling Centres

Expanding Repair Opportunities at Community Recycling Centres

Auckland Council can significantly contribute to a more circular economy by supporting Community Recycling Centres (CRCs) and the Auckland Resource Recovery Network in establishing viable repair streams. This would create a new category between existing "reuse" and "recycle" channels, maximizing resource conservation and waste reduction efforts.

Creating Repair Infrastructure and Jobs:

- Council support could enable CRCs to hire staff dedicated to assessing donated items for repairability. This could involve identifying the need for spare parts or potential for repair with readily available products.
- These new repair streams can create employment opportunities while diverting valuable resources from landfills.

Promoting Repair Education:

- **Educational programmes at CRCs:** By supporting the delivery of educational programmes at CRCs, Auckland Council can empower both the general public and school groups. These programmes can offer valuable insights into, planned obsolescence, design for repairability, accessing manuals and spare parts, tool availability, and basic repair skills for safe home application.
- **Circular Economy Awareness:** CRC repair programmes can also raise awareness about circular economy principles. This includes understanding the impact of overproduction on CO2 emissions and promoting practical climate action steps through repair.
- **Spare Parts Collection:** Establishing spare parts collection points at CRCs allows schools and the public to contribute. Students can utilize these parts for repair projects, fostering a hands-on learning experience that reinforces the value of repair.

7. Provide financial incentives for citizens to choose repair

To incentivise repair as a viable option and encourage citizens to embrace it, Auckland Council could consider a repair voucher programme referencing established models like the Austrian repair voucher system⁸. This programme would offer vouchers covering a percentage of the repair cost, particularly targeting low-income households who may benefit most from repair affordability.



A successful voucher system can significantly contribute to:

- **Increased Repair Activity:** Vouchers can encourage residents to choose repair over replacement, extending the lifespan of their belongings and promoting a more sustainable lifestyle.
- **Landfill Diversion:** By encouraging repair, the programme can help divert repairable items from landfills, reducing waste and its associated environmental impact.

Collaboration with Stakeholders: Successful programme implementation would require collaboration with relevant stakeholders, such as repair businesses. This ensures the programme effectively connects citizens with qualified repair services.

⁸ [The Repair Bonus, Austria](#)

8. Create a city repair platform

To empower citizens to find repair services easily, Auckland Council can develop a comprehensive repair directory and online platform. This platform would offer several key functionalities:

- **Auckland Repair Map:** A user-friendly map would enable residents to locate repair businesses across the city, categorized by repair specialty (e.g., electronics, appliances, clothing) for a targeted search experience. The map could include both public and private repair providers, ensuring comprehensive coverage.
- **Regional and Council Area Maps:** For ease of use, the platform could offer the option to view repair maps by region or specific council area, allowing residents to focus their search on their local area.
- **Integration with the Auckland Council [Waste Nothing](#) website:** Integrating the Auckland repair map with the Waste Nothing website would leverage an existing platform trusted by Auckland residents for waste reduction information. This would increase the visibility of repair options and encourage residents to consider repair before disposal.

Below is a screenshot of the repair cafés associated with RCANZ listed on the Environment Hubs Aotearoa map⁹.



⁹ [Repair Cafe Aotearoa interactive MAP](#)

9. Guide citizens towards the best repair solutions

Auckland Council can play a pivotal role in fostering a robust repair ecosystem for Auckland residents by exploring several initiatives that make repair services more convenient and accessible. This approach not only empowers consumers with repair options but also presents a valuable business opportunity for retailers, particularly during the current cost of living crisis.

1. Supporting In-Store Repair Services:

- **Joint Industry Workshops:** Facilitate workshops with retailers, repair professionals, and industry associations to explore opportunities and challenges related to in-store repair implementation. This knowledge sharing initiative can help establish best practices and identify training needs.

2. Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration:

- Partnering with the Sustainable Business Network and other relevant stakeholders can create a collaborative environment. This will facilitate knowledge sharing and resource development to support the growth of the repair sector in Auckland.

10. Monitor and communicate about the impact of repair in the city

To measure the success of the Repair City initiative and its impact on Auckland, Auckland Council can establish a robust monitoring and communication framework by leveraging existing waste management data in collaboration with key stakeholders, particularly RCANZ. This framework will:

- Integrate waste diversion data with repair data to showcase the environmental benefits (e.g., reduced landfill waste).
- Analyse repair trends (repairability rates, spare parts availability) from RCANZ's [restarters](#)¹⁰ database, part of the International Repair Alliance.
- Support research into the effectiveness of a Repair City in collaboration with universities.

CLOSING NOTE

Repair Café Aotearoa is dedicated to fostering repair ecosystems through community spaces, education, businesses and Right to Repair advocacy. We are delighted to contribute our expertise to the development of Auckland's Repair City concept plan. Thank you for the opportunity to share our knowledge and vision. We look forward to a collaborative partnership.

Auckland, 11 March 2024

Signed: Brigitte Sistig | Co-Founder | Repair Café Aotearoa NZ

¹⁰ [restarters](#)