

Welcome to Trail Talk - A monthly newsletter all about the Around the Mountains Cycle Trail. This newsletter contains information and updates about construction and work on the trail, as well as other aspects including work being carried out with businesses and tourism interests.

October 2014

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Opening of Stage One a roaring success



The Around the Mountain trail will showcase some of the finest scenery in the country

It's all come down to this.

On the eve of the official opening of Stage One, the excitement in Northern Southland is palpable.

Mararoa-Waimea ward councillor John Douglas said residents were eagerly awaiting the arrival of the new month.

"There's an air of anticipation, really. The mood out there is very positive and people are really

looking forward to the opening on the first."

Locals were so excited about the trail's grand opening on Saturday that many were already dusting off their old bikes - and in some cases, even opting for flash new electric ones - in preparation for taking to the trail themselves, Councillor Douglas said.

An experienced road cyclist himself, the trail is "safe as houses" and will give people the opportunity to see parts of the country they otherwise might never have had the chance to, he said.

Meanwhile over in Lumsden, where the opening will be held, CDA chairman Rob Scott said the last cosmetic touches - including the resealing of the railway station, finalising the information kiosk and hanging flags up around the town - are complete.

The mood amongst community members was "all positive", and right behind the belief that extra income generated by those riding the trail would bring huge benefits to the towns of Northern Southland, he said.

"It's not every day you get an opportunity like this in a small town, and if you don't grab the bull by the horns and make it work you're going to miss out. It's just such a great opportunity and it's going to help put the town on the map again. It's just what the businesses here need."

Mayor Gary Tong said the opening tomorrow would be just the beginning.

"Obviously everybody's very excited about the opening of Stage One, and I'm looking forward to being there, feeling the atmosphere - and then moving on to Stage Two," he said.



Submission period for Stage 2 closing soon

While all eyes are on the opening of Stage One this weekend, those wanting to make submissions on plans for Stage Two of the Around the Mountains cycle trail must remember there are just a

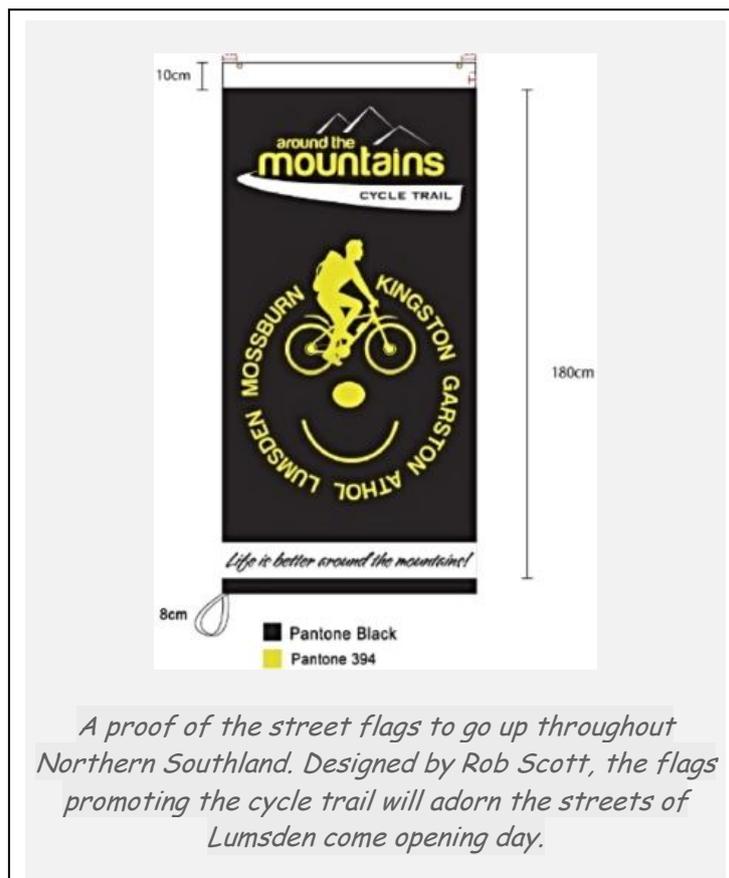
few days left to do so.

About 30 kilometres of proposed trail near the upper Oreti River and Centre Hill Road needs resource consents from Environment Southland and Southland District Council. These consents had been sought in 2012 but a commissioner declined consent for that section, because of concerns around river works and their effects on the ecology, river and surrounding area.

There are two significant changes to the new consent applications: a new lower and longer bridge over a section of the river, rather than a suspension bridge as originally proposed - designed to have less impact visually and on the Oreti River and its surroundings. The other major change is to the proposed path the trail would take, shifting it away from the river. Proposed groynes have also been removed from the proposal.

Submissions to the Southland District Council close at 5pm on **3 November**. Download a submission form [here](#).

Submissions to Environment Southland close at 5pm on **12 November**. Download a submission form or make a submission online [here](#).



Opening day hub ready and waiting



One of the locomotives rolls into town



The restored Lumsden jail

The newly-revamped Lumsden Railway Station will be the hub of tomorrow's festivities, with new additions ready to take centre stage.

Lumsden Heritage Trust Chairman John Titter said the group was formed last year, in the hopes of restoring the Railway Station to its former glory and creating a focal point that would draw people - including tourists riding the cycle trail - into the town. After plenty of hard slog, the only thing left to do was to finish painting one of the wagons. Two 1948 TR diesel shunting locomotives from the Waihi Goldfields Railway in the Coromandel, plus an 1885 P60 undercarriage from Wairio, have joined the existing heritage attractions showcasing Lumsden's railway past.

The day following the arrival of the new locomotives, he had spotted about 40 people stopping to take a look, and since then there had been a steady stream of people checking out the town's new attraction.

"Already the precinct is delivering on what we set out to do, with all the people stopping already. I was talking to a father and son, he would have been three or four, who had come up for a look especially. It's fantastic," Mr Titter said.

He hoped those attending the Around the Mountain cycle trail opening would be similarly impressed.

"I hope they get some joy out of looking at it, and being able to get an actual visual on how the Railway Station looked, with a train sitting in front of it, prior to the lines being lifted back in the 1970s. Just people appreciating it, you know, and people enjoying it - that's what I get out of it."

The railway precinct is now also home to the restored Lumsden jail. The Lumsden CDA and the

township's Area Engineer Bruce Miller brought the jail back to life, with Bruce even painting it during his weekends. The jail itself has an interesting history, with New Zealand's only woman to ever receive the death penalty, Minnie Dean, reported to have spent a night behind the bars here.

Official Partner Programme - join today



The official A3 map - copies of which will be available on opening day

Businesses and organisations linked with the Around the Mountains cycle trail are being encouraged to sign up to the Official Partner Programme, operated by the Around the Mountains Cycle Trail Ltd in association with the Southland District Council and Venture Southland.

Membership is open to any business or organisation which fulfills and maintains cycle-friendly standards, which include:

- selling or promoting products or services that relate to the Around the Mountains cycle trail
- providing a warm welcome and a high level of customer service for cyclists
- providing useful first-hand knowledge about the trail, including maps and brochures

Businesses and organisations typically associated with the trail are split into two groups: accommodation providers and activity operators, and food and beverage providers.

Official Partners will be included in all international and domestic marketing and promotion of the trail, including featuring on its official website, a one-stop-shop that includes the ability to book all services on the cycle trail, real-time availability information and booking, and a central phone and customer support team. Official Partners will also be able to use the "Official Partner Logo", be listed on the Around the Mountains official A3 map, see increased business referrals and have the ability to link in with the promotion of the 22 cycle trails in the Nga Haerenga New Zealand Cycle Trail network.

Accommodation providers and activity operators can profile their businesses and list their services for free; however, all bookings made through the website are charged a 15% commission (8.5% goes to the Official Trail Manager to maintain the website and booking service as well as to undertake key trail maintenance tasks such as toilet cleaning, 5% goes towards Council maintenance of the cycle trail, and 1.5% pays for the online booking system).

Food and beverage providers, meanwhile, will be able to profile their business and list their services for an annual fee. No commission will be charged on food and beverage bookings.