

Big support for project

By JESS ETHERIDGE

ANGER over a proposed \$33 million harbour bridge cycleway appears to have fizzled.

An overwhelming majority of more than 11,000 Aucklanders have supported the SkyPath through submissions.

Although final figures are not yet known, by January 19 just five people had submitted in opposition, Auckland Council says. The deadline was Friday afternoon.

"That level of support does not surprise me," Auckland mayor Len Brown says.

"It is a project that people around the region have been strongly in support of – both to me personally and in the media. Now, I guess, all we need to do is ensure the decision-makers do what they're required to do."

A hearing on SkyPath is scheduled for March.

Letting the legal process of resource consent run its course is important, Brown says.

For the last three years in particular, opponents have been very vocal in the media despite the low turnout in submissions.

"That's democracy," Brown says.

The 1km-long SkyPath has been in the pipeline for almost a decade.

SkyPath will run underneath the bridge's city-side



Figure head: Bevan Woodward of the SkyPath project, inset, which will be scrutinised in a public hearing in March.

Photo: JOSH FAGAN

clip-on lane. The resource consent featured a new design for the pathway's Northcote Point landing.

Project head Bevan Woodward says the new design was made due to residents'

concerns about SkyPath users milling around near their homes. So a new design to steer patrons away from them was unveiled.

It now runs closer to the shoreline where the

proposed Westhaven-Takapuna boardwalk Sea-Path is planned, Woodward says.

The Morrison and Co Public Infrastructure Partnership Fund is bankrolling the

project. The fund will recoup the \$33m through tolling, estimated to be between \$2 and \$4 a visit.

Up to 5000 people a day are expected to use it during summer.

IN BRIEF

Swim series

The Broderick Summer Swim Series kicks off at Kohimarama Beach, tomorrow night from 6.15pm. The all ages event is \$20. Participants can enter any of the six swim events held, which stretch between 250 to 2500 metres. The series ends April 2. Go to summerswim.co.nz for more details.

Shoes stolen

The old adage: "They'll steal anything that's not nailed down" is proving to be true as police receive a number of reports of branded sports shoes being stolen from people's doorsteps. It has been a problem for some time around Onehunga, Penrose, One Tree Hill and Oranga, Onehunga Community Policing Team Sergeant Rhys Smith says. "It's petty crime but we just need to get the message out there because your shoes can be worth a lot of money. Maybe just bring them inside and don't leave them on the front porch," he says. "We think it's kids who are doing it. We suspect they are trading them with each other and using them as payment for things. If you've got a kid coming to your back door, don't be afraid to ask them why they're there," he says.

Home opens

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