

Auckland City Council

Future planning framework version 3.0

9 September 2010

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Foreword

Future planning framework

Auckland city is a fantastic place to live and work. As lifestyles and communities in the Auckland isthmus change over time, this section of the city needs to evolve in tandem with these. If Auckland is to continue being a great city, planning for its future is essential.

Predicting how the isthmus will look and function in the future is important to everyone. The council has taken an extensive look at how to best meet the needs of local businesses and residents.

By dividing Auckland city into eleven geographic areas, the council painted a picture of how we think Auckland city could look in 2050.

Among other factors, we took into account the growth in Auckland's population, the challenges facing Auckland in terms of lifestyle choices, and our built and natural environments.

Draft plans were shared with the community so people could give their feedback on how the city and their particular areas could grow and change. Hundreds of responses were received.

The original objective was to use this document, revised in response to the community feedback, to inform processes such as the district plan review and future capital works programmes.

With the "Super City" amalgamation of local authorities imminent, it was decided not to proceed with a new isthmus district plan for the Auckland City Council area.

Instead, the council is showcasing the Future Planning Framework project as a potential district planning tool for the new Auckland Council. A number of precinct plans have been developed as examples of local area planning, based on the research and feedback gained from the project. Three have been included in this document.

The council will also prepare position papers that could assist the new council in its preparation of one district plan for the whole region. This report together with the three precinct plans and position papers will form uniquely researched planning information to help guide the future growth of an enlarged city.

The Future Planning Framework process is now drawing to a close. It has been an extremely productive journey, recognised by the New Zealand Planning Institute with its top award for 2010. This is a wonderful tribute to all who have contributed – planners, councillors, and development professionals alike, and most importantly, the community.



"It's been an extremely productive journey..."

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Graeme Mulholland". The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a white background.

Councillor Graeme Mulholland JP
Deputy Chairperson, City Development Committee
Chairperson, Future Planning Framework Working Party

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1 Introduction

1.1 What is the future planning framework?

The future planning framework paints a picture of how the Auckland isthmus could look in the future. It shows important aspects of the historic landscape that need to be respected or protected, how land should be used and how and where growth and development should occur. While Auckland city includes the Hauraki Gulf islands, this plan is about the Auckland isthmus, which is the mainland part of Auckland city, comprising the city centre and the majority of the city's residential neighbourhoods and business areas. References in this document to Auckland city generally mean the Auckland isthmus. References to Auckland region correspond to the area within the Auckland Regional Council boundaries.

The future planning framework has been developed to support Auckland City Council's overarching vision for Auckland city and its high-level strategies. The vision and strategies reflect the community outcomes defined in the council's 10-year plan. The main body of work comprises a synopsis of the research recently completed, a citywide spatial framework and eleven area plans.

During the course of preparing the framework the New Zealand Government announced its intention to create a single unitary council covering the whole of the Auckland region. The future planning framework provides the future Auckland city administration with a basis for developing the future district plan for the Auckland isthmus. It also provides the new administration with a potential approach for spatial planning across the wider city.

The district plan is the main instrument governing land use in the city. Other implementation tools include the council's capital works programme, its operational activities, bylaws and advocacy programmes. The framework has also been designed to inform other council documents and policies such as asset management plans.

Draft area plans were shared with the community for an eight-week period commencing mid-March 2009 so people could give their feedback on how the city and their particular areas could grow and change. Nearly 800 individual responses were received offering 1753 comments on aspects of the future planning framework. The framework encapsulates many of the ideas offered during that phase.

In April 2010 version 1.0 of the future planning framework won the Nancy Northcroft Planning Practice Award at the New Zealand Planning Institute conference. Version 2.0, completed in June 2010, improved upon version 1.0 and version 3.0, completed in September 2010, includes precinct plans for four important locations, demonstrating the full future planning framework approach. An area plan has also been included for the city centre and ensures a greater level of planning integration across the whole of the Auckland isthmus.

1.2 The work in outline

Due to the complex issues that the city faces, the council has adopted a three-tiered approach to planning for its future.

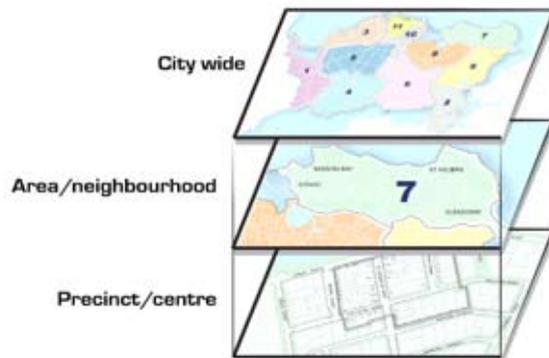


Figure 1: Three tiered approach of the future planning framework

The first two tiers concentrate on what should happen at a citywide level and with respect to particular areas (or neighbourhoods) within the city.

The third tier of planning is at the precinct (or centre) level. During 2009 and 2010 four precinct plans were prepared. The development of these precinct plans completed and demonstrated the full scope of the future planning framework methodology, while also addressing the needs of some key areas identified in the development of this plan. Four precinct plans can be found in chapter 6. Additional precinct plans can be developed in the future.

In summary, the work in completing this plan has encompassed the elements shown below.

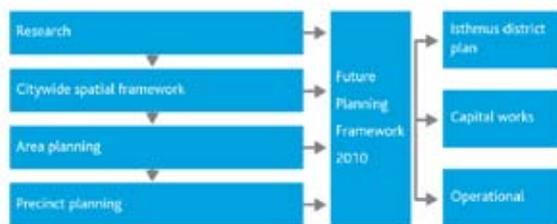


Figure 2: Four elements of the Future planning framework

1.2.1 Research

Alongside the citywide, area and precinct planning, ongoing research is being carried out into matters that affect Auckland city and how best to plan for and regulate these.

The research and analysis contributing to the development of the future planning framework has focused on:

- the historic landscape
- citywide performance analysis
- demographics
- transport
- centres, corridors and employment
- three waters (wastewater, stormwater, fresh water).

You can read more about the research findings and what they mean in terms of planning for the city's future in chapter 2 of this future planning framework.

1.2.2 Citywide planning

The citywide spatial framework expresses spatially and in words the key medium and long-term outcomes for the Auckland isthmus at a citywide scale.

The citywide spatial framework applies to the entire Auckland isthmus. It works within the direction set by the council's vision, strategies and key goals to plan for how the city should grow and change in the long term (up to 2050).

There are three main aspects to the citywide spatial framework:

- research into how Auckland city is performing with respect to the different aspects of community well-being (social, environmental, economic and cultural), including a comparison with similar cities worldwide (summarised in chapter 2)
- a drawing together of Auckland city's community outcomes and the council's vision, high-level strategies, key goals and associated plans and analysing what they mean from a planning point of view, then using this information to define the key outcomes we want to see happen for Auckland city in the medium to long term (we call these outcomes key moves; you can read more about them later in this chapter)
- a spatial framework setting out how all the above elements should work together to shape long-term growth and change in Auckland city in order to create a genuinely sustainable city.

Read more about the citywide spatial framework in chapter 3. Information about the council's vision for Auckland city and the supporting high-level strategies is provided later in this chapter.

1.2.3 Area planning

Eleven area plans have been developed for the Auckland isthmus. Each plan relates to a defined area (or neighbourhood) within the city. These areas may or may not correspond to existing ward boundaries.

The 11 areas are:

- City Centre
- Avondale/Blockhouse Bay
- Eastern Bays
- Eden/Albert
- Maungakiekie
- Mt Roskill/Hillsborough
- Newmarket/Parnell
- Otāhuhu
- Remuera/Meadowbank
- Tāmaki
- Western Bays.

Area plans focus on how land could be used, what activities could occur and what outcomes the council is seeking to achieve for each area in the next 10 to 40 years (up to 2050).

The 11 area plans have been integrated with the citywide spatial framework so that the planned outcomes for each area reflect the key moves that the council is aiming to achieve at a citywide level.

Read more about the area plans in chapter 5.

1.2.4 Precinct Plans

Precinct plans have been prepared for the following locations:

- Onehunga principal centre precinct plan
- Church-Neilson business precinct plan
- Pt Chevalier/Western Springs precinct plan
- Mt Albert precinct plan

There are many other locations that may warrant precinct planning in the future. The precinct plans, shown in chapter 6, allowed the approach to be developed and demonstrated for locations with quite different characteristics.

1.3 The council's vision for Auckland city

The Future Planning Framework gives effect to the council's vision for Auckland city as First City of the Pacific. This vision was developed in consultation with the community in 2000.

The vision sums up what Aucklanders want their city to be: a city that people would choose to live in, do business in or visit if they did not already live here.



Figure 3: Vision for Auckland city

The council's vision is supported by an urban design framework and sustainability policies. Read more about urban design and sustainability in chapters 2 and 4.

The council faces a number of challenges and opportunities in achieving its vision of Auckland city as First City of the Pacific.

These include:

- ensuring economic sustainability
- accommodating rapid population growth
- responding to demand for social and physical infrastructure
- addressing increasing traffic congestion
- preserving the natural environment and resources
- attracting globally competitive businesses
- maintaining residents' quality of life
- managing growth while respecting heritage and sense of place.

The council must use its resources efficiently and effectively while working with other agencies and the community to address these challenges and taking proactive steps towards making its vision a reality.

In order to make it clear for the community where the council will focus its efforts and how its resources will be used, the council has developed six strategies. These strategies outline the council's high-level directions and priorities with regards to six aspects of life in the city.

The strategies are:

- lifestyle choices – encouraging and providing diverse arts, culture, sports and events experiences for Aucklanders
- quality natural environment – protecting and improving the quality of our unique natural landscape and ecology
- strong and healthy communities – providing safe communities, places and events for all Aucklanders to have fun and learn
- transport choices – working together to provide lasting transport choices for all
- quality built environment – managing Auckland city's growth to ensure high-quality urban design and retention of our character and heritage
- economic development – acting as a catalyst and creating the right environment for economic growth to deliver jobs and an improved standard of living.

Read more about these strategies and how they relate to this future planning framework in chapter 3.

1.4 The council's role

The council provides a wide range of infrastructure and services for the city. These combine with what is provided by other public and private sector agencies and businesses to allow the proper functioning of the city. However, no other single agency has the range of functions that the council has, or the degree of responsibility for leadership in city planning. The future planning framework is a plan for the Auckland isthmus that is intended to provide integrated solutions to the key challenges facing the city as it evolves over the next few decades.

The council is committed to managing growth well and making Auckland an internationally competitive city with a great range of choices in areas such as education, employment, housing and leisure. The council wants to help attract new business and events and to make Auckland an attractive place for both existing and future residents and for visitors by looking after its unique natural landscape and other important values. We are particularly committed to protecting the city's heritage and applying quality design principles to the built environment.

All of the agencies, including the council, responsible for building and running the city, will need to work together to ensure its success and the future planning framework provides a basis and focus for this collaboration, both in its formation and its execution.

1.5 Key moves for the Auckland isthmus

A synthesis of existing strategic directions and the work done in the preparation of the future planning framework has resulted in a set of key moves being defined in the future planning framework. These are the common threads that run through the entire document and allow better integration between the three levels of planning.

Integrated planning is also promoted in that the key moves are expressed spatially in the medium term – next ten years – and the long term – out to 2050. Where applicable these will be given effect through a new district plan for the Auckland isthmus.

The key moves are listed below.

Enhance the city centre and waterfront

- integrate business, retail, education, leisure, community, recreation, health and residential uses to make a functional and inviting 'whole'
- promote the city centre as a world-class destination and the gateway to the Hauraki Gulf islands
- reconnect the harbour to the city centre and the city centre to its surrounding suburbs
- create a heart – the city centre as the primary focus of Auckland city's civic, cultural and commercial life.

Develop lively centres

- create a network of high-quality, vibrant, mixed use centres of different size and function
- make centres more accessible
- promote high-amenity, high-quality design that reinforces a sense of place for local communities
- provide services in centres, focusing on those centres and surrounding communities where growth will occur.

House our growing population well

- direct new housing to the right places, focusing growth in or around centres first and along specific corridors and arterials where appropriate
- protect the parts or elements of the city, neighbourhoods and recognised built heritage that are cherished the most
- promote housing choice and high-quality building design
- encourage affordable housing that enhances quality of life.

Be economically competitive

- protect existing business land and provide for employment growth
- facilitate higher density employment around key transport nodes and in corridors
- promote clusters of complementary economic activity and ensure that there is infrastructure in place to support them.

Connect communities

- advocate an easy-to-use public transport system that integrates the rail, bus, ferry, pedestrian and cycle networks
- improve transport connections and choices to the city centre and across the city
- support community interaction by providing a network of accessible community facilities close to centres and transport networks.

Green the city and protect our heritage

- recognise and protect those aspects of our historic landscape that include iconic features, landscapes and groups
- recognise and protect Auckland city's natural and cultural (including built) heritage
- enhance and maintain existing green corridors, and develop new ones
- facilitate access to regional parks and the Hauraki Gulf islands, and enhance the city's beaches
- ensure that key growth areas have enough high-quality public open space for residents, workers and visitors.

The key moves are summarised in the following concept map. A more detailed explanation of how each of the six strategic themes addresses the key moves is provided in chapter 3.

The city centre will be the heart of the city (shown in red) supported by a city centre fringe, principal centres (shown by red circle) and town centres (shown by orange circle). Most future population growth will be directed to existing and future mixed use and apartment living areas (shown in light orange on the map). These areas are found in and around centres and along corridors and are supported by key transport routes and services.

Future employment growth will also go into the city centre and other centres and into business development areas (shown in purple). Business development areas are dedicated to employment uses and protected from other uses that would compete for this space.

This combination of development and transport infrastructure provides a clear future urban form for the city that reflects and respects the historic landscape and natural values of the Auckland isthmus.

Ongoing improvements in transport infrastructure and services will provide a sustainable mix of transport options ensuring the efficient movement of people, goods and services.

Long-term growth and development will not be at the expense of the things we value and our quality of life. Key natural features, including our unique volcanic field and coast, will be protected and over time joined up by green links.

1.6 Key concepts included in the framework

The maps outline the following key concepts relating to land use:

Centres

Centres are places of relatively intense land use which include a diverse mix of uses and perform a multitude of functions. Centres are places where people live, work, shop, socialise and use community services and facilities. A classification of centres has been developed to help in the understanding and future role of centres in the overall centre network. Types of centres include the international city centre (referred to in earlier plans as the CBD), principal centres, town centres, local centres and neighbourhood shops. These are explained in more detail in chapter 4.

City centre fringe

The city centre fringe includes those areas immediately surrounding the city centre that relate closely with the city centre due to proximity. This is a complex environment, containing a number of well-established centres, such as Newmarket, and comprises a mix of residential, retail and commercial activity.

Descriptions of the built form outcomes relating to these key concepts are explained in more detail in chapter 4.

Business development areas

These are employment areas that can support more jobs, a mix of commercial and industrial activities and that have good accessibility. They are areas in which opportunities for economic growth and additional jobs are promoted.

Business nodes

Business nodes are located in business development areas. They include office or administrative outcomes focused around rapid transit stops and where possible near to town centres. They support intensive employment uses but do not provide retail, social and community services other than in support of local business needs.

Corridors

Corridors display linear connectivity of centres, business and/or residential development, typically of higher densities, supported by accessibility to key transport infrastructure. Types of corridors identified include business corridors and mixed use (enterprise) corridors of which there are high- and medium-intensity sub-categories.

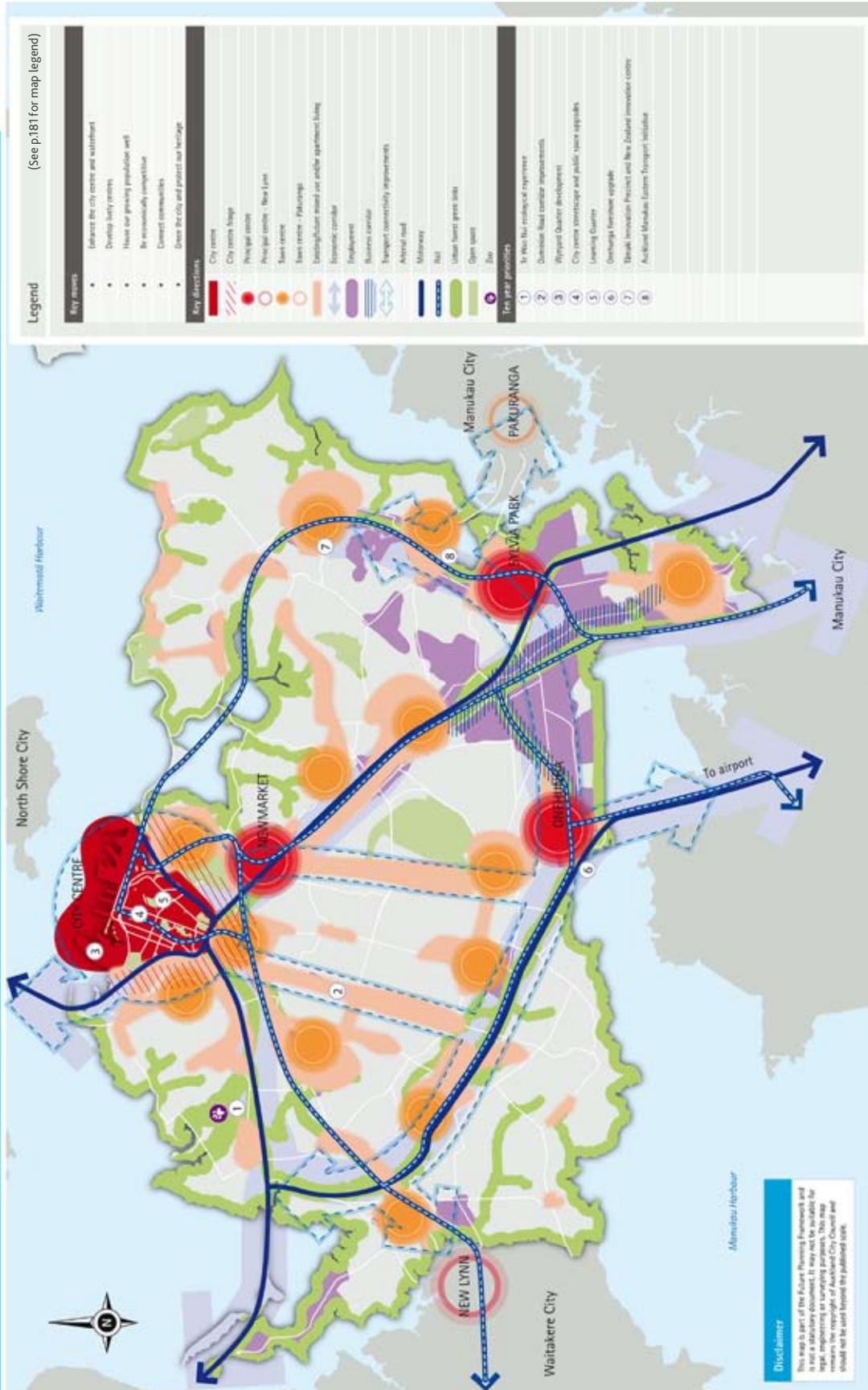


Figure 4: Spatial framework 2050 – concept map (See 7.5 Appendix E for map legends (p.181))