



Environment, Energy, and Resilience

Te Komiti Rauhi Taiao

Thursday, 22 May 2025
Tāite, 22 Haratua 2024

Totara Room, Whakatāne District Council
14 Commerce Street, Whakatāne
Commencing at 9:00 am



Chief Executive: Steven Perdia | Publication Date: 16 May 2025

whakatane.govt.nz



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A Membership - *Mematanga***A Membership - *Mematanga***

Mayor Dr Victor Luca - Chairperson
Councillor Nándor Tánczos - Deputy Chairperson
Deputy Mayor Lesley Immink
Councillor Toni Boynton
Councillor Gavin Dennis
Councillor Andrew Iles
Councillor Wilson James
Councillor Julie Jukes
Councillor Tu O'Brien
Councillor John Pullar
Councillor Ngapera Rangiaho

B Delegations to the Environment, Energy and Resilience Committee - *Tuku Mahi ki te Komiti*

1. To oversee development of strategies and plans that reflect and implement the Council's vision.
2. To oversee the development of strategies, plans and programmes that protect and restore the District's natural environment, resources, and ecology.
3. To monitor and advise on the strategy, policies and direction on the impact of climate change on the District.
4. To improve community resilience to environmental threats.

Specific functions and delegations:

Develop the Long-term Plan and Annual Plan and determine the form and extent of public consultation methods to be employed (Note1: the Council cannot delegate to a Committee the adoption of the Long-term Plan and Annual Plan, Note2: the Council retains for itself the strategic direction setting responsibility of the Long-term Plan process).

- a. Develop, and monitor implementation of, Council's Climate Change Strategy and programme.
- b. Monitor the development of associated Central Government Reform programmes.
- c. Develop and review associated bylaws (Note: only Council has the power to make a bylaw).
- d. Develop, review and approve associated strategies, policies and plans (Note: only Council has the power to adopt policies associated with the Long-term Plan).
- e. Develop a proposed plan or a change to a district plan under the Resource Management Act 1991.
- f. Climate change science, impact and strategy overview - mitigation, adaptation and resilience.
- g. Foster community environmental and climate change understanding.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Meeting Notices - <i>Ngā Pānui o te hui</i>	6
2	Apologies - <i>Te hunga kāore i tae</i>	6
3	Acknowledgements / Tributes - <i>Ngā Mihimihi</i>	6
4	Conflicts of Interest - <i>Ngākau kōnatunatu</i>	7
5	Public Participation- <i>Wānanga Tūmatanui</i>	8
5.1	Public Forum - <i>Wānanga Tūmatanui</i>	8
5.2	Deputations - <i>Nga Whakapuaki Whaitake</i>	8
6	Confirmation of Minutes - <i>Te whakaaetanga o ngā meneti o te hui</i>	8
7	Reports - <i>Ngā Pūrongo</i>	9
7.1	Adoption of the Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan	9
7.1.1	Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report	19
7.1.2	Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan	71
7.1.3	Appendix C - Our Places - Short Story	224
8	Resolution to Exclude the Public	253
1	Public Excluded Business	6
1.1	Public Excluded Minutes EER Committee meeting 13 February 2025	6

1 Meeting Notices - *Ngā Pānui o te hui***1 Meeting Notices - *Ngā Pānui o te hui*****1. Live Streaming**

The Whakatāne District Council livestreams Council and Standing Committee meetings held in Tōtara Room, within the Council building. The webcast will live stream directly to Council's YouTube channel in real time. The purpose of streaming meetings live is to encourage transparency of Council meetings.

By remaining in the public gallery, it is understood your consent has been given if your presence is inadvertently broadcast.

Please be aware the microphones in Totara Room are sensitive to noise, so please remain quiet throughout the meeting unless asked to speak.

2. Health and Safety

In case of an emergency, please follow the building wardens or make your way to the nearest exit. The meeting point is located at Peace Park on Boon Street.

Bathroom facilities are located opposite the Chambers Foyer entrance (the entrance off Margaret Mahy Court).

3. Other**2 Apologies - *Te hunga kāore i tae***

No apologies have been received at the time of compiling the agenda.

3 Acknowledgements / Tributes - *Ngā Mihimihi*

An opportunity for members to recognise achievements, to notify of events, or to pay tribute to an occasion of importance.

4 Conflicts of Interest - *Ngākau kōnatunatu***4 Conflicts of Interest - *Ngākau kōnatunatu***

Members are reminded of the need to stand aside from decision making when a conflict arises between their role as an elected member and any private or other external interests they might have. Elected Members are also reminded to update their register of interests when changes occur.

The [register of interest](#) can be viewed on the Council website.

1. Financial Conflict

- Members present must declare any direct or indirect financial interest that they hold in any matter being discussed at the meeting, other than an interest that they hold in common with the public.
- Members cannot take part in the discussion, nor can they vote on any matter in which they have a direct or indirect financial interest, unless with an approved exception.
- Members with a financial interest should physically withdraw themselves from the table. If the meeting is public excluded, members should leave the room.

2. Non-Financial Conflict

- If a member considers that they have a non-financial conflict of interest in a matter they must not take part in the discussions about that matter or any subsequent vote.
- Members with a non-financial interest must leave the table when the matter is considered but are not required to leave the room.

5 Public Participation- *Wānanga Tūmatanui***5 Public Participation- *Wānanga Tūmatanui*****5.1 Public Forum - *Wānanga Tūmatanui***

The Committee has set aside 30 minutes for members of the public to speak in the public forum at the commencement of each meeting. Each speaker during the forum may speak for five minutes. Permission of the Chairperson is required for any person wishing to speak during the public forum.

With the permission of the Chairperson, Elected members may ask questions of speakers. Questions are to be confined to obtaining information or clarification on matters raised by a speaker.

5.2 Deputations - *Nga Whakapuaki Whaitake*

A deputation enables a person, group or organisation to make a presentation to Committee on a matter or matters covered by their terms of reference. Deputations should be approved by the Chairperson, or an official with delegated authority, five working days before the meeting. Deputations may be heard at the commencement of the meeting or at the time that the relevant agenda item is being considered. No more than two speakers can speak on behalf of an organisation's deputation. Speakers can speak for up to 5 minutes, or with the permission of the Chairperson, a longer timeframe may be allocated.

With the permission of the Chairperson, Elected members may ask questions of speakers. Questions are to be confined to obtaining information or clarification on matters raised by the deputation.

6 Confirmation of Minutes - *Te whakaaetanga o ngā meneti o te hui*

The minutes from the Environment, Energy and Resilience Committee meeting held on Thursday, 13 February 2025 can be viewed via the Council website.

Click on the link below in order to view the 'unconfirmed minutes'.

- [Unconfirmed minutes Environment, Energy and Resilience meeting - 13 February 2025](#)

7 Reports - Ngā Pūrongo**7 Reports - Ngā Pūrongo****7.1 Adoption of the Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan**

To: **Environment, Energy, and Resilience Committee**

Date: **Thursday, 22 May 2025**

Author: **N Woodley / Manager Policy, Planning and Consents Compliance**
B Patchett / Consultant

Authoriser: **L Woolsey / GM Strategy and Growth**
D Bewley / GM Planning, Regulatory and Infrastructure

Reference: **A2889767**

1. Reason for the report - *Te Take mō tēnei rīpoata*

The purpose of this report is to seek the Environment, Energy and Resilience Committee's endorsement of the completed Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan.

2. Recommendations - *Tohutohu akiaki*

1. THAT the Environment, Energy and Resilience Committee **receive** the Adoption of the Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan report; and
2. THAT the Environment, Energy and Resilience Committee **endorse** the Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan; and
3. THAT the Environment, Energy and Resilience Committee **recommend** that the Whakatāne District Council **adopt** the Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan; and
4. THAT the Environment, Energy and Resilience Committee **approve** the Eastern Bay Spatial Plan Project Governance Group ('PGG') being repurposed to oversee future reviews and implementation of the Eastern Bay Spatial Plan and Sub-Regional Economic Development Strategy, and that this group be set up following local government elections in 2025; and
5. THAT the Environment, Energy and Resilience Committee **note** that the Independent Chair of PGG, being Vaughan Payne (in consultation with the Mayors and Chair) will forward a final copy of the adopted spatial plan to the Ministers of Transport, Housing and Urban Development, Regional Development, Local Government and Education and offer a briefing/tour the next time they are in the region; and
6. THAT the Environment, Energy and Resilience Committee **note** that before being received by Council for adoption, minor changes will be made to the spatial plan document to improve communication and readability, provide Te Reo translation of headlines and corrections to spelling, and graphic design of the total document.
7. THAT the Environment, Energy and Resilience Committee **note** that:
 - i. The spatial plan sets out a long-term framework for collaborative implementation leading to positive changes for the Eastern Bay; and

7.1 Adoption of the Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

- ii. Ongoing collaborative planning and implementation will be required to see these changes happen.
 - iii. The spatial plan aligns with Iwi aspirations communicated to the project and engagement feedback received from the community.
 - iv. The spatial plan, implementation plan, and related investment decisions will need to adapt to changes and regular monitoring of indicators such as population and economic changes, decisions on infrastructure and planning, building consents approved, and capacity for residential development will enable this to happen; and
8. THAT the Environment, Energy and Resilience Committee **note** that growth planning, engagement and implementation in Whakatāne District is now transitioning from a sub-regional focus to a local focus, with the Whakatāne Local Growth Strategy being developed and area-specific development planning commencing.

3. Background - *He tirohanga whakamuri*

Since late 2022, Local Authorities and Iwi Authorities in the Eastern Bay of Plenty have been working collaboratively with Government agencies to develop a spatial plan for the region. The process used to develop the plan has sought to capture and reflect partners' goals and aspirations for the rohe.

Spatial plans are about the places communities live in and how they want them to grow and change over time, so that future generations and the environment can continue to thrive. A spatial plan provides a road map for the future of spaces and places, and an agreed evidence base and direction to align other strategies, planning processes and investment decisions, towards common outcomes.

The plan will be used to inform Council long-term plan processes, future district plan reviews, influence Government infrastructure investment decisions and Regional Deals, and support the aspirations of Iwi, hapū, and communities.

A Spatial Plan is needed for the Eastern Bay, so that it can make room for 5,500 more homes (and house up to 11,000 more people), provide more business land and support job growth, while also enabling primary industries to grow, enhancing the natural environment, and living with a range of natural and climate change hazards.

3.1. Purpose and Objectives of the Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan project

In 2023, formal project structures were agreed for the delivery of the Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan. These included a confirmed project scope and purpose, project plan and budget, project governance, a joint project team resourced from partner Councils and regular progress reporting to the Environment, Energy and Resilience Committee.

The confirmed purpose of the project was to “determine a joint Spatial Plan, focused on delivering wellbeing outcomes through planning appropriately for priority growth pressures on Whakatāne, Kawerau and Ōpōtiki Districts, including the Rangitāiki Plains from Whakatāne/Ōhope urban areas to Kawerau and Ōpōtiki urban environment and east of Ōpōtiki town with a lens to the wider district areas”.

The project's objectives were to develop a spatial plan that:

- Enables well planned growth in the context of a changing climate and evolving economy.

7.1 Adoption of the Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

- Defines well-functioning urban environments that meet the changing needs of our communities, including well planned and connected growth.
- Delivers housing choices (including Papakāinga developments, mixed-use spaces and eco villages) and levers to support housing affordability across the housing continuum.
- Guides the development of a future urban growth to support integrated planning, Māori land tenure provisions, investment, and efficient delivery of infrastructure, necessary to support our communities.
- Improves community social and cultural well-being.
- Protects and enhances our natural environment.
- Strengthens and gives effect to active cooperation between Iwi, local and central government.

In addition to a range of technical work (to understand the sub-region's growth-related constraints, opportunities, risks and issues), partnership with Iwi, significant engagement with Government agencies, and community consultation have all been important in the development of the Spatial Plan.

3.2. Partnership with Iwi

From inception of the project, working in genuine partnership with Iwi was identified as critical, at all stages of the spatial planning process. This reflected the Councils' ongoing commitments to partner with Iwi and recognised that Māori make up a large percentage of the sub-region's population, are amongst the most significant landowners across the rohe, are major investment partners, and have important perspectives relating to a long-term vision for the way the Eastern Bay grows and changes. It has been particularly critical to have Iwi at the decision-making table, as part of the Project Governance Group.

The Whakatāne Iwi Policy Hub has also been providing additional support for spatial planning to Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Manawa, Ngāti Whare and Ngāti Rangitihi Iwi. This has been positive for the development of the Spatial Plan, supporting direct Iwi input and opportunities to shape content. During the public consultation phase formal submissions were also received from Ngāti Manawa, Ngāti Whare and Ngāti Rangitihi along with hapū, Ngāi Taiwhakaea, Ngāti Hikakino, Ngāi Te Rangihouhiri II and Ngāi Tamahaua.

The process to develop the Spatial Plan provided an opportunity to understand Iwi aspirations and strategies and to make provision for them within the plan. Recognising this, the project has sought to weave the aspirations of Iwi into the project and ensure decision-making forums included Iwi representation.

3.3. Working with Government Agencies

The spatial plan has implications for Government agencies that deliver transport, housing and urban development, regional development and critical services (such as health and education) that will be needed to meet the expected growth and change across the Eastern Bay of Plenty and deliver on partner aspirations.

To ensure that the project and funding implications arising from the spatial plan can be implemented, the Spatial Plan has been developed collaboratively with Government agencies including NZTA, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, Kāinga Ora, the Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Health.

7.1 Adoption of the Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)**3.4. Community and stakeholder engagement**

The Spatial Plan will also influence decisions that impact a wide range of communities across the sub-region, in the short term to long term. This includes the longer-term settlement pattern for the region (the location of new housing and urban development), and some of the important “key moves” needed to enable growth and change.

Communities and stakeholders have differing needs and aspirations, and their feedback has been sought as the Spatial Plan has been developed. Formal public consultation took place from 14 October 2024 through to 17 November 2024, providing an opportunity to hear directly from communities about their thoughts and aspirations for the future of the Eastern Bay.

Over 550 points of feedback were received, including 60 written submissions, (32 hard copy/email and 28 online), 125 comments through an online engagement tool, and 300 attendees at in person events. Approximately 30% of comments were supportive of the changes outlined in the consultation document, 35% provided suggestions for improvements, 25% expressed concerns about various aspects of the project and 10% were opposed to the proposed changes.

Key themes from the public consultation included:

- Strong desire for well maintained and efficient infrastructure that can support communities' needs and future development.
- Strong desire for balanced and thoughtful development that enhances the area's liveability and economic prospects.
- Community commitment to preserving its way of life while supporting thoughtful and sustainable development.
- The importance of integrating environmental considerations into all aspects of urban planning to ensure a sustainable and resilient community.
- Need for balanced economic development that includes job creation, support for local businesses and consideration of environmental and social factors.

Key reasons for opposing proposed changes related to potential disruption of small-town character, concerns about infrastructure, costs to ratepayers, environmental concerns, and lack of support for existing residents that needs addressing before planning for new growth.

Feedback from Iwi/hapū, Government agencies, stakeholders and communities has been carefully considered and is reflected in the final growth scenario, key moves and implementation actions contained in the Spatial Plan.

The full Engagement Summary Report can be found in Appendix A.

4. Discussion – Kōrerorero

To adopt the Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan is a significant milestone within a work programme that includes a number of connected collaborative projects, such as the sub-regional Economic Development Strategy. The Spatial Plan provides a regionally agreed evidence base, goals, high-level future growth scenario, key moves and implementation priorities for shaping and enabling growth and change in the Eastern Bay over the next 30 years.

7.1 Adoption of the Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan provides a framework to help communities grow in a sustainable way. It focuses on improving amenities, protecting the environment, offering better transport options, and providing housing that meets the needs of the rohe's diverse and growing population. The plan emphasises the importance of safeguarding the natural environment and significant cultural sites. The plan recognises the need for resilient communities, including managing climate change risks and building strong partnerships with Iwi and hapū.

By encouraging investment and economic development, the spatial plan aims to support the local economy. Overall, the spatial plan offers a long-term vision for coordinated planning and decision-making across the Eastern Bay.

The critical elements of the Spatial Plan are summarised in the following sections, with the full Spatial Plan and short story (for public storytelling about the Plan) are attached to this report as Appendices B and C.

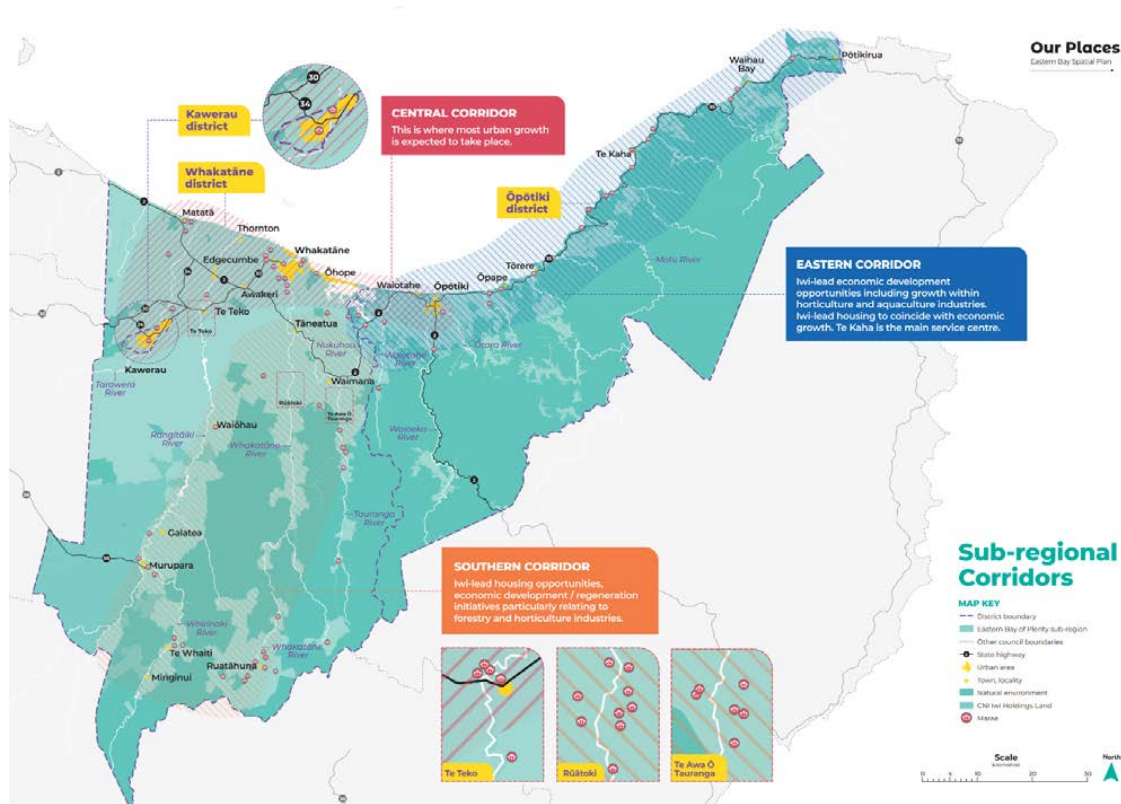
4.1. Goals of the Spatial Plan

To provide high-level direction, and a clear outcome focus for the Spatial Plan, three overarching Goals were defined by the Project Governance Group. These synthesise and align with the Long-Term Plan visions and community outcomes across the sub-region, prior engagements and consultations, and considering Iwi values and aspirations.

**4.2. Development corridors and future growth locations**

At its heart, the Spatial Plan describes how new housing, business and urban development could be accommodated across the sub-region, based on the projected population and employment requirements, technical assessment of different locations, and feedback through engagement.

The plan segments the Eastern Bay into three corridors with different characteristics. Each corridor facilitates movement, economic activity, and sustainable growth, ensuring both urban and rural areas thrive. For each corridor priority growth areas are identified where additional planning and investments will be needed to enable desired growth and change.

7.1 Adoption of the Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

- Urban Central Corridor:** including the townships of Kawerau, Whakatāne and Ōpōtiki and extending along the coast to Matatā capturing main rail routes to the Port of Tauranga and connection to State Highway 2. It is expected to see the most development activity.

As the area with the largest projected urban growth, the Central Urban Corridor also contains the large-scale priority growth areas that are expected to accommodate most new housing and urban development. Those areas are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Priority growth areas in the central corridor

Area	Timing	Notes
Awakeri	Short-Medium term	Develop into an urban township of more than 2,000 dwelling units
Whenua Māori West of Coastlands	Medium term	Explore opportunities based on Land Trust and Hapu interests, with substantial potential for development of 190ha
Matatā	Medium-Long term (Infill) Long term (Expansion)	There is existing zoned capacity requiring centralised wastewater treatment to be realised, and a long-term opportunity to expand eastward
Putuaki (Industrial Growth Area)	Ongoing	Continued ongoing development
Hukutaia	Ongoing	Develop into an urban community of 2,000 dwellings
Whakatāne (Kopeopeo infill)	Ongoing	Ongoing infill of Whakatāne township in locations safe from natural hazards

Note: Long term (10-30 years), Medium term (3-10 years), Short term (0-3 years)

- Rural Southern Corridor:** including the large southern extent of the Whakatāne district including the villages of Tāneatua, Waiōhau, Galatea, Waimana, Murupara, Minginui and Ruatāhuna with linkage to Rotorua from State Highway 38. This corridor emphasizes Iwi-led housing and development opportunities to support rural communities, forestry and horticulture industries.

7.1 Adoption of the Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

The three main Iwi in this Corridor have specific aspirations relating to economic development, housing and self-sufficiency that are reflected in the Spatial Plan.

3. **Coastal Eastern Corridor:** including the coastal strip extending east from Ōpōtiki township to Pōtikirua. The Coastal Eastern Corridor has a focus on Iwi-led housing and economic initiatives.

4.3. Key Moves and Implementation Priorities

While the three overarching Goals focus on the long-term outcomes for the Eastern Bay, the Spatial Plan also contains a set of Key Moves that explain what needs to be done to achieve the goals. Each Key Move also has implementation priorities.

The Spatial Plan's nine Key Moves are:

1. Collaboratively shape the future - We will work together, with stakeholders, and the community to deliver the spatial plan.
2. Nurture strong and effective Iwi and Hapū partnerships - Involve Iwi and Hapū in decisions about their rohe and support achieving housing and wider aspirations.
3. Build climate resilient communities - Ensure vulnerable communities and new growth areas are safe and resilient to natural hazard risk and the long-term effects of climate change.
4. A prosperous, high productivity sub-region - Create a resilient and competitive economic environment through strategic economic development, infrastructure enhancement, and market engagement.
5. Enough housing and business land to meet demand - Ensure zoned, serviceable, and connected land to enable more housing and business land at the locations defined in this plan.
6. Great places for people to live for generations - Develop and improve community places and facilities to enhance quality of life as communities change over time.
7. Connect people with opportunities, and freight with markets - A well-functioning Transport system that enables future growth, provides access to social, recreational, housing and economic opportunities.
8. Improve biodiversity and ecosystem health - Use integrated environmental management practices to enable a full range of ecosystems to be restored to a healthy functioning state.
9. Clear and consistent sub-regional funding priorities - Use available and new funding methods to facilitate the key moves and implementation priorities.

Individual districts, and sub-regional partners will now take the Spatial Plan forward, and move to local planning, engagement and implementation activities. For Whakatāne District Council this involves preparing a Local Growth Strategy, that will:

- Reflect the future growth scenario, priority growth areas, Key Moves and implementation priorities of the Spatial Plan,
- Focus on **how** the desired growth and change can be enabled, **when** it should occur, and **who** the Council should partner with to achieve this, and
- Be undertaken concurrently with area-specific development planning including structure planning for short term growth areas.

7.1 Adoption of the Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)**5. Options Analysis - *Ngā Kōwhiringa*****5.1. Option 1 - Endorse the Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan for adoption by Council – Recommended option**

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a platform for sub-regional collaboration to jointly manage growth and change through partnership. Enables each district to move forward with local growth planning, engagement and implementation – including the Local Growth Strategy, District Plan review, Long-term Plan, priority growth area planning and other strategic planning. Supports future sub-regional collaboration with partners on growth and change planning, investment and partnerships. Supports joint advocacy for regional development and infrastructure investment to Government agencies and Ministers. Supports attraction of new private sector investment in businesses, housing and urban development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No disadvantages have been identified.

5.2. Option 2 DO NOT endorse the Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan for adoption by Council

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No advantages have been identified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would hamper local growth planning, engagement and implementation – including the Local Growth Strategy, District Plan review, Long-term Plan, priority growth area planning and other strategic planning. Impedes future sub-regional collaboration with partners on growth and change planning, investment and partnerships. Prevents joint advocacy for regional development and infrastructure investment to Government agencies and Ministers.

7.1 Adoption of the Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Advantages	Disadvantages
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hampers attraction of new private sector investment in businesses, housing and urban development. • Leads to weaker partnerships outcomes.

6. Significance and Engagement Assessment - Aromatawai Pāhekoheko**6.1. Assessment of Significance**

The decisions and matters of this specific report are assessed to be of low significance in accordance with the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy, because public consultation has been undertaken in the preparation of the Spatial Plan, including with Iwi and hapū.

6.2. Engagement and Community Views

Stakeholder engagement and public consultation has been undertaken in the preparation of the Spatial Plan, including with Iwi and hapū. No future engagement is anticipated until such time as the Spatial Plan is reviewed and updated at a future point in time. Local engagement on growth and change will continue as part of the Local Growth Strategy.

7. Considerations - *Whai Whakaaro***7.1. Strategic Alignment**

No inconsistencies with any of the Council's policies or plans have been identified in relation to this report.

7.2. Legal

There are no legal implications.

7.3. Financial/Budget Considerations

There are no significant budget considerations associated with the recommendations of this report, however there will be some modest costs associated with the PGG being repurposed and maintained ongoing to oversee future reviews and implementation of the Eastern Bay Spatial Plan and Sub-Regional Economic Development Strategy.

7.4. Climate Change Assessment

Consideration of climate change and its impacts have been a critical technical and policy input to the development of the Spatial Plan and are reflected in the recommended future growth scenario/settlement pattern, priority growth areas, Key Moves and implementation priorities.

7.5. Risks

There are a number of implementation risks associated with the Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan.

7.1 Adoption of the Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Risk	Description and/or Mitigation
Partnerships - There is a risk that partnerships needed to deliver sub-regional outcomes, and the key moves do not happen because the plan is not implemented.	Establish sub-regional governance group for spatial plan, economic development strategy and other broad scale initiatives (e.g., regional deals, responding to Government policy changes) with terms of reference delegating authority to work on behalf of Councils and other partners, appropriately resourced. Note that the existing Project Governance Group (PGG) could be repurposed for this function.
Commercial Feasibility There is a risk that development areas are not commercially viable due to infrastructure costs, and housing or business land does not get developed, and housing and economic development outcomes are curtailed.	Encourage viability by derisking development in priority areas with enabling planning frameworks, providing structure plans that set out urban form and infrastructure requirements, ensuring natural hazard risk information is available and mitigations are well understood, ensuring enabling infrastructure projects are outlined in Long Term Plans and other funding planning to enable development to proceed in a timely manner.
Infrastructure Funding and Affordability -There is a risk that infrastructure costs are unaffordable for Councils, and priority development areas or related placemaking and economic development activities cannot be delivered.	Employ investment thresholds, explore the use of private investments into public projects, ensure required infrastructure projects are in the Long Term Plans and infrastructure strategies to enable appropriate development contributions. Prioritise/sequence investment into development locations.
Population Growth - Risk that population may be lower or higher than selected most likely population scenario, which could affect commercial viability for development and funding sources.	Monitor population change and adapt investment timing.
Changes in Government - Policy Changes in national policy directions can influence the viability of delivering the spatial plan due to funding criteria shifts or policy requirements changing.	With each change in government review Spatial Plan to determine if priorities need to change to better align to the Governments priorities of the day.
Climate Change & Natural Hazards - Natural hazard risks exist and will become worse through climate change; this affects existing communities.	Undertake comprehensive natural hazard risk assessments for at risk locations to consider risk management options. For the priority growth areas (Awakeri, Hukutaia and Matatā) undertake integrated stormwater planning at the master planning stage to inform structure planning and the objectives of the relevant river schemes.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report**8. Next Steps – E whai ake nei**

If the recommendation is followed and the Spatial Plan is adopted by the Whakatāne District Council, each partner to the Spatial Plan will lead the relevant actions in the implementation plan and/or associated activities.

Before the spatial plan is received by Council for adoption, minor changes will be made to the spatial plan document to improve communication and readability, provide Te Reo translation of headlines and corrections to spelling, and graphic design of the total document.

Attached to this Report:

- Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report.
- Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan.
- Appendix C - Our Places - Short Story.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report

Our Places

Eastern Bay Spatial Plan

Engagement summary report

A summary of the feedback received from community engagement

Final version – May 2025

Note: a graphic designed
cover page to be added to
the report before
finalisation



7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)

Contents

Summary	1
About this report.....	1
Engagement outcomes and next steps	1
What did we hear?	1
How will the plan respond?	2
Infrastructure.....	2
Housing.....	2
Community and lifestyle	2
Environment	3
Economic opportunities	3
Feedback on the three engagement scenarios.....	3
1 Introduction	4
1.1 Report purpose	4
1.2 Content	4
1.3 Next steps.....	5
2 Engagement overview.....	6
2.1 Engagement metrics in summary	6
3 Levels of support.....	9
4 Themes from feedback	11
4.1 Infrastructure theme.....	12
4.2 Housing theme.....	17
4.3 Community and lifestyle theme	21
4.4 Environmental theme	24
4.5 Economic opportunities theme	26
5 Feedback about scenarios	32
6 Substantive topics.....	39
Appendix 1: Draft new scenario.....	42

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)

Summary

The *Our Places – Eastern Bay Spatial Plan* aims to guide sustainable growth and development across the region over the next 30 plus years. Once completed, this plan will set out where local communities want to head in the future and provide a roadmap, or spatial plan, for how to get there. It's about looking after our taonga, both people and places, now and into the future.

About this report

This report summarises feedback from public engagement, held from 14 October to 17 November 2024. It includes matters raised in all submissions received up until the end of 2024 and responses to the engagement feedback. The responses to feedback reflect guidance received from the Project Governance Group after hearing from submitters.

Engagement outcomes and next steps

The engagement period saw feedback being received from people across the sub-region. It involved a mix of workshops, drop-in sessions, online platforms, and written submissions, resulting in over 550 points of feedback. Participation included 69 written submissions (41 hard copy/email and 28 online), 125 comments through an online engagement tool, social media feedback, and over 300 attendees at in-person events. The consultation also achieved significant digital reach, with 71,000 social media impressions and 650,000 digital ad views. Submitters also had the opportunity to present to the Project Governance Group on 2 December 2024.

The feedback received provides valuable insights into community priorities and will help shape a robust, future-focused spatial plan for the eastern bay.

What did we hear?

Participants highlighted the need for upgrades to roads, bridges, water, and wastewater systems, alongside calls for climate-resilient infrastructure. Housing feedback focused on affordable housing, and balanced growth. Enabling the development of Māori land was also raised. There was a strong desire to preserve the small-town feel throughout the sub-region, enhance public amenities, and improve recreational facilities. Environmental concerns emphasised protecting natural areas and adopting sustainable development practices, while economic feedback stressed job creation, support for local businesses, commercial expansion and ensuring balanced growth.

There were three engagement scenarios:

- Scenario 1, which focused on resilient greenfield areas, received the broadest support, due to its emphasis on structured growth and infrastructure improvements. Concerns were raised about the degree of change considered in Matatā in Scenario 1, balanced with the recognition of a need for housing options.
- Scenario 2, which was promoting un-serviced rural residential development, elicited mixed reactions, with concerns over inadequate infrastructure but desire for more rural lifestyle housing options being enabled.
- Scenario 3, which suggested growth outside the sub-region, was not favourably received because it would not lead to more local housing options. However, there was also some limited support because it would not change the character of existing communities.

Overall, there was broad support for developing a spatial plan, from specific comments: 30% of feedback was supportive, 35% offered constructive suggestions, 25% raised concerns, and 10% opposed certain aspects of the proposals.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**How will the plan respond?**

This summary offers a snapshot of some of the themes of feedback and how the spatial plan will address these. Fuller discussion and responses are illustrated throughout the report.

Infrastructure

What we heard:	Participants highlighted the need for upgrades to roads, bridges, water, and wastewater systems, alongside calls for climate-resilient infrastructure.
What we will do:	Identify pre-requisite infrastructure to address existing issues and future development and highlight where further investigations and strategic approaches to infrastructure are needed. Natural hazard risk assessments and mitigation plans will be required in some locations. Refer to Section 4.1 for further information.

Housing

What we heard:	Feedback focused on the need for housing to meet community needs, affordability, sustainable building practices, natural hazard and climate resilience, and to facilitate the development of Māori land.
What we will do:	Set out direction for structure plans or masterplans to consider sustainable design outcomes. Discourage growth in at risk locations until natural hazard risk mitigation plans are established. Identify where there are iwi/hapu aspirations for their land and what would help achieve these. Refer to Section 4.2 and Section 6 for further information.

Community and lifestyle

What we heard:	There was a strong desire to preserve the small-town feel, enhance public amenities, and improve recreational facilities.
What we will do:	Identify placemaking and community revitalisation projects that recognise the value of community character and importance of community wellbeing. Develop design principles that will guide preparation of structure plans in relation to provision of community infrastructure and recreational facilities. Refer to Section 4.3 for further information.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**Environment**

What we heard:	Participants emphasised protecting natural areas and culturally significant areas and protecting highly productive soils and sustainable water use practices.
What we will do:	<p>Avoid urban development of natural areas and culturally significant sites.</p> <p>Include design principles that will guide preparation of structure plans in relation to nature-based solutions and compliance with environmental regulations.</p> <p>Protect highly productive land and only identify future urban development on that land where necessary.</p> <p>Refer to Section 4.4 for further information.</p>

Economic opportunities

What we heard:	Feedback stressed job creation, support for local businesses, and ensuring balanced growth. New areas for commercial and industrial land expansion were also identified by participants.
What we will do:	<p>Specify housing growth areas so new workers have a choice of housing when moving to the sub-region.</p> <p>An economic development strategy has been developed in parallel with the spatial plan. The spatial plan will identify industrial and commercial land in conjunction with the development focus areas from the economic development strategy.</p> <p>Refer to Section 4.5 for further information.</p>

Feedback on the three engagement scenarios

What we heard:	<p>Scenario 1: Resilient greenfield areas. Concerns were raised about the degree of change considered in Matatā in Scenario 1, balanced with recognition of a need for housing options.</p> <p>Scenario 2: Unserved rural residential focus. Concerns over inadequate infrastructure but desire for more rural lifestyle housing options being enabled.</p> <p>Scenario 3: Growth outside the sub-region. Was not favourably received because it would not lead to more local housing options. However, there was also some limited support because it would not change the character of existing communities.</p>
What we will do:	<p>Considering feedback provided on the engagement scenarios, a new scenario has been developed in response to the feedback and consideration of additional areas of land which were identified by submitters. An interim draft is included at Appendix 1. It may change as it is further defined and included into the spatial plan.</p> <p>The new scenario reflects consultation feedback for how different areas may or may not grow. Communities are highly engaged on the future of their local places, future planning for changes at local places will involve further engagements.</p> <p>Refer to Section 5 and Appendix 1 – New Scenario for further information.</p>

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**1 Introduction**

Once completed, "Our Places – Eastern Bay Spatial Plan" will set out where local communities want to head and provide a roadmap, or spatial plan, for how to get there. It's about looking after our taonga, both people and places, now and into the future.

A spatial plan identifies locations for future development to help direct investment and infrastructure planning. It is not a statutory plan, but does inform district plans, transport strategies, asset management (infrastructure) plans and funding strategies. It also identifies areas where development is not appropriate due to natural hazard or climate risks, or where there are significant natural and cultural areas.

A spatial plan does not contain a detailed plan for new growth areas. This is done at a 'structure plan' level when a growth area is to be developed. However, a spatial plan can include direction for structure plans and highlighting matters to be addressed, such as water sensitive stormwater management.

The consultation phase for the project has concluded. From October 14, 2024 to November 17, 2024 when we asked communities across the Eastern Bay to tell us about: How can the region grow and develop, while making sure it remains a great place to live, work, play and visit?

There were two main questions we asked:

- 1 What are your thoughts about where to plan for 5,500 new houses and land for businesses by 2055?
- 2 What is most important that you want us to think about and plan for, to support your community and other communities across the eastern bay?

The project team are very grateful to the people and organisations that volunteered their time and ideas to contribute to this important project.

1.1 Report purpose

This report summarises the feedback received from the community engagement. This report was prepared by the Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan Technical Working Group. A draft version of the report provided an information update in advance of the Project Governance Group (PGG) receiving presentations on 2 December 2024 from members of the community on their submissions to the project. It also informs updates to the various councils participating in the project, with respect to the type and scale of feedback received and the responses to engagement. This final version of the report includes responses to the engagement feedback that reflects direction from the PGG after the 2 December 2024 meeting.

1.2 Content

The report content includes the following sections:

Engagement overview describes the methods and metrics employed in the consultation period. The result has been a broad reaching engagement with substantial amounts of information from participants to inform the drafting of the spatial plan. The project has recorded a total of 550 individual points of feedback.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)

Levels of support is a barometer for the tone of comments received. Approximately 30% of the comments are supportive, 35% of the comments provide suggestions for improvements, 25% of the comments express concern and 10% of the comments are opposed to the proposed changes or certain aspects of the proposals.

Themes from feedback describes the main themes emerging from the consultation feedback. Top-level themes address infrastructure, housing, community and lifestyle, environment, and economic opportunities.

Feedback about scenarios outlines what was supported or not about the three possible future scenarios that were included in the consultation materials, being:

- Scenario 1: Resilient greenfield areas
- Scenario 2: Unserved rural residential focus
- Scenario 3: Growth outside the sub-region

Substantive topics are matters highlighted by submitters that the project will need to consider in depth as the spatial plan is developed. Topics encompass the settlement pattern (where and what types of development), resiliency of critical infrastructure and climate resilience.

1.3 Next steps

The next key step is to develop a spatial plan and associated implementation plan. This will be based on direction from the PGG on:

- Responses to the engagement feedback outlined in this report.
- Development principles to guide decisions around the feedback issues, including consideration of new development areas from submitters.
- Other technical information and policy directions.

The final spatial plan is intended to be adopted ahead of the 2025 Local Government elections.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**2 Engagement overview**

The project has recorded more than 550 individual points of feedback to date across all formats—digital, physical, and in-person.

A multi-channel communication approach to consultation resulted in a balanced large-scale reach by employing both digital and physical distribution. Face-to-face events were available for people that were interested in this.

The result was a broad reaching engagement with substantial amounts of information from participants to inform the drafting of the spatial plan.

Workshops and drop-in sessions complemented broader digital, radio and print media efforts, ensuring a well-rounded approach to feedback collection and meant that people were aware that they had a chance to provide their feedback.



Figure 1 - Social pinpoint comments on question 1

2.1 Engagement metrics in summary

At the time of writing this report:

69 written submissions and 125 pinpoint comments were received:

- 41 written submissions received in hard copy or by email and 28 survey forms submitted online.
- The social pinpoint online engagement platform saw 125 comments on the maps.

More than 300 people attended in-person events as follows:

- Six facilitated workshops were held for stakeholders and students, with 145 people attending.
- “Business After 5” event via the Chamber of Commerce in the Whakatāne township, with 80 people attending.
- Eight public drop-in sessions with 100 people attending.

71,000 social media post impressions, 650,000 digital advertisement impressions were received:

- 43 posts on social media with 71,000 impressions.
- NZ Herald online – digital advertorial with 650,000 impressions and 1,050 link clicks to ‘have your say’.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)

Other methods ranged from radio advertisements to surveys located in different Council community facilities:

- Online information: project website and StoryMaps platform.
- DL rates insert at Whakatāne District Council and Kawerau District Council.
- Radio – 1XX, Bayrock, Tumeke, SunFM, iHeart radio.
- Beacon newspaper advertisement.
- Media release.
- Physical surveys - located at Whakatane District Council customer service centres in Whakatāne and Murupara, Kawerau District Council customer service centres, Ōpōtiki District Council customer service centres, Libraries - Whakatāne, Edgecumbe, Ōhope, Whakatāne Aquatic Centre.



Figure 2 - Student workshop



Figure 3 - Drop in session



Figure 4 – Facilitated stakeholder workshop

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**3 Levels of support**

This section sets out the estimate of supportive tone comments received, providing an indicator of how well the consultation materials were received.

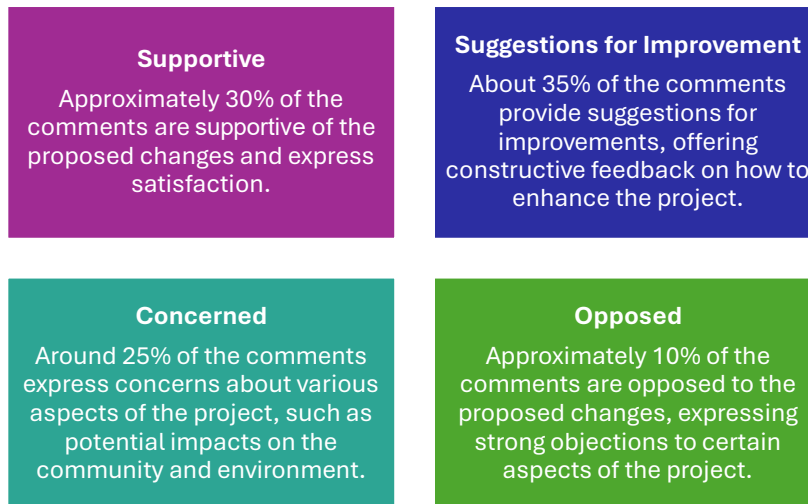


Figure 5 - Levels of support

The primary reasons for **support** in the consultation feedback include:

- 1 **Alignment with Environmental and Economic Goals:** Respondents appreciated that Scenario 1 aligns with the goals of the spatial plan, such as promoting a healthy and healing environment, supporting a sustainable and diversified economy, and providing jobs and purpose for the community.
- 2 **Protection of Valuable Land:** Many respondents supported Scenario 1 because it emphasises the protection of valuable farming and horticultural land. They believe that regulating and protecting this land is crucial for maintaining the area's agricultural productivity and preventing inappropriate development.
- 3 **Maintaining Community Character:** Some respondents supported Scenario 1 because it helps maintain the small-town feel and community character of different areas. They believe that this scenario balances a need for development opportunities with the preservation of the sub-region's unique qualities.
- 4 **Sustainable Growth:** Scenario 1 is seen as a practical solution that can support sustainable growth. Respondents appreciated that it considers the long-term impact of development on the environment and community, ensuring that growth is managed responsibly.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)

The main reasons for **opposition** in the consultation feedback include:

- 1 **Disrupting small-town character:** Many respondents expressed a desire to keep the community as it is, valuing the small-town feel and the current way of life. They were opposed to changes that could disrupt this character. This was particularly acute in Matatā.
- 2 **Concerns about infrastructure:** There were significant concerns about the adequacy of existing infrastructure to support new developments. Respondents highlighted issues with road congestion, particularly congestion at the Whakatāne bridge, and the potential strain on water and wastewater systems.
- 3 **Cost to ratepayer:** Some respondents were worried about the financial impact of the proposed changes, particularly the potential increase in rates and the financial burden on current residents. They felt that councils should focus on working within their budget and improving existing amenities, rather than expanding into new development areas.
- 4 **Environmental concerns:** There were also concerns about the environmental impact of new developments, particularly in areas prone to flooding or in relation to water allocation. Respondents emphasised the importance of listening to historical knowledge and avoiding mistakes that could lead to environmental degradation and natural hazard risks.
- 5 **Lack of support for existing residents:** Some feedback indicated that the proposed changes did not adequately consider the needs and preferences of current residents. Respondents felt that the Councils should prioritise supporting existing communities and improving their quality of life before focusing on new developments.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**4 Themes from feedback**

Across the 550+ points of feedback, including submissions, there were some recurring themes that illustrated topics of importance from the consultation.

Overall, feedback was focused on what to consider in the spatial plan and how to go about implementing the plan, such as through District Plans or Long-Term Plans. Both types of feedback will be carried forward to the relevant processes.

The themes are as follows:



Figure 6 - Themes and sub-themes

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**4.1 Infrastructure theme**

Overall, the feedback reflects a strong desire for well-maintained and efficient infrastructure that can support the community's needs and future development.

The feedback highlighted significant concerns and suggestions regarding the infrastructure in the area. Respondents emphasised the need for substantial improvements in road infrastructure to accommodate increasing traffic and ensure safety. Suggestions included the construction of new bridges, the addition of roundabouts, and enhancements to existing roads. The feedback highlighted that the current road conditions are inadequate to handle growing traffic, and there is a pressing need for upgrades to support future growth.

The capacity of three waters infrastructure was also raised as an issue, along with the overall resiliency of infrastructure in the face of climate driven hazards, with emphasis on renewable energy, and the protection of critical infrastructure.

Sub-theme 1: Transport infrastructure that is safe, efficient, and sustainable

The feedback highlighted the need for significant improvements in road infrastructure and traffic management to enhance road safety and efficiency, and also to support the forecast population and economic growth. Respondents emphasised the importance of building new bridges, such as a second Whakatāne River bridge, to accommodate increasing traffic and provide alternative routes for commuters and travellers.

There were also calls for the addition of roundabouts at critical intersections, like Rewatu Road, to facilitate smoother traffic flow and reduce congestion. Additionally, some respondents suggested implementing speed control measures, such as speed bumps, to address issues of speeding in residential areas and near schools.

Respondents highlighted specific locations where there are vulnerabilities in the road network which could be impacted by extreme weather events, like Waioweka Bridge and Pekatahi Bridge.

Increased provision of alternative transport options such as safe cycle paths was also highlighted to encourage cycling as a mode of transport and reduce traffic congestion, along with improvement of public transport.

Response to Sub-theme 1 – How the spatial plan will respond

- Identify priority transport infrastructure projects to address existing issues such as increasing congestion, safety, and the challenges posed by climate change. Topics to address include a second river crossing in Whakatane township, and state highway resiliency.
- Identify improvements to active transport modes to help to reduce the demand and congestion on roads by providing people with options and choice for how they move around.
- Identify transport infrastructure projects that are pre-requisites for future urban growth areas, and which require further investigation.
- Work with NZTA/Waka Kotahi to further investigate solutions to transport constraints and promote working collaboratively with all transport partners to advocate, plan and implement a high-quality, integrated, safe and efficient transport network.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)***Discussion***

Resilience, safety, and capacity issues are all present or emerging and will require significant ongoing investment if the road network is to continue to perform to an acceptable standard, whilst adjusting to the challenges of climate change mitigation, adaption and a growing population and economy.

New Zealand Transport Agency/Waka Kotahi (NZTA) are committed to addressing resilience issues across their network, and work is identified in relation to resilience improvements for SH 2 in the National Land Transport Plan (NLTP) 2024-27. NZTA have recognised the importance of maintaining the transport network and have increased the funding allocated for maintenance in the NLTP 2024-27.

Moving people from using private vehicles to alternative modes (public transport, cycling, walking, micro-mobility) has become increasingly important, especially within our towns and connections between our communities.

The Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP) (2024-2034) has policies around resilience and security. These include ensuring the resilience of our communities and the regional transport network is continuously improved by:

- Identifying, prioritising and addressing current network risks, vulnerabilities, critical lifelines and alternative options, and
- Ensuring the design of new transport infrastructure is resilient to low impact high probability, high impact low probability events, and the long-term effects of climate change.

The RLTP also identifies a lack of accessible, affordable, and efficient travel choices for people, goods and services. Improving safe and resilient multi-mode accessibility from existing and new residential areas to jobs, schools, services, and leisure facilities is a key RLTP policy and investment priority.

The RLTP sets out several proposed transport activities for the Eastern Bay of Plenty which include:

- Additional river crossing (Whakatāne River) – to prepare a business case to support growth components of the spatial plan.
- Transport System programme to support delivery of the spatial plan. This will be in the form of a programme business case and will identify new transport investments, projects and their expected timeframes for delivery, based on the expected growth patterns and locations.
- Whakatāne network-wide resilience.
- Ōpōtiki urban growth and resilient access improvements.
- Ōpōtiki low cost, low risk: local road improvements, walking and cycling improvements.
- Kawerau low cost, low risk: local road improvements, walking and cycling improvements.

The transport maintenance and renewals programmes of the three district councils provide the opportunity to optimise assets, where appropriate, and to support each council's environmental protection and climate change initiatives. Councils work closely with the NZTA on the future planning and investment of the transport system, including the continued monitoring of population growth and development demands.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**Sub-theme 2: Water and wastewater services that are modern, efficient, and which protect the public health and environment**

Respondents emphasised the need for improvements in the water supply system to ensure a reliable and sustainable source of water for the growing population, particularly in Whakatāne and Matatā. There were also concerns about the adequacy of the existing wastewater treatment facilities in these areas, with calls for upgrades to handle increased demand and prevent environmental contamination. Increased accessibility to these services were also promoted in submissions, with a focus on reaching smaller villages and areas identified for future growth. In Matatā, the feedback indicated that the wastewater system has been a long-standing issue, with delays in implementing necessary improvements. In Whakatāne, respondents stressed the importance of planning for future water demand and ensuring that infrastructure can support new housing developments.

Response to Sub-theme 2 – How the spatial plan will respond

- Undertake further technical investigations to better understand the overall feasibility of accommodating more homes in Matatā, in relation to the potential cost implications of a wastewater treatment plant.
- Identify three waters infrastructure projects that are necessary to support current communities or are precursors for future development.
- Identify investigations to increase asset condition and resilience of three waters infrastructure.
- Advocate that preparation of a Water Services Delivery Plan (WSDP) provides for growth as identified in the spatial plan.
- Identify the need for a strategic approach (versus only end of pipe solutions) to improve water quality, in particular catchment-based solutions that integrate diffuse and point source discharges.

Discussion

The functionality of water supply infrastructure and its resilience to natural hazard events and from operational failure are important factors for efficient water use. The need to ensure water services infrastructure is available to support growth will be a key priority in the draft spatial plan.

A qualitative assessment of stormwater, water and wastewater infrastructure throughout the sub-region has been undertaken, which has considered the infrastructure requirements to support growth. The assessment has been informed by known constraints as well as current infrastructure projects being undertaken by councils. The draft spatial plan will be informed by the assessment and the current Long Term Plan infrastructure investment decisions of the respective councils.

The preparation of a Water Services Delivery Plan (WSDP) (including water, wastewater and stormwater) is a legislative requirement for all councils and needs to be submitted to the Government by September 2025. This will either be a joint arrangement between councils or a stand-alone document by each district council. The WSDP will include a description of the current state of the network, including any issues, constraints or risks impacting on the delivery of water services, the financial workings, the infrastructure required for population growth, and the proposed model for delivering water services. It will seek to address challenges including:

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)

- Natural hazards/events and climate change effects with low lying settlements and high ground water.
- Geographically disparate communities -most schemes service small populations.
- Potential future demand to service areas that are currently unserved.
- Funding and financing challenges and future affordability for ratepayers.

In relation to Matatā, the wastewater management system project is a top priority for Whakatāne District Council (WDC) to provide a safe and reliable wastewater system for Matatā that reduces public health and environmental risks. WDC has secured a 56 ha property for the project which will use approximately 2 ha for the treatment facility and around 15 ha for the irrigation of treated wastewater. The project will be designed to support the growth of Matatā and the treatment plant will feature a modular design, allowing for future expansion.

It is also recognised that Matatā is within the Tarawera River Catchment that has multiple diffuse and point source discharges that create water quality issues. While localised issues need to be addressed, there is also a need to understand the impacts of point source discharges within the context of the overall catchment. A Tarawera restoration strategy is currently being prepared which will inform strategic investment decisions. Catchment based solutions to improve water quality should be considered for both point source and diffuse discharges in other catchments. Refer to the response in Section 4.2, Subtheme 2 for further information.

Sub-theme 3: Infrastructure resiliency to protect the community and ensure safety during natural disasters

The feedback highlighted significant concerns regarding the resiliency of infrastructure in the face of natural hazards and climate change. Respondents emphasised the importance of planning and upgrading infrastructure to withstand natural disasters such as floods, tsunamis, and earthquakes. Specific locations like Awakeri and Matatā were mentioned as areas prone to flooding, with calls for better flood management systems and the need to avoid repeating past mistakes.

Respondents also emphasised the importance of having adequate facilities to support the community during emergencies and improve the overall quality of life, and the promotion of more self-sufficient communities to reduce overall risk. Feedback also included recognising the role of critical infrastructure in enabling growth and the need for the protection of critical infrastructure from inappropriate development, along with support for local renewable energy generation to promote energy security.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**Response to Sub-theme 3: How will the spatial plan respond**

- Develop risk assessments and risk mitigation strategies for communities on a priority basis (i.e. plans would first be developed for those communities at higher risk, or where there is intent to develop like Awakeri). Restrict new development in those communities until mitigation strategies are in place.
- Addressing flood risk management is critical to the feasibility of areas being considered for growth, such as Awakeri or Matatā, and an integrated catchment management approach to investigating these areas will be a pre-requisite activity to development.
- Identify key strategic infrastructure on the spatial plan maps. Protection of infrastructure networks from inappropriate development will continue to be appropriately managed through the Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement and district plans.
- Show the National Grid on maps, differentiating between the National Grid assets and electricity distribution network assets.
- Recognise the role of critical infrastructure and highlight the interdependencies between critical infrastructure and the flow-on impacts that outages can have on other sectors. This will include telecommunications and electricity services, and acknowledge the role they play in responding to, and recovering from, natural hazard events.
- Recognise that achieving a low carbon future for the Eastern Bay of Plenty will require investment in reliable renewable energy.

Discussion

Flooding is a known natural hazard risk and is a significant existing and future constraint in the sub-region. Many floodable areas are mapped and there is still more work to do to understand the extent of flooding in some areas. This work has informed the spatial plan which identifies areas where there is natural hazard susceptibility and other land constraints, and directs growth away from these areas unless it can be demonstrated that the issues can be managed with risk mitigated to acceptable levels. Decisions on flood risk management for existing, intensified or new urban areas must take a long-term management perspective, taking a precautionary approach to the risk and uncertainty of future weather events.

Climate change poses additional challenges for infrastructure management, including the need to adapt to more frequent extreme weather events and rising sea levels. Central to managing risks, hazards and resilience, is ensuring we have the right infrastructure in place, which is safe, supports community wellbeing and can respond to emerging risks such as climate change. By making sure investment is made up front with a short-medium- and long-term view in mind, means we will have an asset that supports communities for the next 20, 50 and 100 years.

An example of infrastructure resiliency work is the Whakatāne District Council Climate Change Adaptation Plan, which will develop over time to define risk areas (that are not already known) and put in place an adaptive planning framework to respond. This will also build on WDC's existing knowledge of where the vulnerable infrastructure is located and help define what needs to be considered, as decisions around land use (residential and business use) are made.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**4.2 Housing theme**

Overall, the feedback reflects a strong desire for balanced and thoughtful housing development that enhances the area's liveability

The feedback addresses the need for thoughtful and sustainable development in the area. Respondents emphasised the importance of planning new housing developments carefully to avoid overburdening existing infrastructure. There were calls for more housing developments to meet the growing population's needs, with a focus on sustainable and well-planned communities. This was balanced by concerns about retaining the existing character of local communities.

Sub-theme 1: A desire for housing development to meet demand, that is affordable, caters for a diverse (and ageing) population, and provides choices like rural residential development

There is a strong demand for new housing developments to accommodate the growing population. Respondents emphasised the importance of planning these developments carefully to avoid overburdening existing infrastructure. They also highlighted the need for affordable housing options and the importance of integrating new housing projects within existing communities to maintain the character of the area.

A need for more retirement facilities to cater to the aging population in the area was identified. Respondents noted that there are currently only a few lifestyle options or care facilities available locally, which can force older residents to relocate to other centres (i.e., outside of the eastern bay) to meet their needs.

Some feedback highlighted a desire for more rural residential development to accommodate the growing population and provide diverse living options, it is thought that this could be done with sustainable design. Respondents emphasised the importance of planning these developments carefully to avoid overburdening existing infrastructure, avoid and manage reverse sensitivity to industries and agricultural/horticultural operations, and to maintain the rural character of the area.

Response to Sub-theme 1: How the spatial plan will respond

- No additional areas of rural residential development will be identified in the spatial plan.
- Recognise the need for housing suitable for older people. Identify greenfield urban development areas, which provide opportunities for retirement villages.

Discussion

The provision of suitable areas for rural residential development is already achieved within the respective district plans. No additional areas will be identified in the spatial plan. This approach is consistent with the development principles applied to identify the growth scenario (refer to Section 5 below for a list of the development principles). The first principle is to consider locations where there are existing settlements and infrastructure before contemplating new growth areas and infrastructure. This does not preclude rural residential development in the areas provided for in district plans, but does clearly signal the spatial plan does not prioritise rural residential development (except for papakāinga on Māori land). It also aligns with national policy direction with respect to how highly productive lands are to be used.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)

The need for housing suitable for older people, including retirement villages and smaller homes, is fully recognised. The spatial plan will identify this high-level need. Development of this type of housing is dependent on retirement village operators and other housing developers. In the past, pensioner housing has been developed by local councils. However, further development by councils is highly unlikely due to budgetary constraints. New retirement villages usually require around 5 ha of greenfield land for development. Due to land area constraints within and adjacent to existing townships, it is likely that new retirement villages would be located in greenfield areas. Driving to specialist amenities and services (e.g. medical centres) is a necessity in provincial areas and this will be no different for retirement village residents. Greenfield areas provide opportunities for retirement villages. However, neither the spatial plan or district plans can require that land be developed for that use.

Also refer to the responses in these sections for more information:

- Section 4.1: Infrastructure – Subtheme 1: Transport, and Subtheme 2: Water supply and wastewater infrastructure.
- Section 4.3 Community & Lifestyle – Subtheme 1: Community character.
- Section 5: Feedback about scenarios (contains the development principles used to prepare the new scenario).

Sub-theme 2: Sustainable practices for housing development

The feedback emphasised the importance of adopting sustainable practices for housing development. This includes using eco-friendly building materials, implementing energy-efficient designs, and promoting renewable energy sources. Respondents also called for better waste management practices and the reduction of carbon emissions to mitigate the impact of urban development on the environment.

Respondents had the following comments regarding sustainable practices:

- Self Sustaining “Off-Grid” solutions
 - New greenfield development should be self-sustaining in water and energy and preferably produce substantial quantity of its own food (through community gardens etc).
 - Favour solar PV on buildings. Community-owned energy systems would be more beneficial to the local economy.
 - Rural residential housing opportunities have less facilities, and this type of housing should be provided as a choice for people to live ‘off grid’.
- Energy efficient building techniques
 - Consider building materials, passive solar design, renewable energy options, for different housing types and locations. Local timber, stone and brick should be promoted for climate change reasons.
- Better carbon management
 - Use of structural timber locks up carbon, and can be used in homes, factories, multi storey buildings.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**Response to Subtheme 2: How the spatial plan will respond**

- Recognise the challenge of ensuring future development is built to deliver a climate-resilient built environment.
- Set out direction for structure plans or masterplans to consider environmentally sustainable and water sensitive design principles and standards.

The Building Codes sets minimum standards for building materials and design elements (such as insulation). Passive solar design and energy efficient materials can be encouraged through mechanisms such as Healthier Homes and Homestar rating New Zealand, and design guides associated with district plans. Currently, the Whakatāne District Plan encourages a degree of consideration of sustainability, including energy efficiency and water conservation for higher density housing developments. General low-density development does not explicitly consider passive solar design or energy efficient materials.

Sustainable building practices and design on a site-by-site basis is not within the scope of the spatial plan as it is focused at a high level and the location of development. Encouraging or requiring the adoption of sustainable practices for housing development may be addressed in future district plan reviews. Some aspects may be addressed during structure planning for identified growth areas, such as stormwater management.

Sub-theme 3: Natural hazards and resilient communities

Respondents were concerned with natural hazards, particularly flooding. Coastal erosion, extreme weather events, sea level rise, tsunami, landslide and earthquakes were also mentioned. Resilience to natural hazards and the impacts of climate change and avoiding areas with flooding issues were identified as key issues.

Submissions specifically identified flood risks at Matatā, Awakeri, Tāneatua, Edgcombe and the Rangitāiki Plains; coastal hazards between Ōpōtiki and Ōpape, and at Te Kaha; fault lines through Waiohaou-Galatea-Murupara; and risks to transport connections along the Pikowai Straits.

Some respondents suggested upzoning existing urban areas with low risk of natural hazards. Others identified the need to move out of low-lying areas (e.g. to Hukutaia in Ōpōtiki).

One respondent noted that climate change is not well defined and there are huge uncertainties and impacts that cannot all be predicted. The Hawke's Bay experience shows the impacts can be wide ranging well beyond flooding, and include physical access, communications, water supply, electricity and social impacts.

Response to subtheme 3: How the spatial plan will respond

- Carefully consider avoiding growth, or reducing potential for development, in areas susceptible to natural hazards and climate change, particularly in locations that are susceptible to flooding or which have residual risk.
- Identify where new information is needed to make informed decisions.
- Discourage growth until risk mitigation plans are established to keep people safe.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)***Discussion***

The spatial plan recognises the risks posed by natural hazard and impacts from climate change is a critical issue, to ensure our communities are safe and resilient in the long term. To inform decision-making about where growth could go, careful consideration has been given to avoiding growth in areas susceptible to natural hazards and climate change, particularly in locations that are susceptible to flooding.

The spatial plan also acknowledges 'residual risk' associated with stopbanks, which refers to the level of risk that still exists from natural hazard events, even after mitigation measures are put in place. An example is the risk from a flood event that exceeds the design level of a stopbank (i.e. 'overtops' the stopbank).

In response to residual risk, the upzoning of existing urban areas (intensification) is being carefully considered to ensure that risk is not increased in areas susceptible to residual risk and known flooding. An example of this approach would be to limit intensification in parts of Whakatāne township. In vulnerable locations, options are being explored to assess and better understand natural hazard risk and will be considered as implementation actions for the spatial plan.

Also refer to the following responses for additional information:

- Section 4.1: Infrastructure theme. Sub-theme 3: Infrastructure resiliency to protect the community and ensure safety during natural disasters.
- Section 5: Feedback about scenarios. This response describes natural hazards and climate change have been considered in relation development of the new scenario.
- Section 6: Substantive topics. Climate resiliency.

Sub-theme 4: Development of Māori land

Respondents highlighted the importance that development of Māori land, particularly for papakāinga, in providing additional homes for whānau. Greater consultation with hapu was sought by submitters.

Also refer to sections 5 and 6 below for a list of Māori land areas from submitters that will be considered for inclusion in the new scenario.

There are ongoing engagements with iwi, hapu, and iwi land trusts on this matter. The content of this report only reflects the submissions received during the engagement period.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**Response to Subtheme 4: How the spatial plan will respond**

- Identify actions that Council can consider that will enable and support iwi/hapu to use their land for their aspirations. This may include Māori Purpose Zones and provisions to enable Papakāinga development in district plans (if not already included).
- Support the development of masterplans led by iwi trusts with support from hapū to determine development of their land and communities. Masterplans can inform changes to the district plan and structure plans, to enable the development and confirm the ultimate intended development proposal, infrastructure approach related funding proposals.
- Where specific land areas or aspirations are identified in submissions or other engagements, they will be considered through the spatial plan. For example, feedback was received from Ngāti Rangitihi and Ngāi Te Rangihouhiri II who have a strong desire for Papakāinga development and Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whare, alongside the Minginui Village Incorporated Society and whānau living in Minginui, have aspirations for the development of Minginui. Many other comments were provided from iwi and hapu.

Discussion

The spatial plan seeks to enable Māori-led housing developments and Papakāinga. The spatial plan is a partnership between councils and iwi in the eastern bay.

Efforts are underway to ensure the potential for Māori owned land to be identified through the engagement process and through understanding aspirations from the various land trusts and owners.

Papakāinga housing is enabled within the relevant district plans or will be enabled through district plan reviews. For example, the Kawerau District Plan is currently under review with the aim to include provisions that enable papakāinga and use of Māori owned land. Ōpōtiki District Council have an enabling district plan for Papakāinga and will be progressing further discussion on structure plans to facilitate development of specific areas.

Whakatane District Council's iwi policy hub is looking at developing master plans (aka 'structure plans') with landowners, to facilitate integrated development of Māori owned land with interested landowners.

4.3 Community and lifestyle theme**Overall, the feedback highlights the community's commitment to preserving its way of life while supporting thoughtful and sustainable development**

The feedback emphasises the importance of maintaining the community's character and lifestyle, including safety, peace, and the natural environment. Respondents value the area's small-town feel and the sense of community it fosters. They expressed concerns about potential changes that could disrupt the character and stressed the need for careful planning to preserve the area's unique qualities. The feedback reflects a strong desire to maintain the area's identity and ensure that any development aligns with the community's values and lifestyle. There were also calls for improvements in public amenities and infrastructure to enhance the quality of life for residents.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**Sub-theme 1: Community character is highly valued**

Respondents emphasised that the spatial plan needs to recognise the unique character and identity of the communities, lifestyle opportunities and natural environment that are unique to the eastern bay. Communities have told us, community character is about relationships and whakapapa and that maintaining the small-town identity is important to communities. The protection of natural areas and culturally significant areas is addressed in the Environmental Theme below.

Respondents have highlighted that community character is fundamentally tied to relationships and whakapapa. They value maintaining close connections to the natural environment and prefer controlled growth to preserve these ties. The community spirit is strong, with a deep appreciation for the sub-region's natural resources and green spaces, which help maintain its unique character. The lack of traffic congestion and the close-knit, family-oriented nature of eastern bay communities are also highly valued.

Preserving close communities is a priority, with many respondents valuing the small, unchanged nature of their towns. Generations of families have lived in these areas, finding them safe, quiet, and peaceful. The communities of Matatā, Kawerau, Braemar Road and Awakaponga have been identified as having particularly strong generational connections to their places.

There are concerns about over-development and the potential loss of the small-town character of towns, particularly for Matatā.

Respondents comment that expanding too much or adopting development styles seen in other parts of the region could lead to overcrowding, increased traffic, and a loss of the community's unique identity. There is apprehension about incoming residents who might want to change existing character, and a strong preference to avoid becoming like more urbanised and congested areas.

There is support for sustainable development practices that prioritise public and active transport, community spaces, green areas and addressing compatibility issues between industrial growth and residential areas to preserve the small-town atmosphere.

Response to Sub-theme 1: How the spatial plan will respond

- Use placemaking and master planning processes to recognise the value of community character and importance of community wellbeing.
- Reference existing community revitalisation projects for Murupara and Minginui.
- Apply placemaking principles in community revitalisation projects and structure plans processes.
- In relation to Matatā, consider the community's overall feedback for a mid-low range level of additional growth. Test this through further engagement with the community.

Discussion

There is a tension between providing for growth (including meeting the housing needs of current and future community members) and maintaining community character. Changes to communities are inevitable over time, due to demographic and economic factors. Intensification and infill will be necessary in some areas to balance other goals, such as avoiding highly productive land, areas at risk from natural hazards, and achieve affordable infrastructure and growth.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)

However, it is recognised that each community has an individual character that residents value. The spatial plan development principles include a principle to 'employ placemaking to support community wellbeing'. Placemaking equates to community character and refers to a collaborative process (with the community) to create quality places that people want to live, work, play and learn in. The spatial plan principle recognises that the purpose of a spatial plan is to identify areas for growth (and areas where growth is not appropriate) but that community placemaking is maintained or improved through other mechanisms. Those mechanisms include community revitalisation projects, and district plan rules (e.g. yard setbacks, density of houses, requirements for outdoor living spaces).

Sub-theme 2: Recreational facilities can enhance the quality of life for residents

The feedback also highlighted the need for better recreational facilities to enhance the quality of life for residents. Respondents called for the development of parks, playgrounds, and sports facilities to provide spaces for community activities and promote a healthy lifestyle. They emphasised the importance of accessible and well-maintained recreational facilities that cater to people of all ages.

Respondents have shared their appreciation for the recreational activities available in their communities. Kawerau's prime location between lakes, rivers, and the sea offers excellent opportunities for water activities. Communities value the recreational bike trails, geothermal pools, and the Ōhope Beach Surf Club. The rivers are important for the rowing club, and the Tarawera River is favoured for kayaking and rafting.

Respondents have made suggestions for what should be included in the spatial plan such as galleries, community facilities, (particularly youth and elderly hubs), accessible, safe and enclosed play areas for neurodiverse communities, and developing a sports stadium in Whakatāne. There is also interest in hot pools in Kawerau, improved skatepark and shopping areas, and tenpin bowling alleys.

Respondents recognise that with growth, additional amenities would be required. These include more education centres, retail and commercial spaces, medical centres, early childhood centres, walking and cycling connections.

Communities see value in recreational spaces in nature, suggesting transforming the Whakatāne Rivermouth into a recreational bathing area, enhancing access to walking trails, mountain bike trails, recreational biking paths, access and activities in Te Urewera, and motorbike trails have been noted. These suggestions aim to provide diverse and accessible recreational options to improve the quality of life in the sub-region. Green belts within townships were also mentioned, such as in Kawerau along the Tarawera River.

Respondents have highlighted that outdoor adventures and the rural lifestyle are integral to what makes the eastern bay special. They appreciate the spaciousness of their towns, the proximity to beaches and native bush. Activities such as hunting, fishing, horse riding, whitebaiting, and boating are highly valued, contributing to the sub-region's unique character. The eastern bay is seen as an adventure-filled backyard for neighbouring districts, offering natural beauty, coastal scenery, and a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities. Maintaining this lifestyle is important to communities, and ensuring that development complements the existing environment.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**Response to subtheme 2: How the spatial plan will respond**

- Develop design principles to guide preparation of structure plans so they provide the right level of community infrastructure and recreational facilities and also consider the effects on existing assets.

Discussion

Recreational facilities are recognised as important community infrastructure for active and passive recreation activities and support community wellbeing. Greenfield urban development will need to be planned to include parks and reserves. This is carried out at the structure plan level, which is undertaken after a development area is confirmed and development triggers (e.g. population growth and housing demand) or infrastructure precursors are met. A structure plan is a framework for the development of a specified area, which includes the layout of the area with roads and transport connections, land use activities (residential, commercial, etc), and greenspace.

The spatial plan does not identify where new reserves and parks will be located, or where existing facilities could be upgraded. That level of detail is best addressed in either a structure plan (for new areas) or community placemaking projects. However, the spatial plan will note that social infrastructure (which includes parks and reserves) is to be viewed as 'lead infrastructure' that supports community wellbeing and it will set out some expectations for structure planning or master planning activities to consider. Providing amenities and social infrastructure is important to attract and support people and to maintain the lifestyle of the eastern bay.

Greenbelts and areas within townships are usually local reserves and are managed by the respective councils and protected for the values and uses of those areas.

4.4 Environmental theme**Overall, the feedback underscores the importance of integrating environmental considerations into all aspects of urban planning to ensure a sustainable and resilient community**

The feedback highlights significant concerns regarding the environmental impact of urban planning and development. Respondents emphasised the importance of protecting natural areas and ensuring that new developments do not lead to environmental degradation. There is a strong desire to maintain the natural beauty and ecological health of the area, with many participants stressing the need for sustainable planning practices. The feedback reflects a community deeply connected to its natural surroundings and a commitment to preserving them for future generations. Concerns were raised about the potential loss of green spaces, the impact of increased pollution, and the need for better management of natural resources including aggregate resources.

Sub-theme 1: Protection of natural areas from development

Respondents stressed the need to protect natural areas from development, including forests, lakes, awa, tāhahi (beaches) and moana. They highlighted the importance of preserving green spaces, forests, and waterways to maintain biodiversity and provide recreational opportunities for residents. There were calls for stricter regulations to prevent encroachment on these areas and to ensure that any development is carried out in an environmentally responsible manner.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)

Respondents support the continued protection of green spaces, which contribute to the community's natural beauty and recreational opportunities. Eastern bay communities value their connections with nature which foster a sense of community and appreciation for the natural environment. The natural beauty of the sub-region including its scenic areas and outdoor spaces, is seen as essential to preserving the identity and quality of life.

Protection of the Tarawera River from the effects of future development was specifically mentioned, as was avoiding development of land that is significant to iwi.

One respondent requested consideration of the use of conservation land (DOC) for appropriate land uses, including aggregate extraction.

Response to subtheme 1: How the spatial plan will respond

- Recognise that protection of natural areas and culturally significant sites is essential and avoid urban development in those areas.

Discussion

The spatial plan recognises that protection of natural areas is essential. One of the development principles that was used to formulate the scenarios for engagement, and which has been used to create the new scenario for the spatial plan is '*Avoid and mitigate impacts on natural areas to protect and conserve*'. This includes DOC land, Te Urewera, other protected natural areas (e.g. covenanted areas, Significant Natural Areas). Culturally significant sites have also been identified and considered in the scenarios.

Stricter regulations to prevent encroachment of awa (rivers) is largely achieved by avoiding areas subject to flooding, and through regulations in regional planning documents that implement Treaty Settlement river documents. The Rangitaiki River is covered by Te Ara Whanui o Rangitaiki (Pathways of the Rangitaiki). The Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy Group is currently developing a strategy.

The use of DOC land is outside the scope of the spatial plan as that is subject to the Conservation Act.

Sub-theme 2: Management productive land and water resources

Effective management of productive land was a key concern for respondents. They highlighted the need for sustainable water management practices, including the protection of water sources and the implementation of efficient irrigation systems. There were also calls for better management of soil and land resources to prevent erosion and degradation, highlighting the importance of access and availability of aggregate resources, and ensuring that the land remains productive and healthy for future generations.

Some respondents requested the application of Te Ao Māori principles and values, and use of nature-based approaches. Other comments requested the identification of areas that are well-suited to horticulture expansion and protect these from future residential development. The Rangitaiki Plains was specifically mentioned in relation to highly productive soils.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**Response to subtheme 2: How the spatial plan will respond**

- Develop design principles to guide preparation of structure plans in relation to nature-based solutions and compliance with environmental regulations.
- Comply with the NPS-HPL by only identifying areas on highly productive land for urban development where an assessment has determined that there are no other reasonably practicable and feasible options to provide the required housing development capacity. The objective of the NPS-HPL is that highly productive land is protected for use in land-based primary production, both now and for future generations.

Discussion

Application of Te Ao Māori and nature-based principles are dependent on the decisions of individual landowners and industry organisations and can't be required by the spatial plan. Some of the matters of concern are reflected in environmental regulations and future structure planning and development will need to comply with those environmental regulations. The spatial plan can also recognise the value of nature-based solutions by clearly identifying matters to be addressed in structure plans. An example is that nature-based solutions and water sensitive design is used in urban areas.

The spatial plan has applied highly productive soils as a consideration for identifying future areas for urban development. This has been carried out in a way that implements the (NPS-HPL). In this way, the spatial plan is protecting highly productive soils as much as possible. A balanced decision needs to be made on future development locations where flooding and other constraints mean a safe greenfield location occurs on highly productive land. The spatial plan process helps the community to make that decision.

Sustainable land and water management practices are not within the scope of the spatial plan. This is addressed by environmental regulations and standards in regional plans and national planning frameworks. Any development needs to comply with those regulations and standards and to avoid or minimise environmental impacts.

4.5 Economic opportunities theme**Overall, the feedback highlights the need for balanced economic development that includes job creation, support for local businesses, and consideration of environmental and social factors**

The feedback also addresses the need for economic development, commercial and industrial land expansion, including job opportunities and support for local businesses. Respondents emphasised the importance of creating a vibrant local economy that provides employment opportunities and supports the community's growth. They called for initiatives to attract new businesses and industries to the area while ensuring that economic development is balanced with environmental and social considerations.

Sub-theme 1: Creating new employment opportunities

Creating employment opportunities was a key concern for respondents. They highlighted the need for initiatives to attract new businesses and industries to the area, which would provide jobs and support the local economy, ensuring that these opportunities are accessible to the community and contribute to its overall well-being was emphasised.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)

The following opportunities and projects were suggested by respondents:

- Tourism:
 - Cycleways and walkways (including in the Matata area)
 - Eco-tourism including rafting, kayaking
 - Wellness businesses in rural areas
 - Cultural tourism, including east of Te Kaha and Tāneatua (linked to the gallery)
 - Marine tourism
 - Matata – weekend visitors and tourists, by providing a mix of shops and cafes along the waterfront
- Renewable energy generation and use:
 - Geothermal
 - Solar
 - Hydroelectric
 - Wind
- Primary production:
 - Aquaculture expansion (including at Te Kaha)
 - Kiwifruit and horticultural expansion (including in the Ōpōtiki–Te Kaha area)
 - Dairy farming
- Marine industry:
 - Boat building at Ōpape / Tōrere
 - Marine industrial zone at Ōpōtiki, including boat building and apprentices for young people
 - Whakatane Marina – fishing and tourism
- Whakatane Airport:
 - Build more hangers and encourage aircraft owners to relocate their aircraft
- Industrial development:
 - Sustainable industrial activities and catalyst projects
 - Employment around existing industrial areas
 - New industrial areas were suggested, including Baird Road, Ōpōtiki; Brownfield land in Taneatua
 - Precision fermentation
- Log and timber processing:
 - Pre-processing of logs at Murupara
 - Structural timber building materials (engineered lumber) at Kawerau
 - Forestry, wood processing and biochemicals in Galatea area

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)

- Digital infrastructure and data centres
 - Sustainable cooling using river water
- Whakatane township – build a mall on Wally Sutherland land

Response to subtheme 1: How the spatial plan will respond

- Ensure that adequate industrial and commercial land is provided in locations that align with the Economic Development Strategy.
- Support economic outcomes by identifying locations for housing near employment opportunities.
- Highlight actions in the Economic Development Strategy that relate to spatial location matters. For example, a workforce development workstream where there are employment opportunities.
- Also refer to transport network resilience in Section 4.1 above.

Discussion

The spatial plan integrates with the Economic Development Strategy. The Economic Development Strategy has considered key Development Focus Areas based on a strengths-based approach and building on existing work to generate more high-quality jobs and boost economic performance. This includes:

- Aquaculture – Ōpōtiki (including further development along the coast in the open ocean).
- Green industry and energy – Kawerau (including high-value innovation in the forestry sector).
- Commercial and services – Whakatane (including marine tourism).

There is currently a mismatch between the jobs available in the eastern bay and the local labour force. Employers have high-quality roles on offer, for instance, Factory Engineer or IT lead roles in aquaculture, but they cannot attract the talent they need. Similarly, locals cannot find suitable roles or appealing career pathways. As a result, labour force participation rates are relatively low and unemployment rates are high, along with social service costs.

Businesses struggle to import talent and fill key roles, and this is exacerbated by the lack of quality housing on offer. The cost of doing business goes up, and without essential staff, productivity drops. Locals who cannot find a suitable role, career, or training pathway do not fulfil their full potential, and at scale, this hinders economic growth and collective wellbeing.

As part of the refresh of the Eastern Bay Economic Development Strategy, it has been proposed to create a separate workforce development workstream within spatial planning, which coordinates between public and private organisations in the eastern bay.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**Sub-theme 2: Support for local businesses to create economic development**

Supporting local businesses was seen as crucial for economic development. Respondents called for measures to help small businesses thrive. They also emphasised the importance of creating a business-friendly environment that encourages entrepreneurship and innovation.

Comments sought more shops in small towns to help them grow and support the local community (including Minginui, Waiohau, Murupara and Kawerau).

Some respondents requested enabling local businesses through contracts for development work (as opposed to out-of-town companies).

Response to Subtheme 2: How the spatial plan will respond

- The matters raised in Subtheme 2 are not within the scope of the spatial plan.

Discussion

The spatial plan does not have the ability to attract or direct more shops to small towns. Identification of additional commercial land is a role of the spatial plan. However, many small towns have sufficient commercial areas with vacant buildings. Community development plans or revitalisation plans are better options to address the issue. The spatial plan implementation plan can identify where community development plans will be developed.

In relation to contracts with local businesses for development work, this is the responsibility of councils and their respective procurement policies. This is acknowledged as an important matter for local businesses but is not within the scope of the spatial plan.

Support for business associations is not within the scope of the spatial plan.

Sub-theme 3: Commercial and industrial land expansion to create job opportunities

Commercial and industrial land expansion is seen as crucial for the subregion's economic development. Respondents called for more industrial and commercial land supply to create job opportunities.

Response to Subtheme 3: How the spatial plan will respond

- Identify the Putauaki industrial area expansion at Kawerau as the key industrial location for the eastern bay.
- Identify additional industrial land in Ōpōtiki district (as being identified through a project by Ōpōtiki District Council).

Discussion

Additional commercial and industrial land areas are identified in the spatial plan. This is to respond to the Economic Development Strategy and identify a clear link between job opportunities and locations where housing is required for employees.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**Sub-theme 4: Economic development needs to be balanced with environmental and social factors**

Economic development was a significant theme in the feedback. Respondents stressed the need for a balanced approach that considers environmental and social factors. They called for strategic planning to ensure that new developments contribute positively to the community and do not lead to negative impacts such as increased traffic congestion or environmental degradation. They also stressed the importance of balancing commercial growth with environmental sustainability and ensuring that new developments do not negatively impact quality of life in the community.

The social factors mentioned by respondents were:

- Make employment in aquaculture and horticulture attractive to local people and bring back locals into the region (and reduce the need for RSE workers). There was a general support for higher employment of local people, supporting the local community and strengthening self-reliance to build the local economy.
- Protection of human health.
- Concern about effect of development on increasing rates in an area and affordability for whanau who may be driven out of the area due to increasing costs.
- Development in a way that retains the special character of towns and locations, and also provides for public and active transport, community spaces and access to services (e.g. food and medical facilities) within a reasonable distance. It was also noted that the types of housing provided needs to suit the needs of residents.
- Housing developments need to be linked to commercial and industrial areas for employment opportunities.
- Job creation and skill development is needed to support the local community.

The environmental factors mentioned by respondents were:

- Resilience to climate change and natural hazards - reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and future proofing existing primary production industries for the impacts of climate change. A comment was made to consider other primary production options that are better aligned with the changing environment.
- Avoid new housing within reverse sensitivity areas. These included horticultural and industrial areas, and the existing noise contour for the Fonterra Edgecumbe site.
- Any industrial areas need direct access to the state highway network.
- Sewage discharges need to be properly treated and discharged to a location that does not impact rivers, estuaries and harbours. Connecting Ōhope, Edgecumbe and Matata to the Whakatane WWTP was suggested. Concerns about getting basic infrastructure for the existing population before future development, including transport.

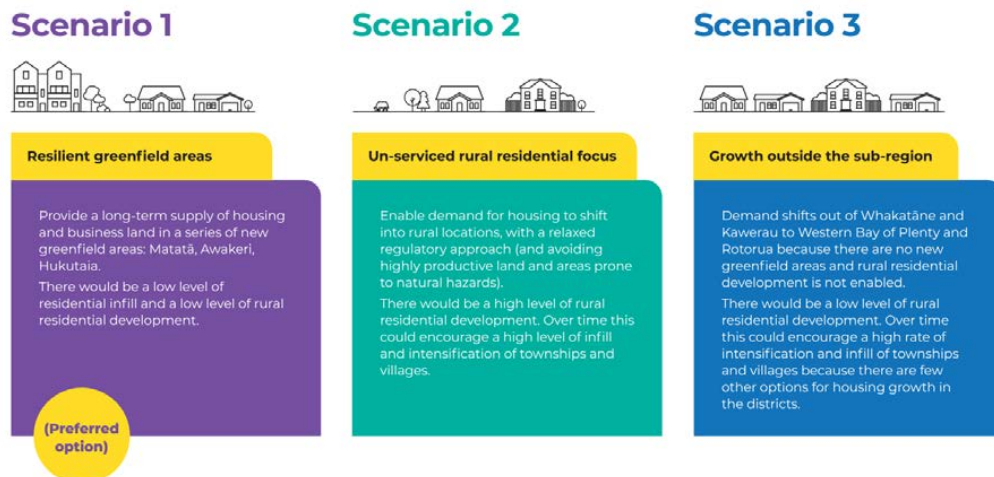
7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**Response to Subtheme 3: How the spatial plan will respond**

- Job creation, skill development and employment opportunities for local people will be addressed through the Economic Development Strategy.
- Recognise that affordability is a key consideration. Refer to Section 4.1 Infrastructure theme above for more information.
- New industrial areas shown in the spatial plan all have direct access to the state highway network.
- Consider the separation of incompatible activities when identifying urban growth areas.
- Develop design principles that will guide preparation of structure plans in relation to provision of compliance with environmental regulations, natural hazard and climate change resilience.

Discussion

Balancing environmental and social factors and ensuring future development provides for the needs of the community and meets environmental standards in a way that is affordable is a key aim. Another key aim of the spatial plan is to address a lack of housing that is limiting economic development opportunities and linking housing with commercial and industrial areas for employment opportunities.

The environmental standards and regulations in district and regional plans, and National Policy Statements and Standards apply to development. Environmental standards also help protect human health. The spatial plan does not supersede those regulations and standards. Detailed structure planning of future development areas identified in the spatial plan will need to comply with environmental standards.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**5 Feedback about scenarios****Figure 7 - Three possible future scenarios were presented for consultation**

A total of 38 responses were received specifically regarding the scenarios, with 21 referring to Scenario 1, seven to Scenario 2, and three to Scenario 3. The feedback highlights diverse perspectives on the proposed scenarios, emphasising the need for balanced development, improved infrastructure, and environmental sustainability.

A collation of the feedback from the workshops indicated where new housing and businesses could be located is shown in Figure 8. It should be noted that the feedback from the workshops was often expressed as general areas rather than specific 'points' and that Figure 8 should be viewed accordingly.

The feedback shows a preference for co-location of housing and business, support for rural areas and development of Māori owned land.

A higher density of locations are around existing towns and settlements, particularly the coastal strip and the Kawerau - southern Rangitāiki Plains - Tāneatua area.

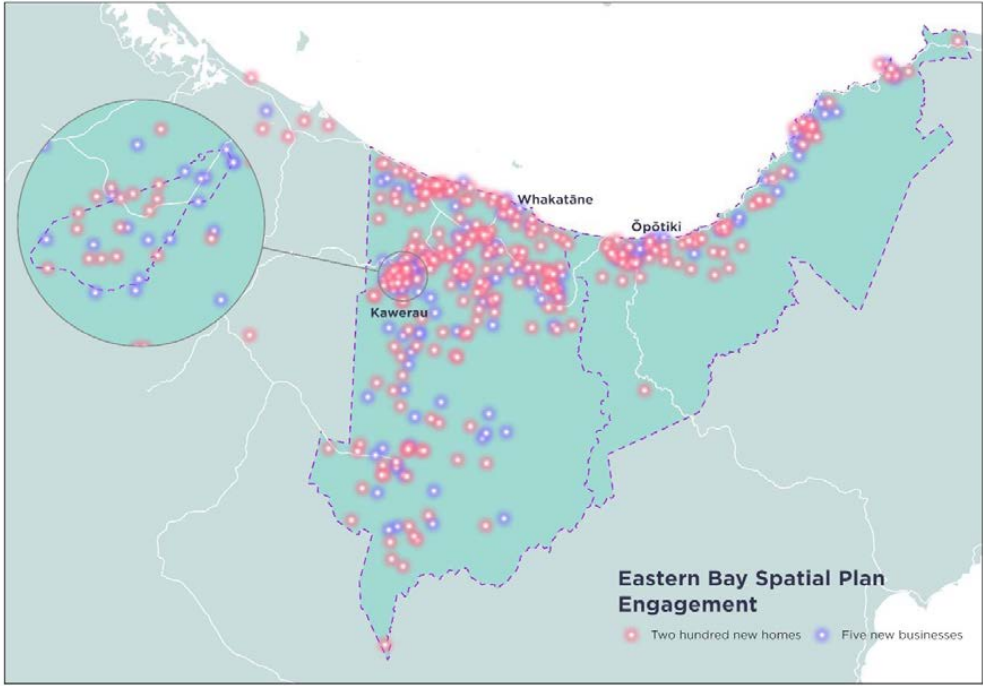


Figure 8 – Collation of workshop feedback on locations for housing and businesses

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**Scenario 1: Resilient greenfield areas:**

Eighteen respondents favour Scenario 1, including Fonterra Limited, SmartGrowth Partners, and Horticulture New Zealand, for its structured growth and community development.

Submissions stress the need for community spaces, recreational facilities, and maintaining the unique character of towns. There is a call for balanced development that includes affordable housing and supports local businesses.

There is strong support for using solar, water-efficient taps, and water collection in new developments; however, there were three respondents with concerns about infrastructure improvements to handle increased traffic, challenges envisioning Matatā with 1500 more homes and businesses without adequate sewerage, and questions about why rural residential development is limited by District Plan rules in Scenario 1. Key considerations were also focused on protecting high-value agricultural land and integrating renewable energy.

Comments included expanding areas to cater for schools and retail, addressing the vulnerability of SH 2 at Waiotāhe and greater consideration for horticultural expansion. Requests for addressing natural hazard risks and climate change impacts were also made. Additionally, detailed plans on the quantum, timing, and type of growth were requested.

Scenario 2: Unserved rural residential focus:

Six responses favoured Scenario 2 for its potential to support resilient, self-sustaining communities.

This scenario was seen to align with Te Ao Māori values and encourage smaller-scale developments. Respondents emphasised the importance of historical settlement patterns and cultural values, noting that smaller settlements up the coast encourage self-sufficiency and resilience to issues like climate change and access loss.

Whakatāne Action Group Incorporated was specifically against Scenario 2 and the assumption that large numbers of people will be attracted to live in rural areas without basic services and highlighted various challenges and drawbacks of rural residential development. The response suggests exploring new greenfield areas for additional housing instead.

Comments included supporting smaller subdivision size requirements in Scenario 2, promoting papakāinga developments, and considering international trends that increase demand for natural spaces. Requests highlight the need to avoid assuming large numbers of people will move to rural areas without basic services, ensuring rural residential development does not negatively impact traditional rural activities, and the need to provide adequate infrastructure and services to support rural communities.

Scenario 3: Growth outside the sub-region

Scenario 3 received three responses, two in support and one questioning the overall relevance of this scenario.

Respondents favoured this scenario to avoid overcrowding in existing towns and to support distributing growth more evenly across the region.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)

Comments included focus on ensuring necessary infrastructure and services are in place to support growth outside the sub-region and addressing potential issues with community fragmentation and loss of local identity. Requests for more information on how this scenario would be implemented and its impact on existing communities, as well as considering the need for business land and economic development were also made.

Other comments about the scenarios

Two submissions suggest combining Scenarios 1 and 2 to balance structured growth with resilient, rural development. This combination is seen as appropriate by some respondents, who believe it accommodates town and coast aspirations, providing more options and flexibility.

Some respondents prefer dispersed villages over centralised communities and questioned the limitations on rural residential development in Scenario 1.

Others reject all three proposed scenarios, highlighting issues such as wastewater ponds in Hukutaia and suggesting new options that prioritise local infrastructure and community involvement in planning decisions. Some of these comments preferred that development takes place outside of the sub-region.

Response to feedback on the three scenarios – How the spatial plan will respond

In response to the engagement feedback specifically on the Scenarios, and related matters from feedback on the Themes (as identified in section 4 above) and the Substantive topics (in section 6 below), the following process has been followed to develop a new scenario for inclusion in the spatial plan.

The Project Governance Group (PGG) approved a set of decision-making Principles to be used to develop a new scenario that applies the feedback received during engagement. These Principles encompass the decision-making factors used to develop the draft scenarios (i.e. Scenario 1, 2 and 3 presented for engagement purposes). And they also include additional principles addressing matters raised in the engagement and to 'fill the gaps' in the existing set of principles. The approved full set of Principles are shown below in Figure 9.

The draft new scenario has been developed for inclusion in the spatial plan. This has been done by considering the engagement feedback and applying the Principles to the development options outlined in this section. The development options include locations from the engagement scenarios that have been reconsidered from engagement feedback (e.g. the scale of growth at Matata) and also of new locations requested by submitters.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**PRINCIPLES THAT DIRECT WHERE WE WANT DEVELOPMENT TO HAPPEN**

- 1 First, consider development locations where there are existing settlements and infrastructure before contemplating new growth areas and infrastructure.
- 2 Avoid locations where man-made and natural hazard risk (including residual risk) and effects of climate change cannot be practicably and equitably managed.
- 3 Urban development locations should have good connections or access to employment, services and schools, and have affordable community infrastructure to support community wellbeing.

PRINCIPLES THAT ARE 'GIVENS' THAT APPLY IN ALL LOCATIONS

- 1 Avoid and mitigate impacts on natural areas to protect and conserve.
- 2 Protect culturally significant areas from development.
- 3 Minimise urban development on Highly Productive Land and ensure no rural residential development on Highly Productive Land (excluding papakāinga).

PRINCIPLES ABOUT WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

- 1 Enable and support iwi/hapū to use their land for their aspirations and unlock opportunities and ensure engagement reflects this intention.
- 2 Cost of infrastructure is feasible and affordable.
- 3 Enable a certainty of zoned and serviced land supply for residential and business purposes for a thirty-year period.
- 4 Locations that enable residential development and economic development opportunities are preferred, including iwi/hapū development.
- 5 Consider the changing needs of housing types due to shifts in demographics.
- 6 A settlement pattern that supports achievement of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- 7 Community wellbeing outcomes can be supported by great placemaking.

Figure 9 - Principles to be used for the new scenario

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**List of development options to be reconsidered in creating a new scenario**

- 1 **Matatā** – reconsider the scale of development suitability, considering that 1,500 additional homes were not supported in engagement feedback. Review affordability of delivering infrastructure, particularly the planned wastewater treatment plant, and resultant feasibility of development. These are interlinked with the scale of development.
- 2 **Awakeri** – The timing of development could be sooner and the scale larger than initially thought, considering a smaller possible scale of development in Matatā. It will be important that the physical location of the flood scheme and flood risk limitations are considered at the early planning stages to ensure that regionally important infrastructure (like the flood scheme) is protected and affordable, and flood risk to the community is not increased.
- 3 **Whakatāne township** – The potential of intensification is limited by flood risk and other natural hazard constraints and intensification (e.g., new houses in existing areas) has not been delivered at scale by the market to date and is not expected to be delivered at scale in the short to medium term. Evacuation mapping indicates that many parts of Whakatāne (with exception of Kopeopeo and some other elevated locations) could be affected by a breach of the stopbank, indicating that more housing at these locations is not a good idea.
- 4 **Ōpōtiki township** – further investigation has highlighted issues relating to existing flood risk, as well as residual risk that has the potential to pose risks to the safety of the community and affect the suitability of additional intensification or infill development.
- 5 **Tāneatua** – Further information about flood hazards has identified the need for a precautionary approach to enabling greenfield development is more appropriate for this location, until natural hazard risk is assessed, and risk management decisions are made.
- 6 **Edgecumbe** – The natural hazard risk means additional development is not appropriate in the Edgecumbe township.
- 7 **Rural residential areas** – Consider identifying locations to avoid, due to highly productive land and reverse sensitivity effects and consider areas that may be promoted for this type of development.
- 8 **Iwi aspirations** – Continue to work with Iwi partners to clarify their aspirations and incorporate these into the plan. Ensure support for papakāinga to be enabled on Māori land.
- 9 **New locations from submissions:** New land areas were requested by submitters for consideration, listed below, and these will be addressed. Where they are part of Māori freehold land, the relevant Iwi would be asked to provide their opinion:
 - (a) Māori Land Trusts (Golf Links Road Partnership, Te Paroa Lands Trust, Hunia Marupo Lands Trust, Ratahi Lands Trust, Kiwinui Lands Trust, Rotoehu Lands Trust) represent owners of land holdings between Coastlands, Whakatāne golf course and airport (188 ha across four land parcels – Māori Freehold Land and Freehold title),
 - (b) Keepa Road (currently Rural Zone), Whakatāne,
 - (c) Māori freehold land to east of the Charter Club, Ōhope,
 - (d) Māori freehold land on Ngāti Awa Farm,
 - (e) Maraetotara Valley in Ōhope,
 - (f) Baird Road and River Flats (Ōpōtiki). Ōpōtiki District Council is undertaking a detailed study of industrial and commercial land. Decisions on that study will be included in the spatial plan if timing enables this,
 - (g) 20 Dunlop Road in Ōpōtiki for mixed use development,
 - (h) Evan's Park, Murupara (Ngāti Manawa),

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)

- (i) Minginui and Te Whaiti. Involve Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whare in the aspirations for the growth and development of Minginui,
- (j) Ngāi Te Rangihouhiri II and Ngāti Hikakino. Support the expressed interest of hapū members who are part of the Kiwinui Trust in understanding the feasibility of developing Māori housing on Rangitaiki Parish 31P 3F, Awakeri, and
- (k) Paroa Road area (west of Whakatāne township).

Locations to be retained without change

From the feedback received, some areas would be supported into the spatial plan without changes from how they were communicated in Scenario 1. These include:

- 1 Development at Hukutaia,
- 2 Additional industrial/business land at Putauaki Industrial Area (Kawerau), Whakatāne (commercial land), Ōpōtiki and East Coast locations in alignment with iwi aspirations,
- 3 Some infill or intensification at Kopeopeo and other elevated areas in Whakatane township, and in Kawerau, and
- 4 Some additional houses at Murupara and Minginui, with development being iwi-led, not proposed as a Council target.

In considering these factors, an interim draft new scenario has been prepared and included as **Appendix 1** to this report.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**6 Substantive topics**

This section brings forward topics highlighted by submitters that the project will need to consider in depth as the spatial plan is developed. Topics encompass the settlement pattern (where and what types of development), resiliency of critical infrastructure and climate resilience. These matters have been considered by the Project Governance Group and direction has been provided.

Settlement pattern (where and what types of development)

Most respondents are in favour of meeting development demands within the eastern bay.

Matatā residents have provided feedback that the scale of change, being 1,500 dwellings, and what this would impose is likely to affect the community character that is highly valued and that this scale of change is undesirable.

Many submitters queried why the principal focus for growth was not on the existing centres and maximising infill development, promoting higher densities (upzoning) and utilising existing infrastructure.

Feedback included a minor push to intensification in Kawerau– to include duplexes and some townhouses. People also like the open spaces around Kawerau and want to retain it's character.

There were requests for making rural residential development more enabled in district plans in suitable locations, and there were stated concerns that this would need to be well controlled to avoid and manage reverse sensitivity.

Three submissions made specific requests to have land areas considered as development options in the spatial plan.

- Māori Land Trusts (Golf Links Road Partnership, Te Paroa Lands Trust, Hunia Marupo Lands Trust, Ratahi Lands Trust, Kiwinui Lands Trust, Rotoehu Lands Trust) represent owners of land holdings between Coastlands, Whakatāne golf course and the Whakatāne Airport (188 ha across four land parcels – Māori Freehold Land and freehold title)
- Ōpihi structure plan landowners are seeking recognition for the provision of development at this location, pursuant to the approved structure plan and land use subdivision consent.
- Baird Road and River Flats land parcels for industrial and commercial use near the western side of Ōpōtiki township.

Response to feedback on the settlement pattern – How the spatial plan will respond

- Refer to the response in section 5 above in relation to the three draft scenarios. This response describes how requests to consider new land areas have been considered.

Resiliency of critical infrastructure

Feedback was received on the existing vulnerability of the road network i.e., SH 2 and SH 35 bridges and roads. NZTA's submission recognised their commitment to addressing resilience issues across their network, and that work is identified in relation to resilience improvements for SH 2 in the NLTP 2024-27.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)

In some locations, infrastructure is struggling to cope with the existing demand leading to traffic congestion. More of the state highway and local road network will be exposed to resiliency issues over time from climate change. There are limited/restricted alternative routes available. Suggestions were received to build new bridges (even a tunnel).

Feedback was received on the need to recognise the resiliency of critical infrastructure networks (e.g. National Grid) and their role in responding to and recovering from natural hazard events. This highlights the role of the national grid in enabling growth along with the need for protection from inappropriate development.

Response to feedback on resiliency of critical infrastructure – How the spatial plan will respond

- Refer to the Responses in section 4.1 Infrastructure theme relating to resiliency.

Climate resiliency

Concerns were expressed about the impact of natural hazards and those driven by climate change on existing settlements and the long-term growth areas outlined in Scenario 1 – Matatā and Awakeri.

Response to feedback on climate resiliency – How the spatial plan will respond

- Land surrounding the existing township Awakeri is susceptible to a level of flooding. Options are being considered to manage natural hazard risk, protect the river and drainage scheme and inform the growth, scale and location of growth in Awakeri. This will be an action in the Implementation Plan for the spatial plan.
- Matatā - land to the east of the existing settlement is not significantly constrained by natural hazards. However, it is acknowledged that a catchment-wide approach is needed to manage existing and future natural hazard risk and to protect sensitive receiving environments, including Te Awa o te Atua. Options are being considered to manage natural hazard risk and to protect sensitive receiving environments to inform the growth, scale and location of future growth in Matata. This will be an action in the Implementation Plan for the spatial plan.
- Tāneatua is susceptible to known flooding and a precautionary approach to development is recommended to ensure the community is safe and resilient in the long-term.
- Options are being considered to ensure that the Ōpōtiki township is safe and resilient to natural hazard risk in the long-term.
- Intensification in the Whakatane township is expected to be limited due to the need to manage natural hazard risk, including residual risk associated with overdesign events. Kopeopeo, which is already zoned for Medium Density is not subject to a significant flood risk and is supported as a viable development option in the spatial plan. Other elevated areas may similarly be considered.
- Edgecumbe has not been considered for future urban development due to the risks from flooding.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)***Discussion***

The effects of climate change are becoming more apparent. These issues have been highlighted through the recent Hawke's Bay flood review and has heightened expectations for Councils and others to consider the implications and costs of significant flood events on communities, particularly those that are protected by flood schemes.

Earlier work undertaken by the Bay of Plenty Regional Climate Change Risk Assessment 2023 (BOPCCRA) has identified areas at risk of climate change. The areas at higher risk noted from this work are:

- Coastal settlements may be exposed to increasing coastal hazards (coastal erosion, sea level rise and coastal flooding, and groundwater rise). This includes Whakatāne township, and places like Matatā and Ōhope, Ōpōtiki township and further along the coastline.
- The road and state highway network may face increasing damage and disruption from rainfall related flooding, landslides, coastal erosion, and sea level rise and coastal flooding. Coastal and low-lying areas such as central Whakatāne, Wainui Road from Ōhope to Ōhiwa, coastal parts of SH 2 and SH 35 may become increasingly disrupted from these risks, as will those roads vulnerable to landslides.
- The Matatā and Murupara rail lines may be exposed to increased coastal flooding and landslides, and tree fall in extreme weather.
- Whakatāne Airport may experience increasing disruption due to severe weather and could experience loss of access due to wider flooding of the surrounding roads.

This has informed baseline work for the preparation of the draft Scenarios and Development Options Report which was part of the engagement materials in late 2024.

Subsequent discussions with planning and engineering representatives of the partner councils further considered climate resilience and flooding. These discussions have looked at the locations identified in the three draft scenarios (those described in section 5 above) to ensure flood risk is appropriately thought through. The outcomes from the technical discussions above have been used to develop the new scenario for inclusion in the spatial plan.

Also refer to the following responses for additional information:

- Section 4.1: Infrastructure theme, Sub-theme 3: Infrastructure resiliency to protect the community and ensure safety during natural disasters.
- Section 4.2: Housing theme, Sub-theme 3: Natural hazards and resilient communities
- Section 5: Feedback about scenarios. This response describes natural hazards and climate change have been considered in relation development of the new scenario.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)

Appendix 1:

Draft new scenario

The new scenario is an important input to the writing of the spatial plan because it communicates the growth plan.

The new scenario is future-oriented and considers what could be possible. By setting out a clear, aspirational vision built on engagement feedback, it focuses on creating a desired future. As with all forward-looking statements, there is a great degree of uncertainty, especially from dynamic influences, like immigration rates or macro-economic trends.

Where unit yields are indicated in the scenario, these are subject to additional feasibility investigations and are likely to change. They may also change as the draft spatial plan is prepared, as additional analysis is conducted in relation to the latest population statistics.

Over the course of a 30-year spatial plan regular monitoring and reporting of population changes and land supply (e.g., during revisions to the spatial plan, and in Long Term Plans and infrastructure planning activities) is needed. This can enable adaptable implementation of funding and infrastructure programmes to ensure investment can slow down or speed up to keep pace with demand.

Central Urban Corridor

Most urban growth and economic activity are expected to take place in the central urban corridor. These places are highly interconnected for schooling, employment, and residential activities.

Place	By 2055	Critical pre-requisites
Awakeri	By 2055...Awakeri develops into a small town with commercial services catering mainly to local needs and employment. More than 2,000 dwelling units have been developed with a mix of stand-alone and multi-unit types. Beyond 2055, Awakeri could continue to expand and become a new town in the eastern bay. New parks and open spaces have been established through a master planning approach, to development that integrates with local stormwater management facilities. The school has grown to meet roll requirements, and there are good bus options to other schools in the district. Connections to Whakatāne township, Kawerau, and other local employment opportunities are provided by road and public transport. The intersection of SH 2 and SH 30 places Awakeri at the centre of many places.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development feasibility • Integrated catchment management plan and development masterplan • Structure plan and district plan change • Secured funding • State highway access improvements • Water supply and wastewater services

Environment, Energy, and Resilience Committee - AGENDA

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)

Place	By 2055	Critical pre-requisites
	<p>Ngāi Te Rangihouhiri II and Ngāti Hikakino supported the interest of hapū members who are part of the Kiwinui Trust in developing Māori housing on Rangitaiki Parish 31P 3F, in context of Awakeri in the vicinity of the town.</p> <p>Ngāti Awa Group Holdings has also supported growth in Awakeri and noted that they will be willing to support Ngāti Awa Land Trusts interested in development.</p>	
Whenua Māori West of Coastlands	<p>By 2055... this area could remain in its current state or be developed into a multitude of options from commercial and educational opportunities to residential leasehold and papakāinga developments. At nearly 190 ha, the area represents a strategic opportunity for housing and socio-economic activities. A vision for these future uses would need to be led by iwi and hapū to promote a change from the current undeveloped state.</p> <p>For example, at a lower residential density, the site could possibly accommodate 600 houses as well as social or commercial uses (depending on site conditions and many other factors). As another example, with an urban density and fully reticulated water services it could possibly support 2-3 times this number of houses.</p> <p>While a higher housing yield could possibly be achieved, the lower density recognises that the land tenure is Māori freehold land, and a leasehold based development model (which is likely on this land tenure) would limit the interest of the broader market.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Māori freehold land belongs to members of Ngāi Taiwhakaea hapū who would require strict environmental controls and would oppose anything which may cause further adverse effects to their whenua, awa and moana. It is likely that where development "potentially" occurs on Māori freehold land led by Land Trusts, it will be opposed by Ngāi Taiwhakaea hapū. • The first step must include creating a hapū approved approach to development, development feasibility investigation, site specific natural hazards risks and mitigations assessment (e.g., tsunami). • A masterplan by Land Trusts and hapū would need to be undertaken to inform a District Plan Change and structure plan to enable development of this area, and to confirm the intended development proposal, infrastructure approach, and the related funding proposal. • There would be specific planning and infrastructure pre-conditions, and funding requirements, identified through the masterplan. • The district plan could apply a Future Urban Zone.
Matatā	<p>By 2055.... Matatā has experienced some growth. Development occurs within the areas of the community presently</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently, Matatā is on septic tanks and growth depends on the ability to treat and dispose of wastewater. A stand-alone

Environment, Energy, and Resilience Committee - AGENDA

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)

Place	By 2055	Critical pre-requisites
	<p>zoned residential. Growth has been slow and steady. Matatā's future will be influenced by population growth driven by nearby employment hubs. Increased activity in the Putauaki Industrial Area in Kawerau, business development at Rangiuru (east of Papamoa), and continued growth within Whakatāne township are expected to create new employment opportunities within a reasonable commuting distance. This will likely attract new residents to Matatā, reinforcing the need for a coordinated and sustainable approach to township development.</p> <p>The residential zone in the Operative District Plan for Matatā is larger than the current developed urban footprint. Subject to the development of a reticulated wastewater system, the town is anticipated to grow from approximately 260 homes in 2025 to 600-700 homes. This is expected to happen through a mixture of infill, subdivision of existing residential properties, and new development on residentially zoned land east of Pollen Street. This will occur over the long term of 10-30 years.</p> <p>Additional to the existing capacity provided for in the Operative District Plan, there is elevated land suitable for future new growth further east of the existing residential zone. This area could accommodate another 700-800 homes and should be preserved for future urban development consideration by avoiding low density residential uses.</p> <p>Ngāti Rangitihī and Ngāi Te Rangihouhiri II have a strong desire for Papakāinga development. Ngāti Rangihouhiri also has an interest in developing a cultural base on their land blocks in the East of Matatā.</p>	<p>wastewater treatment plant with land-based disposal is required to enable new housing. The wastewater treatment plant is not a fully funded activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A structure plan should be undertaken for the vacant areas of existing residential zoned land east of Pollen Street, once a wastewater treatment plant receives a resource consent. • At the same time as the structure plan, address changes in character and additional infrastructure requirements by conducting levels of service review, for the community to address impacts on existing infrastructure and facilities from planned development. • The district plan will need to recognise a Future Urban Zone that encompasses land beyond the existing residential zoned areas east of Pollen Street. Before this area could be developed, it should first require the existing residential zoned capacity to be taken up within the community and additional wastewater treatment plant capacity to be funded. Followed by a masterplan led by both iwi and Council. • As part of the structure plan and ahead of any zoning change, a site-specific natural hazards risks and mitigations assessment (e.g., tsunami) should be carried out. • Understanding the work proposed to be undertaken to re-channel Te Awa o Te Atua and the impact that may have on the current town layout is a critical component of future planning for the community.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)

Place	By 2055	Critical pre-requisites
Kawerau: residential infill and Putauaki Industrial area	<p>By 2055... residential infill/intensification in Kawerau has been driven by market demand, supported by the ongoing growth of employment within the community, especially with the expansion of Putauaki Industrial area.</p> <p>Kawerau district has limited opportunities for greenfield residential development. Increasing housing in the district will require infill or intensification of the existing residential areas. There are also blocks of Māori-owned land in the residential area that provide opportunities for papakāinga and Māori-led housing options.</p> <p>The Putauaki Industrial area has been successfully developed as a green industry and geothermal and bio-energy hub. Kawerau is regarded as the pre-eminent industrial activity area in the sub-region.</p>	<p>District-wide stormwater flood modelling to inform review of the district plan, and inclusion of flooding provisions to address the potential for infill / intensification in Kawerau.¹</p> <p>Feasibility for infill development should be improved through the pending district plan review process.</p>
Ōpōtiki township	<p>By 2055... within the township, in the short term, a controlled approach to infill is taken, due to the flood risks present in the township increasing due to climate change.</p> <p>In the medium to long-term, as risks and potential mitigations are clearly understood and implemented, the degree to which infill or intensification of the township can be supported may change. Also in this timeframe, the Hukutaia development area is expected to emerge as an important growth area adjacent to the township which provides a resilient option for further development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infill and intensification within the township will be considered on a case-by-case basis until a risk assessment and mitigations plan are prepared, which make further recommendations. • This would consider both the risk profile and mitigation options, providing a recommendation about the best ways to keep people safe (e.g., through investment into factors like flood warning systems, evacuation planning, etc) based on consideration of costs and benefits.
Hukutaia	<p>By 2055... Hukutaia develops into a vibrant new growth area with capacity for around 2,000 dwelling units, local commercial services, parks, and open spaces.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Plan change/structure plan • All new infrastructure is dependent on new Council budgets or external funding. • Reticulated wastewater services are needed. • New river crossing for water and wastewater services. • A common approach to stormwater management for

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)

Place	By 2055	Critical pre-requisites
		the entire growth areas is facilitated by Council.
Rural residential enablement	<p>By 2055... careful consideration of highly productive lands has led to the loosening of rural residential development rules in selected locations where performance criteria can be achieved. Zoning in these locations encourages sustainable land use, subdivision, and building design outcomes (such as off-grid or hybrid infrastructure solutions). Development will be led by the market.</p> <p>Rural residential performance criteria direct that this may take place in areas away from unacceptable natural or man-made hazards and protected natural areas, where it avoids highly productive lands and does not cause reverse sensitivity constraints toward horticultural, agricultural, industrial activities. And it should not cause transport infrastructure maintenance and operating costs to rise, or network safety performance to decrease.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further investigation of areas that meet the performance criteria. • District Plan change for rural residential areas that meet performance criteria.
Whakatane Township and Kopeopeo	<p>By 2055... The township remains the economic centre for the sub-region, with increasing vibrancy of the town centre supporting a local and sub-region wide catchment. Additional commercial land has been in the vicinity of the township.</p> <p>The focus for residential redevelopment and infill is areas of higher elevation, like the Kopeopeo area, as these areas are more resilient to flood hazards. This area sees a slow and steady pace of infill redevelopment, including more side-by-side multi-unit developments and low-rise</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The district plan review should include a natural hazard risk-based review of existing infill and intensification provisions throughout the township to mitigate risks from more people living in areas susceptible to evacuation orders and hazard events. • It also will re-examine the zoning provisions at Kopeopeo and other suitable areas (e.g., town centre, Hillcrest/Appenzell, others as may be determined), to ensure they are sufficiently

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)

Place	By 2055	Critical pre-requisites
	apartments that meet a need for smaller sized houses. While there is some water and wastewater capacity to accommodate more development, stormwater management continues to be a limiting factor. In lower lying areas, Whakatāne township has changed the district plan to be more restrictive for infill and intensification in areas of town which are more exposed to residual risk from overdesign flood events.	enabling for intensification and infill development.
Te Teko	By 2055... a risk-based approach enables development in areas where effective mitigations can ensure people's safety or risk is minimal. Te Teko is within the Rangitāiki Floodplain and major urban stopbanks run adjacent to the Rangitāiki River as a flood protection. These assets provide for a specific level of service and are still prone to a risk of flood water breaching the defence in a rainfall event that is greater than the defence is designed for (residual risk). Te Teko is also located downstream from the Matahina hydro-electric dam. While not highlighted as an area for substantial growth through the spatial plan, there may be opportunities for small scale developments to meet local demand for housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of flood mapping. • A risk assessment and mitigations plan being prepared which makes further recommendations about where and how development could take place.
Tāneatua	The significant flooding event (2017) demonstrated the susceptibility of Tāneatua to flooding and a lack of safe evacuation routes. Flood mapping of the area is pending.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of flood mapping. • A risk assessment and mitigations plan are prepared which make further recommendations. • Development may bring forward need for Peketahi Bridge renewal.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**Rural Southern Corridor**

The focus for this corridor is on iwi-led housing and economic regenerative opportunities particularly related to established forestry and horticultural industries and new opportunities like water bottling. While the spatial plan captures some of the associated aspirations for these lands, the main emphasis sits with iwi to provide leadership and direction for Councils to support.

Place	By 2055...	Critical pre-requisites
Minginui and Te Whaiti	By 2055.... an increase in Māori housing and papakāinga provides opportunities for people of Ngāti Whare descent to relocate to Māori freehold land in Minginui and Te Whaiti. Marae and surrounding lands are prepared as an emergency civil defence hub for their people in case of emergencies that may block the community from nearby townships. Minginui grows sustainably, providing for the needs of whānau and creating a central recreation area and access to essential services. These areas and services remain accessible to the Te Whaiti community. The development of infrastructure in Minginui reflects a focus on self-sufficiency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a masterplan led by Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whare and the Minginui Village Incorporated Society. • Review the District Plan to ensure it enables the masterplan outcomes.
Murupara	By 2055... Murupara residents have worked towards their top priorities: hāpori spaces, improvements to public facilities, and access to healthcare and improved safety on roads and addressing housing needs. Two main changes have been considered through the spatial plan, being changing Evan's Park into a residential zone and rezoning land to reorient the central business area to the main road to service the travelling public. More broadly, some of the areas zoned for residential development have been taken up for new homes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of the feasibility of land transfer of Evan's Park, followed by a district plan change. • Cost-benefit and feasibility analysis and engagement on shifting the commercial centre, possibly followed by a district plan change for commercial rezonings, depending on the outcome. • Finalise Murupara Master Plan. • Infrastructure is expected to be delivered through existing infrastructure renewals programmes. Additional planning is required to confirm.

Eastern Coastal Corridor

The focus of this corridor is on iwi-led economic development opportunities, particularly including growth within horticulture and aquaculture industries. Papakāinga and other Māori housing opportunities are supported outcomes. Te Kaha is the primary local service centre.

Place	By 2055...	Critical pre-requisites
Te Kaha and other coastal areas	By 2055... Additional industrial areas have developed in relation to aquaculture/horticultural activities east of Ōpōtiki township up the coast, including the Te Kaha area. Papakāinga and Māori-led housing has grown to meet iwi aspirations, becoming a larger part of the overall housing mix.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Plan changes to recognise industrial land uses and facilitate economic activities.

7.1.1 Appendix A - Engagement Summary Report(Cont.)**Areas not being considered further as part of the spatial plan**

Some areas were put forward earlier as part of the technical work or by submitters. These have been reviewed against up-to-date natural hazards considerations. Due to natural hazards constraints, these areas are not being considered as places where additional development capacity should be allocated in addition to what is already in the district plans.

Place	Key constraining factor(s)
Ōhope	Ōhope is a high demand residential location due to the environmental amenity of the coastal area. There are substantial constraints from flood hazards and coastal inundation that preclude much development taking place. Natural hazard mapping is under review, and there is unlikely to be substantial capacity to infill or intensification in this area.
Edgecumbe	Edgecumbe is within the Rangitāiki Floodplain and major urban stopbanks run adjacent to the Rangitāiki River as a flood protection measure for these settlements. These assets provide for a specific level of service and are still prone to a risk of flood water breaching the defence in a rainfall event that is greater than the defence is designed for (residual risk). Edgecumbe is also located downstream from the Matahina hydro-electric dam. In previous heavy rain events, floodwater has been pre-emptively released from the spill gates of the dam to relieve the water pressure and lessen the impact of flooding upstream and downstream. The significant flooding event (2017) demonstrated the susceptibility of the location.
Keepa Road area and Paroa Road area near to Whakatane township	These areas are protected by stopbanks. These assets provide for a specific level of service and are still prone to a risk of flood water breaching the defence in a rainfall event that is greater than the defence is designed for (residual risk).
Māori freehold land to east of the Charter Club Ōhope	Moderate to high susceptibility to landslide from extreme rainfall. Some mitigation could be feasible and could support development, although this would be limited. Land to the east of Maraetotara Stream is within a floodplain. The area is partially located in low-lying area at the fringe of Pohutukawa Avenue and at the entrance of Ōhiwa Harbour, limiting yield potential.
Maraetotara Valley in Ōhope	Moderate to high susceptibility to landslide from extreme rainfall. Some mitigation could be feasible and could support development, although this would be limited. Land to the east of Maraetotara Stream is within a floodplain. Road access is likely to be compromised due to flooding.
Paerata Ridge, near Ōpōtiki township	Paerata Ridge is not a viable option for greenfield development due to topographical constraints and natural hazard risk (landslides). The area also has highly productive horticulture land with Land Use Class 2 soils which are to be protected from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.
20 ha parcel across from Dunlop Road, Ōpōtiki, Lot 1 DP 7114	These sites are within the floodplain of Te Karaka and Kukumoa streams, exposed to river and stream flooding and coastal inundation. Very low elevations above sea level.
Baird Road, Ōpōtiki	Any development decisions around the Baird Road area require a precautionary approach for industrial development due to flood risk and wastewater treatment plant upgrades. ODC will decide on the best location to provide for future industrial growth within the wider area before a decision is made regarding Baird Road.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan

Contents

Part 1: Introduction..... 3

About this Plan 5

 Who are we planning for? 5

 What the Spatial Plan is used for..... 6

 Who has been involved in making the plan? 7

 How does it align with the policy, planning, funding, and project delivery framework? 10

 What process was undertaken to prepare the plan?..... 12

Enabling iwi visions for the future..... 13

 Treaty Settlements 14

 Visions for the future 16

The community’s values and aspirations 17

What we want to achieve..... 18

Figures

Figure 1: Location	4
Figure 2: How the plan is implemented	6
Figure 3: Groups involved in making the plan	8
Figure 4: Project team structure	9
Figure 5: Process to prepare the plan	12
Figure 6: Iwi rohe in the eastern bay	15
Figure 7: Iwi engagement feedback	16
Figure 8: Themes of engagement feedback	17

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Part 1: Introduction

We have created a plan that helps us set a vision for the future growth of the Whakatāne, Kawerau and Ōpōtiki districts, within the rohe of the iwi and hapū of Eastern Bay of Plenty in the wider Bay of Plenty Region. Our Places – Eastern Bay Spatial Plan sets out where the Eastern Bay of Plenty wants to head and provides a roadmap for how to get there. Welcome to Our Places, Eastern Bay Spatial Plan

The eastern bay is renowned for its outstanding natural and cultural taonga, attracting people to our region over the centuries. We are all part of a continuum – there were those before us and there will be those after us. We have a responsibility to care for the taonga we have inherited, while meeting the needs of current and future generations. Those needs include ensuring that our people can continue to live, work, visit and play in the eastern bay, now and in future. It's about providing safe places for people to live, supporting the local economy, adapting to climate change and protecting our environment – ultimately, ensuring people and places can thrive.

The spatial plan is a collaboration between Whakatāne, Kawerau, and Ōpōtiki district councils, and Toi Moana Bay of Plenty Regional Council, working in partnership with iwi and Government agencies to respond to the challenges and opportunities facing the sub-region.

The spatial plan provides a framework to help our communities grow in a sustainable way. It focuses on improving our amenities, protecting our environment, offering better transport options, and providing housing that meets the needs of our diverse and growing population. The plan also emphasises the importance of safeguarding our natural, cultural, and historic resources, ensuring resilient communities, including managing climate change risks, and building strong partnerships with iwi and hapū.

By encouraging investment and economic development, the spatial plan aims to support the local economy. It also promotes community involvement, giving residents a chance to have their say in planning for the future. Overall, the spatial plan offers a long-term vision for coordinated planning, resource allocation, and decision-making across the eastern bay.

Introduction



7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Introduction

About this Plan

Who are we planning for?

The plan has been developed for the people of the eastern bay, and for future generations.

The eastern bay has about 57,000 residents, and we need to plan for many more. Of these, 33,500 (59%) live in Kawerau, Ōpōtiki, and Whakatāne; 11,650 (20%) in Awakeri, Matatā, Murupara, Tāneatua, Te Teko, and Edgecumbe; and 11,850 (21%) in rural areas.

By 2055, the eastern bay's population could increase to 68,000. This growth means we will need more houses, business space, and supporting infrastructure.

Our population is ageing, alongside a youthful and growing Māori population. By 2055, people aged over 65 could make up almost one third of the population, up from 17% in 2018. Māori have a different age profile compared to the general population, with a median age about ten years younger. This demographic shift means that future housing in the eastern bay will need to support both a growing and ageing population, with particular attention to the needs of our young and vibrant Māori community.

Our region is unique with its significant Māori population, which stands out compared to other parts of the country. Over half of the eastern bay's population are Māori, comprising about two-thirds of the population in Kawerau district and Ōpōtiki district, while in the Whakatāne district, Māori represent almost half.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Introduction

What the Spatial Plan is used for

This spatial plan captures our collective aspirations and goals for the sub-region. It outlines how we can tackle challenges and seize opportunities together. Here's how it will help:

Guiding growth and development: The plan outlines where we expect urban growth and development across the eastern bay, while ensuring communities are safe and resilient. It aligns strategies from various organisations, including local and Central Government agencies and iwi.

Informing priorities and decision making: The plan guides councils and Government agencies on where to invest in infrastructure and services to help our communities grow.

Building partnerships: The plan focuses on collaboration with different groups to address community needs through collective actions, joined up infrastructure delivery and advocacy.

Effective regulation: While this plan does not replace Council district plans or change zoning, it does guide detailed growth planning and will inform district plans and long-term plans, and align decision-making, helping us see the bigger picture. It will also place the eastern bay in a strong position to respond swiftly to implementing the upcoming reforms of the Resource Management Act (RMA), which are expected to require a regional spatial plan.

Integrating other plans: The plan considers other policies and programs influencing places. For areas facing changes, it shows how Councils can work collectively with each other, and for communities and landowners to understand impacts and plan together. The spatial plan will align with the Economic Development Strategy to achieve growth.

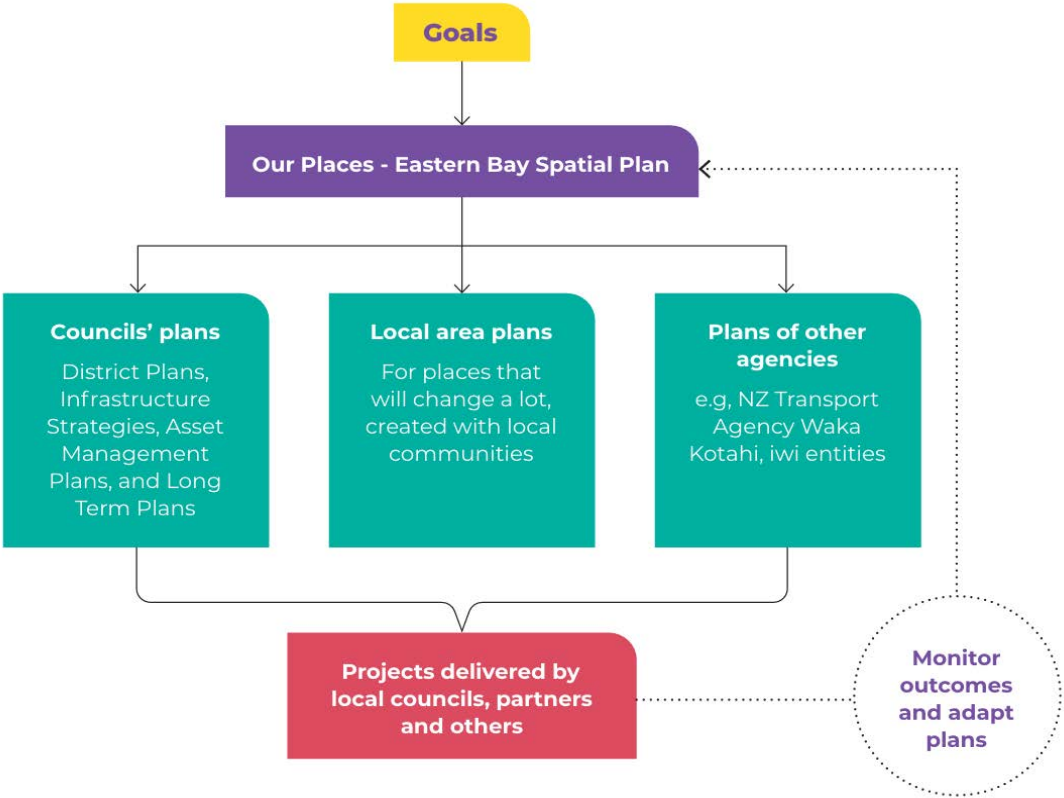


Figure 2: How the plan is implemented

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Introduction

Who has been involved in making the plan?

The spatial plan has been developed in partnership with Local, Regional and Central Government along with iwi partners from across the sub-region. The wellbeing of eastern bay communities is inextricably linked, and partners recognised the need to plan and implement outcomes together as a sub-region, rather than separate authorities, iwi and districts.

This partnership was initiated in 2022 when leaders in the eastern bay recognised the need to work together to positively shape the future of the sub-region. It brings together the people and organisations that have a significant role in managing growth. The partnership is also underpinned by Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi) principles of partnership, making informed decisions and active participation. The spatial plan has been developed with tangata whenua and iwi representatives as part of the Project Governance Group.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Introduction



** Iwi authorities involved in the project at the time of this report; not all have chosen to actively participate in the project, but are being kept informed*

Figure 3: Groups involved in making the plan

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Introduction

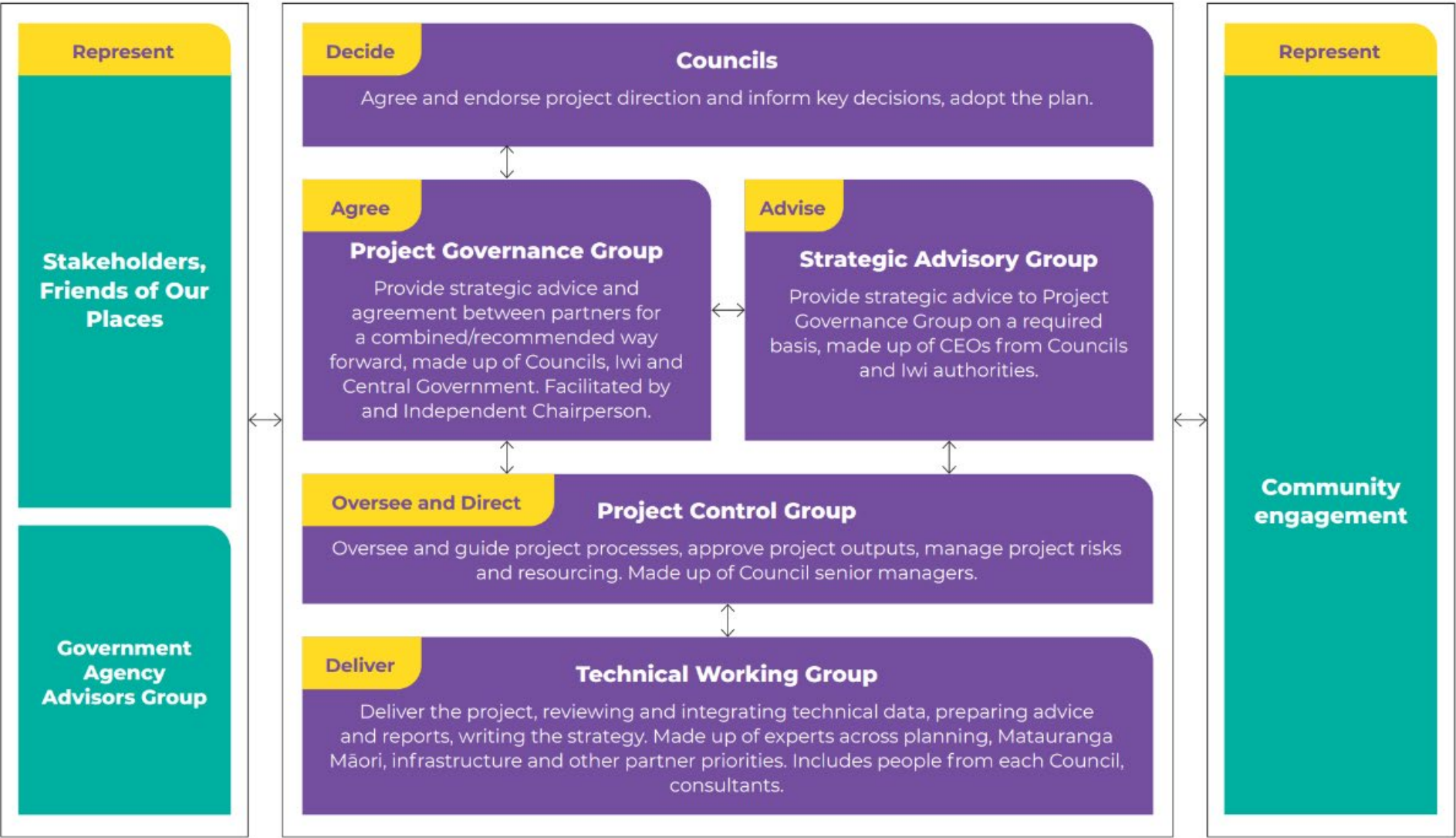


Figure 4: Project team structure

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Introduction

How does it align with the policy, planning, funding, and project delivery framework?

One of the primary objectives of the spatial plan is to integrate various policy directions and planning processes into a unified set of priorities. This single vision can then serve as the core of the broader framework of directives, strategies, policies, plans, and programmes at national, regional, and local levels to influence the growth and development of the eastern bay.

The spatial plan supports the purpose of the Local Government Act 2002 by enabling local decision making and by promoting social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of the communities in the eastern bay. The spatial plan has also considered the Land Transport Management Act 2003 which requires the integration of land use and transport planning and the 2024 Government Policy Statement (GPS) on land transport which sets out the strategic priorities for land transport investment. The spatial plan has also been informed by the RMA and the suite of National Policy Statements (NPS) which provide direction on matters of national significance.

National direction for resource management and planning is in a period of significant transition. The spatial plan enables the eastern bay to proactively speak about what it holds important in these processes and can inform the development of pending regional spatial plans signalled in RMA reform announcements.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Introduction

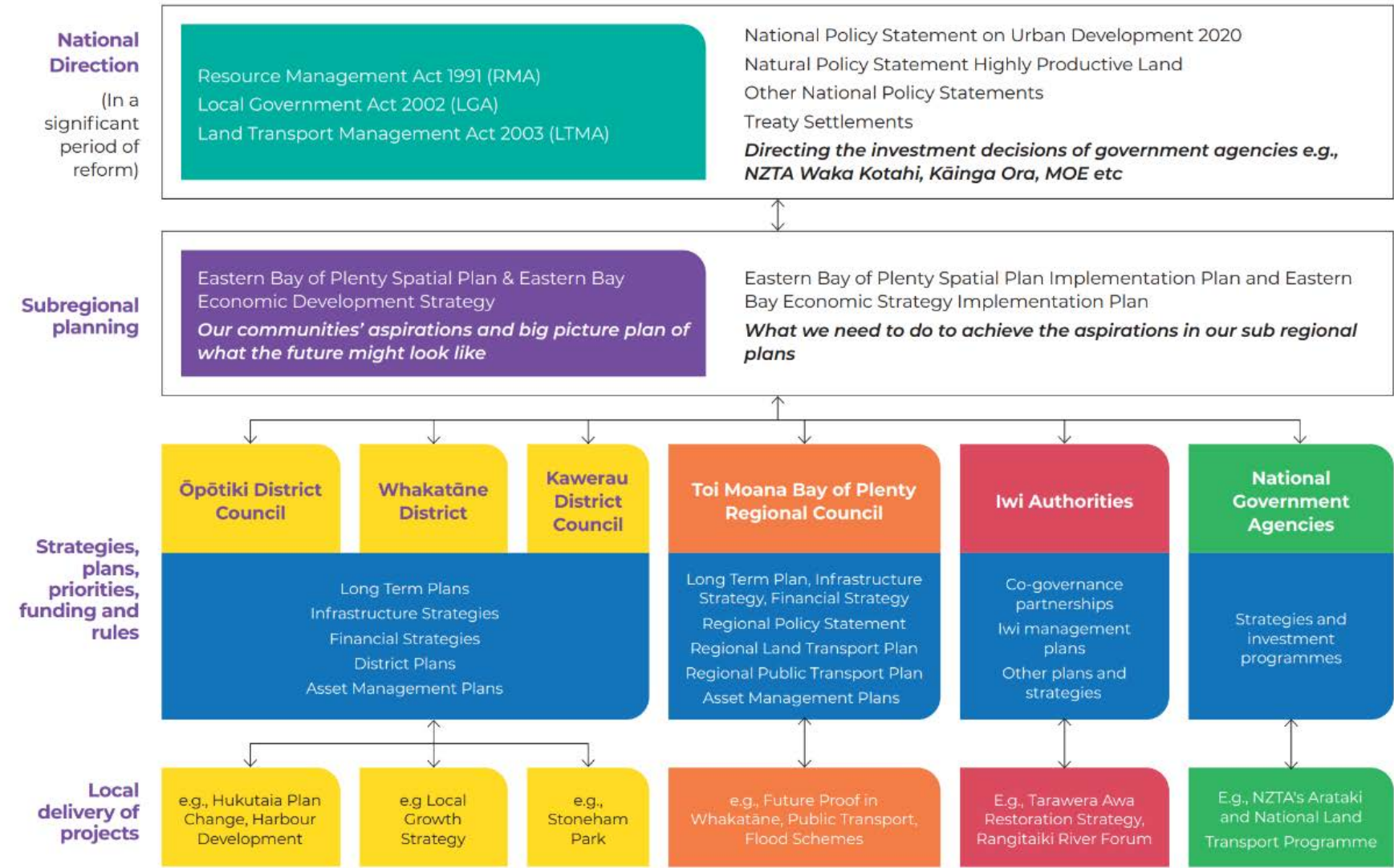


Figure 5: Planning and policy direction

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Introduction

What process was undertaken to prepare the plan?

A collaborative approach was taken to prepare the spatial plan, including community and stakeholder engagement, so that the people of the eastern bay have a say about what matters most about the places we live, work, play and invest, and all relevant agencies have a realistic understanding about future priorities, resourcing and funding needs.



Figure 6: Process to prepare the plan

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Introduction

Enabling iwi visions for the future

Iwi are key players in the eastern bay, with customary rights and obligations to use, develop and protect their ancestral taonga, including lands, water, and infrastructure. Such rights and obligations include providing healthy homes and sustainable employment for tribal members.

Iwi are emerging as major investment partners across aquaculture, horticulture, agriculture, tourism, forestry, and water resources and supply.

Grounded in deep and enduring connections to their kāinga, iwi and hapū demonstrate a unique resilience and ability to walk in both te ao Māori and te ao Pākehā. This strength, shaped by whakapapa and a fixed presence in the region, continues to inform and drive iwi-led aspirations for social, cultural, economic, and environmental wellbeing.

Iwi in the eastern bay

The iwi of the eastern bay are an enduring presence, grounded in whakapapa, whenua, and generations of connection to place. They have maintained an unbroken relationship with their rohe, upholding the values, tikanga, and identity of their people through centuries of change. Their presence is not just historical but living and resilient.

In the face of colonisation and Treaty breaches, these iwi have remained strong and adaptive. They continue to lead with purpose, restoring mana motuhake and revitalising their language, culture, and environmental stewardship. Their role in the region is central, not only as tangata whenua but as contributors to community wellbeing, education, and whānau resilience.

Economically, they are investors, employers, and innovators. Iwi governance entities drive sustainable development, partner with local and regional government, and support projects that reflect iwi aspirations. The iwi of the eastern bay are essential to the social, cultural, and economic fabric of the region, anchoring its identity and shaping a future that honours the past and uplifts generations to come.

Hapū, whānau, and Land Trusts play a vital role in sustaining the fabric of iwi life in the eastern bay. As the foundation of iwi identity and governance, hapū and whānau carry the responsibilities of ahi kā, ensuring the ongoing presence, protection, and use of whenua, awa, and maunga. Land Trusts and incorporations, often established to manage whenua Māori under collective ownership, are key vehicles for advancing local development, supporting marae, and providing opportunities for future generations. Together, these entities enable grounded decision-making, uphold intergenerational responsibilities, and ensure that the aspirations of whānau and hapū are reflected in the management and use of whenua and resources.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Introduction

In the eastern bay, there are 11 iwi, 99 hapū and 92 marae. These iwi include:

- Te Whānau a Apanui
- Ngāti Porou
- Ngāi Tai
- Te Whakatōhea
- Ngāti Awa
- Ngāti Makino
- Ngāi Tūhoe
- Ngāti Rangitahi
- Tūwharetoa ki Kawerau
- Ngāti Manawa
- Ngāti Whare

Twenty two percent (22%) of land in the eastern bay is Māori Freehold Land (168,987 ha) making iwi and Māori Land Trusts key parties in the development of the eastern bay. Māori-led housing and economic activities are inseparable from the eastern bay, and it is crucial that the wider spatial planning work acknowledges that each iwi and hapū have historical whakapapa over their places of interest, and that these are considered in decision-making.

Treaty Settlements

Treaty Settlements are formal agreements between the Crown and iwi that aim to address historical breaches of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. In the Eastern Bay of Plenty, iwi such as Ngāti Awa, Ngāi Tūhoe, Ngāti Manawa, Ngāti Whare, Te Whakatōhea, Ngāti Rangitahi, Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Makino, Tuwharetoa ki Kawerau (as part of the Ngāti Tūwharetoa settlement) have settled with the Crown through these processes. Ngāi Tai and Te Whānau a Apanui are still in negotiations. Settlements typically include financial and cultural redress, the return of specific lands or sites of significance, and formal apologies.

The settlements enable iwi to reassert rangatiratanga and require the establishment of Post-Settlement Governance Entities (PSGEs). They also support iwi participation in co-governance arrangements, environmental management, regional planning and strengthening iwi presence across social, cultural, economic, and political spheres.

Introduction



7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Introduction

Visions for the future

Aspirations and priorities have been documented from engagement on the spatial plan and from materials provided in prior consultation processes.

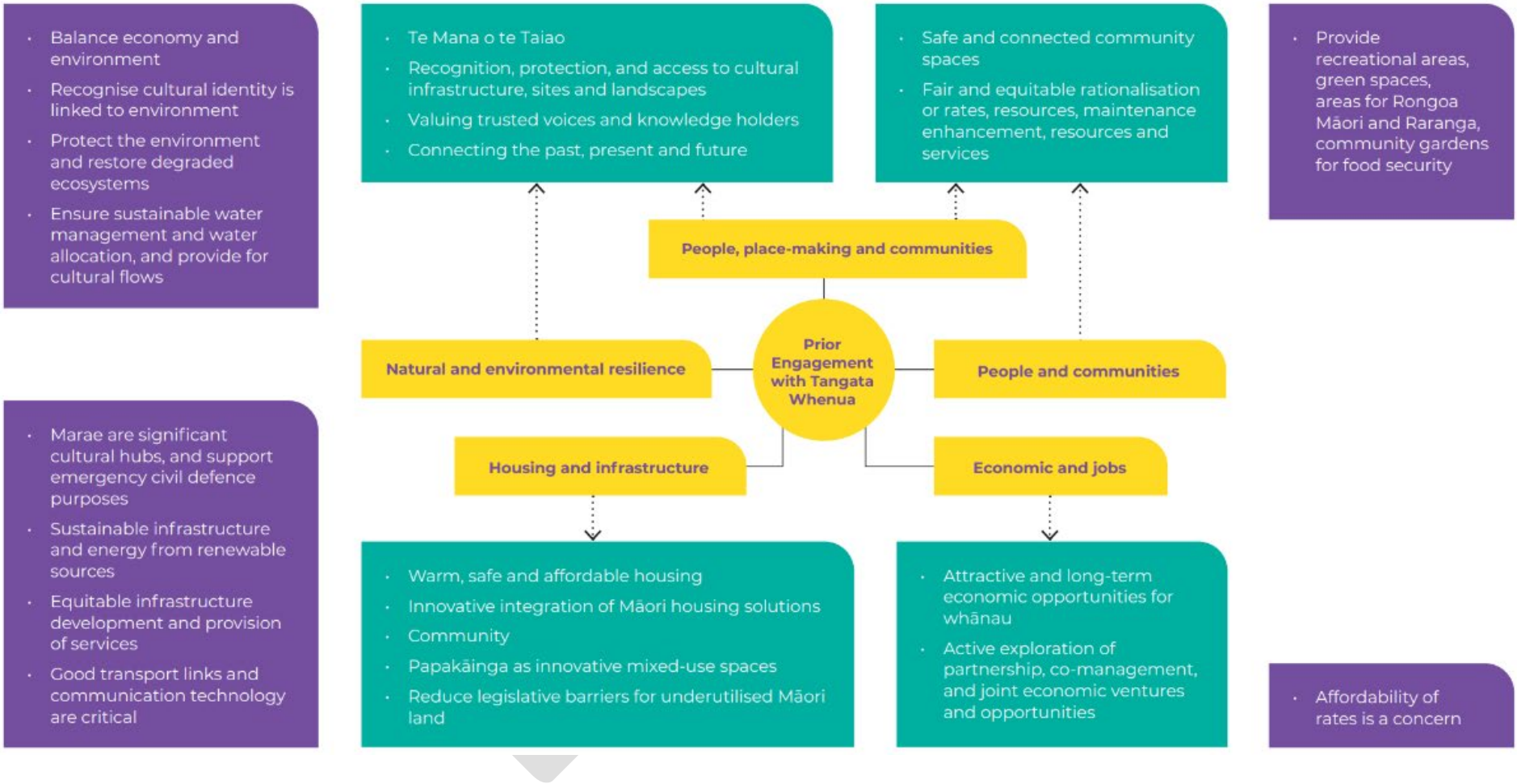


Figure 8: Iwi engagement feedback

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Introduction

The community’s values and aspirations

The implementation priorities of the spatial plan respond to the interest and ambitions set out by the community through engagement, with emphasis on quality of life and the environment.

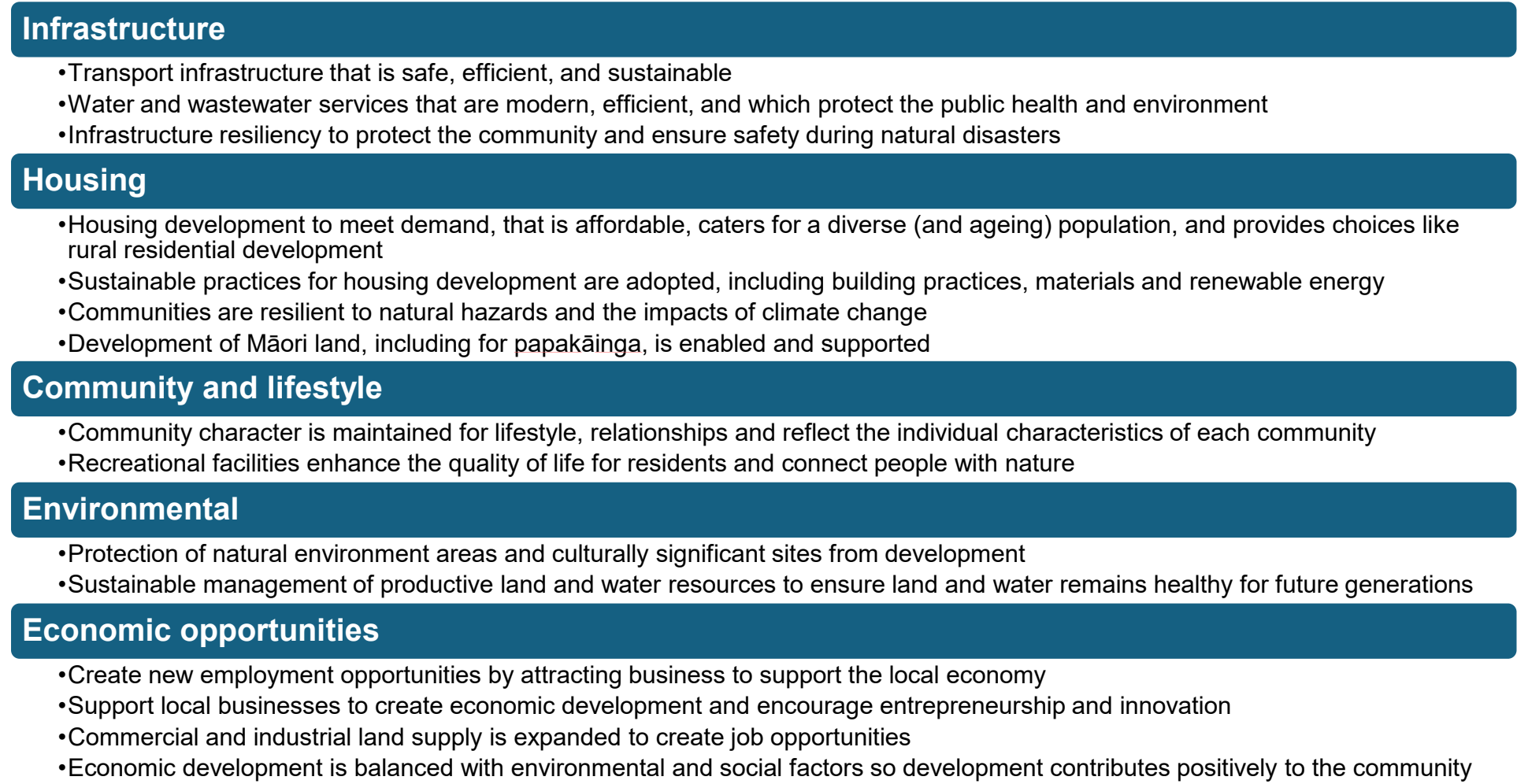


Figure 9: Themes of engagement feedback

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Introduction

What we want to achieve

The Project Governance Group (PGG) developed goals to provide direction for the spatial plan in achieving long term wellbeing outcomes. These were developed to be in alignment with the Long-Term Plan visions and community outcomes across the sub-region, prior engagements and consultations, and considering iwi values and aspirations.

Goals

Whai hauora me te whakarauora
Healthy and healing

Ngā ohaoha toitū, kanorau hoki, e tuku ana i ngā mahi me ngā kaupapa mō te iwi whānui
Sustainable, diversified economy providing jobs and purpose for our people

Ngā tāngata, ngā haporī me ngā tauwāhi e hono ana, e tōnui ana, e manawaroa ana hei whakaata i te hītori me ngā tūmanako o tātou katoa
Connected, thriving, resilient people, communities & places that reflect our history and aspirations

Key influences

Contents

Part 2: Key influences 5

Factors shaping the eastern bay’s future 5

Strong connections create opportunities 6

Healthy and healing 8

Natural and Cultural Environment 8

 Where are we now? 8

 What is being done?..... 10

 What does the future hold? 12

Sustainable, diversified economy 15

Economic wellbeing..... 15

 Where are we now? 15

 What does the future hold? 21

Population growth..... 23

 Looking back at how the population has changed 23

 Looking ahead at how the population could change 24

Employment growth..... 27

Connected and resilient people, places, and communities 28

Changing housing needs 28

 An aging population needs accessible housing 28

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

A growing youthful Māori demographic needs larger homes, and more affordable homes28

Affordability of housing continues to be a challenge for everyone29

Natural hazards and climate resilience33

Where are we now?33

What is being done?.....38

What does the future hold?39

Rural Environment41

Where are we now?42

What does the future hold?45

Figures

Figure 1: Regional and upper North Island Connections 7

Figure 2: Natural and cultural environment activities 11

Figure 3: Protecting and enhancing the environment 13

Figure 4: Protecting the cultural environment 14

Figure 5: Primary industries 17

Figure 6: Eastern bay's contribution to GDP 18

Figure 7: Economic structure by broad sector (% of total, year to March 2024) 19

Figure 8: Annual change in GDP over the past twenty years 20

Figure 9: Economic Development Strategy Summary 22

Figure 10: Number of children born on the eastern bay Error! Bookmark not defined.

Figure 11: Birthplace of residents Error! Bookmark not defined.

Figure 12: Eastern bay population projection range 25

Figure 13: Employee projections 2022-2053 27

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

Figure 14: Demand for business land 2022-2053 (ha)	27
Figure 15: Median age	30
Figure 16: Demographic change	30
Figure 17: Housing register	31
Figure 18: Household crowding	31
Figure 19: Housing register	31
Figure 20: House values	31
Figure 21: Climate change risks	37
Figure 22: Catchment locations	35
Figure 23: Natural hazards	36
Figure 24: Risk reduction roadmap	41
Figure 25: Rural environment	43

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

Part 2: Key influences

Factors shaping the eastern bay’s future

Part 2 – Key Influences describes the key influences that inform the decision-making process for the spatial plan, development of goals, and recommendations for key moves and what we need to focus on doing next.

Goal	Key influence topics	Overview statement
Whai hauora me te whakarauora Healthy and healing	Natural and cultural environment	There is an opportunity to prioritise the natural and cultural environment more highly within decision-making processes.
Ngā ohaoha toitū, kanorau hoki, e tuku ana i ngā mahi me ngā kaupapa mō te iwi whānui Sustainable, diversified economy providing jobs and purpose for our people	Economic wellbeing Population growth Employment growth	There is an opportunity to leverage investments and infrastructure projects to boost the local economy and create new job opportunities.
Ngā tāngata, ngā hāpori me ngā tauwāhi e hono ana, e tōnui ana, e manawaroa ana hei whakaata i te hītori me ngā tūmanako o tātou katoa Connected, thriving, resilient people, communities and places that reflect our history and aspirations	Changing housing needs Natural hazards and climate resilience Rural environment	The eastern bay's population is expected to, present an opportunity to plan for diverse housing types and business developments to accommodate this growth. This needs to be done in context of various natural hazards, presenting an opportunity to proactively address these risks, ensuring community safety and growth.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

Strong connections create opportunities

The eastern bay is not an island and strong connections to the broader region are needed. For example, it is critical that freight can access the Port of Tauranga to reach export markets reliably, housing is located close to employment, and people can reach healthcare and other services in larger urban centres. These are some of the key intra-regional projects that have influenced our planning:

Rangiuru Business Park: a significant industrial development located near Te Puke in the Western Bay of Plenty. It spans 148 ha to accommodate large industrial facilities and is expected to provide up to 4000 jobs in the future. Quayside Holdings owns Stage 1 and 2, comprising 60 ha which is in development now. It provides easy access to major transport routes, including the Tauranga Eastern Link expressway and SH 2 within the junction of the western, eastern, and southern Bay of Plenty, making it highly accessible to the eastern bay.

Tauranga Port: is well-connected to all eastern bay of Plenty districts. Key transport routes, such as SH 2 and the Tauranga Eastern Link expressway, facilitate efficient movement of goods between the port and these areas.

Rotorua Future Development Strategy: outlines how Rotorua will grow and develop over the next 30 years. It focuses on creating a well-functioning urban environment that supports the social, economic, and cultural wellbeing of its people and acknowledges freight links to Kawerau and Whakatane.

Western Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth: a collaborative strategy for managing growth in the Western Bay of Plenty sub-region. The latest SmartGrowth Strategy (2024-2074) aims to build strong, resilient communities that are well-connected and sustainable, including planned growth in Te Tumu in the eastern corridor of the Western Bay sub-region. The SmartGrowth Strategy also identifies SH 2 as an important corridor that services rural production in the eastern bay to the Port of Tauranga.

Gisborne Region Tairāwhiti Future Development Strategy: a comprehensive plan outlining a 30-year vision. It identifies areas for future housing development to meet the demand for nearly 5,000 new homes, ensures necessary infrastructure upgrades, promotes urban intensification to prevent sprawl, and emphasises sustainable practices to benefit the community and environment.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

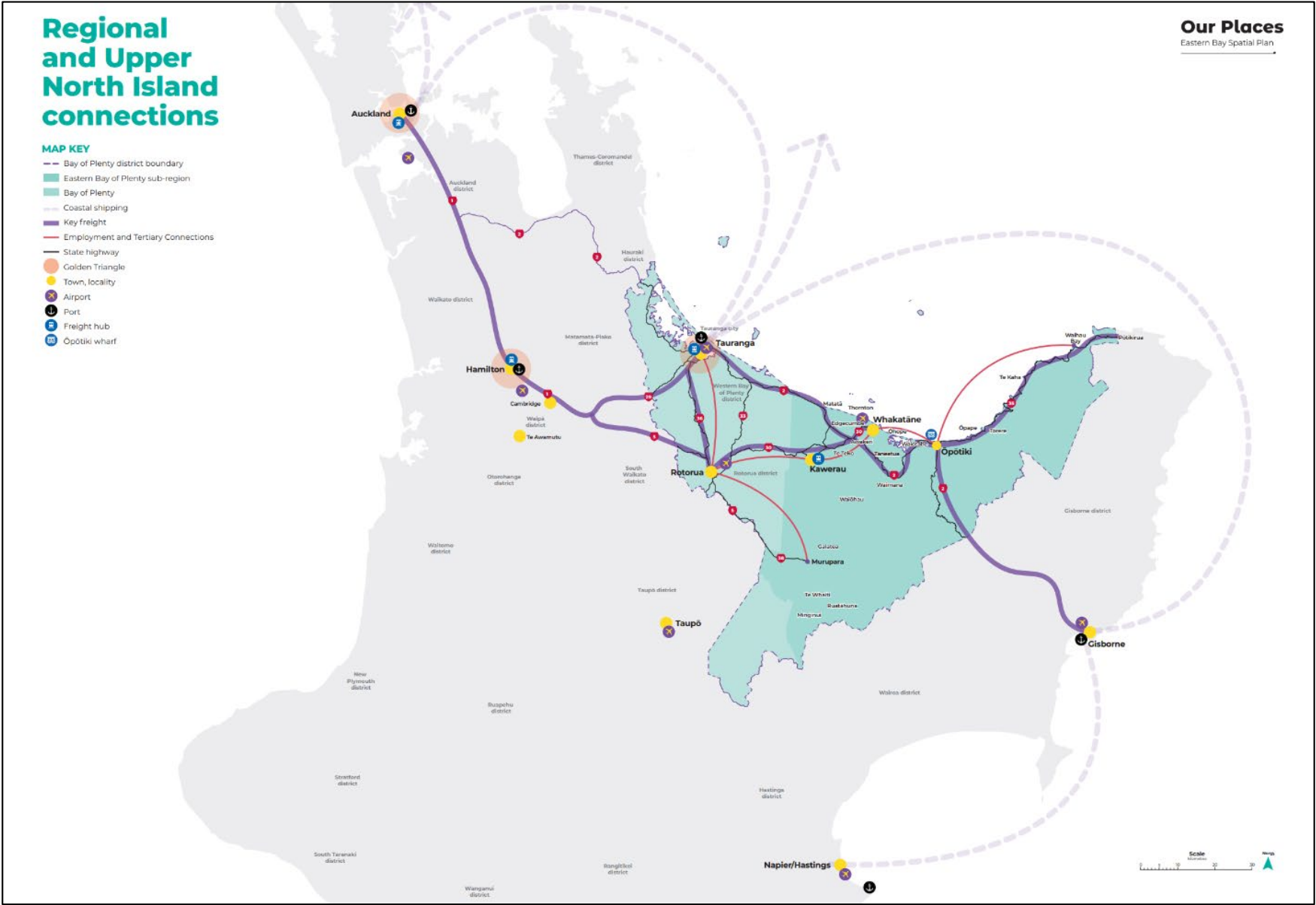


Figure 1: Regional and upper North Island Connections

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

Healthy and healing

Natural and Cultural Environment

To be better guardians, we need to prioritise the natural and cultural environment more highly within our decision-making. This includes focusing on:

- **Designing sites sensitively by incorporating green infrastructure into urban design, maintaining and developing ecological corridors, and implementing habitat restoration projects in impacted areas.**
- **Upgrading water management systems to meet higher standards.**
- **Continuing to prioritise an integrated catchment management approach, reflecting the Māori concept of "ki uta ki tai" (from the mountains to the sea).**
- **Continuing to recognise, protect and enhance cultural landscapes, customary activities, wāhi tapu, wāhi taonga, wāhi tupuna, and mahinga kai.**

Where are we now?

Whenua

The tangata whenua of the eastern bay whakapapa to the natural world, including their ancestral whenua. The eastern bay has a diverse natural landscape. The ranges of Huiarau and Ikawhenua, with the high point of Maungapōhatu running through to the wilderness treasure of Te Urewera which is the north island’s largest native forest. The steep Raukūmara Ranges taper away at the East Cape. Te Urewera and other forested areas such as Whirinaki Te Pua-a-Tane and Raukūmara Conservation Parks provide numerous benefits for the environment, including biodiversity protection, climate regulation, soil stability, and maintaining water quality and supply. Other landscapes such as Ōhiwa Harbour, Waiōtahe and Waioweka Estuaries, and the Matatā wetlands hold significant natural and cultural value and are sensitive to change.

Residential, industrial and agricultural development has modified the landscape. This has had harmful effects on the landform, and the ecological and indigenous biodiversity components of the environment. Many natural landscapes, features and sites are now protected through regional and district planning from inappropriate development.

Awa

The main rivers in the eastern bay (Rangitāiki, Whirinaki, Whakatāne, Waimana-Tauranga, Tarawera, Waiōtahe, Waioweka, Ōtara, Mōtū, and Raukōkore) have shaped the land by depositing sediments, creating fertile soils in areas like the Rangitāiki Plains and around Ōpōtiki.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)**Key influences**

For Māori, fresh water is a taonga considered essential to life and identity. Fresh water (rivers, lakes, streams, wetlands, groundwater and geothermal resources) is a precious resource and used for residential, commercial and industrial uses, for horticultural irrigation and agriculture, stormwater management, to generate electricity in hydroelectric power generation schemes, and for recreation and tourism purposes. Freshwater habitats also offer the opportunity for wildlife, recreation and amenity, and connections between the places we live.

The catchment areas surrounding the rivers affect the biodiversity and ecology of the water and activities on the land in these catchments can harm the rivers. Risks can include pollution from factories, farms, and towns, increased water use reducing river flow, extreme weather causing floods, landslides, and droughts, and poor land practices leading to sediment build-up in rivers. To address these risks, integrated catchment management practices are being undertaken to protect the natural character, indigenous biodiversity and ecosystems, alongside community involvement in conservation.

The Rangitāiki River, Tarawera River and Ōhiwa Harbour have co-governance or co-management arrangements with tāngata whenua to restore the cultural, environmental and spiritual health and wellbeing of the catchments, rivers and harbour for the benefit of present and future generations.

Moana

The eastern bay has the longest coastline in the Bay of Plenty region and includes several rural coastal communities. From Matatā to Ōpape, the coast is lined with sand dunes, interrupted by river mouths, harbours, volcanic features, and rocky headlands. East of Ōpape, the landscape becomes steep and rugged with rocky headlands and long gravel beaches. This 125 km coastline supports active boating and aquaculture industries, with many aquaculture projects in Ōpōtiki District led by iwi, benefiting future generations. The coastal marine area offers many values, including ecological, cultural, spiritual, recreational, and economic benefits for communities. However, activities like farming, forestry, transportation, and urban growth have polluted and changed many coastal ecosystems. It's important to understand these impacts to manage and reduce them effectively.

Cultural Heritage

Te Taiao, the natural world, holds deep significance to tangata whenua. There are many sites and areas of cultural significance in the eastern bay, which include urupā (burial site), pā (fortified settlement), kaingā (village) maunga tapu (sacred mountain) and places where taonga have been found. These sites may be wāhi tapu (culturally and spiritually significant sites and places) or wāhi tupuna (ancestral sites) and wāhi taonga (treasure places that have high intrinsic value). Adverse effects on sites and areas of cultural significance, cultural landscape values, culturally sensitive ecology, as well as important waterways and marine environments have occurred and continue to occur. This leads to cultural disconnection and loss of land, cultural practices and identity. The relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, and other taonga is a matter of national importance. Many sites and areas are protected through regional and district planning to ensure the sacred nature is respected.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

What is being done?

A lot of work has already been done or is in progress to recognise and manage elements of our natural and cultural environment. Overarching legislation, plans, projects, agreements and initiatives are currently in place to ensure actions are taken to restore and protect areas and sites. The existing work is a mix of local or site-specific projects (e.g., community care groups), infrastructure and reserve management planning, regional and district-wide policies and plans, catchment-based programs, and implementation of national policy direction.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

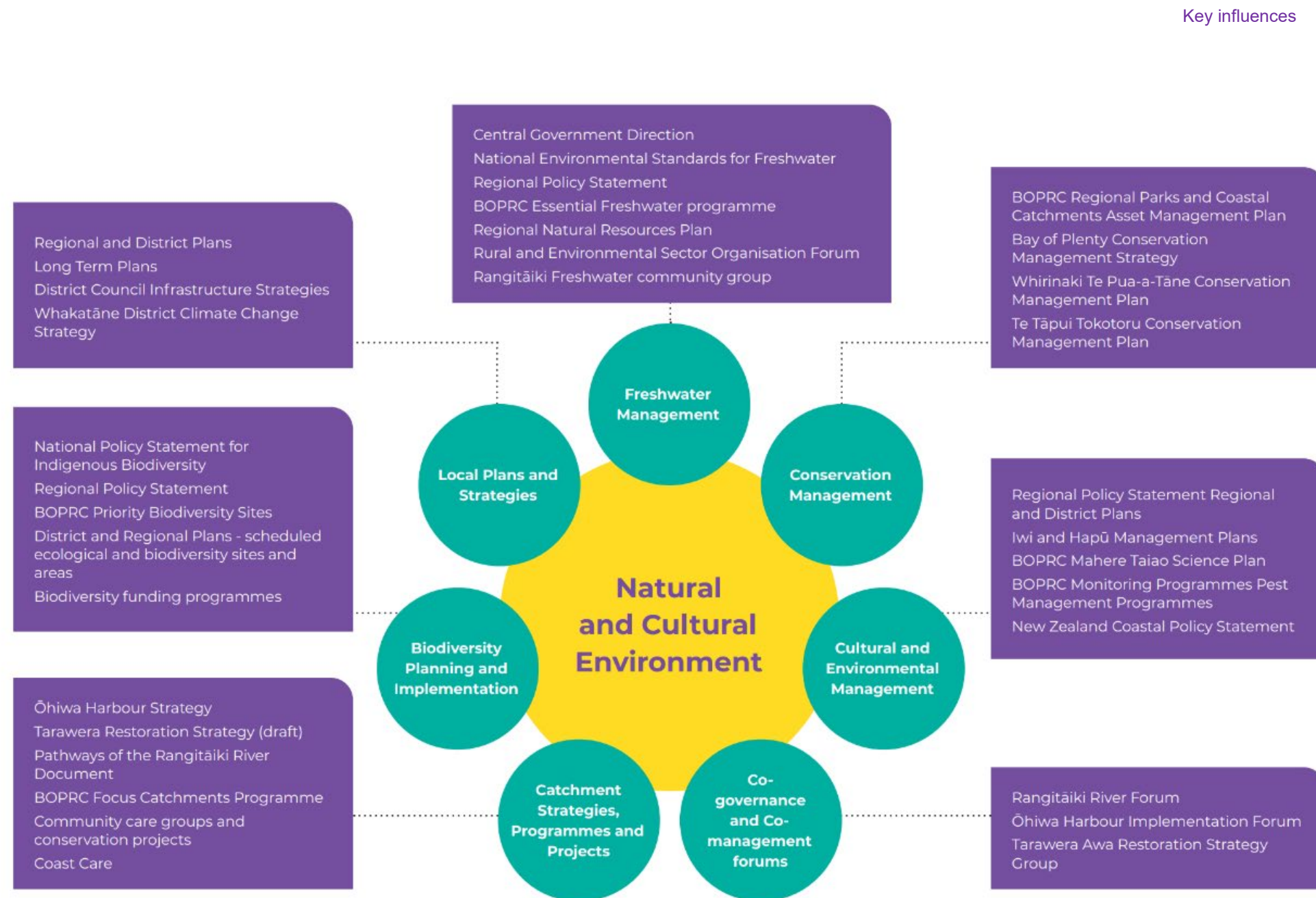


Figure 2: Natural and cultural environment activities

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

What does the future hold?

First and foremost, we need to continue to look after our taonga, now and into the future. We need to continue to make sure we make space for nature and create the right conditions for people to live healthy lives and for the mauri of te taiao to thrive and support our wellbeing.

We need to enhance the resiliency of our environment by increasing the quantity and quality of our nature and biodiversity. Protecting, restoring and enhancing biodiversity ensures that our taonga will be present for future generations to enjoy. Prioritising the health and wellbeing of our waterbodies is very important and we need to reduce the impact of land uses.

A strong emphasis is needed on site sensitive design, incorporating green infrastructure into urban design, maintaining and developing ecological corridors and implementing habitat restoration projects in impacted areas. This will likely involve using methods like water-sensitive urban design and low-impact water design to address climate change, increase biodiversity, and make our towns healthier and more liveable. We will need to upgrade water management systems, including stormwater, water supply, and wastewater, to meet higher standards.

While land, freshwater, coastal and marine are often dealt with separately, it is critical to recognise that they are interconnected and that an activity in one area has effects in another. We need to continue to prioritise an integrated catchment management approach which means managing natural resources on a catchment scale, reflecting the Māori concept of "ki uta ki tai" (from the mountains to the sea).

We highly value the sub-region's rich and diverse cultural heritage. Cultural landscapes, customary activities, wāhi tapu, wāhi taonga, wāhi tupuna, and mahinga kai will continue to be recognised, protected and enhanced. Careful consideration and collaboration are needed to uphold our cultural heritage. Respecting the integrity of mātauranga Māori and recognising the value of mātauranga to inform decision making processes, will enable a more productive and meaningful relationship with tangata whenua and Māori communities throughout our region.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

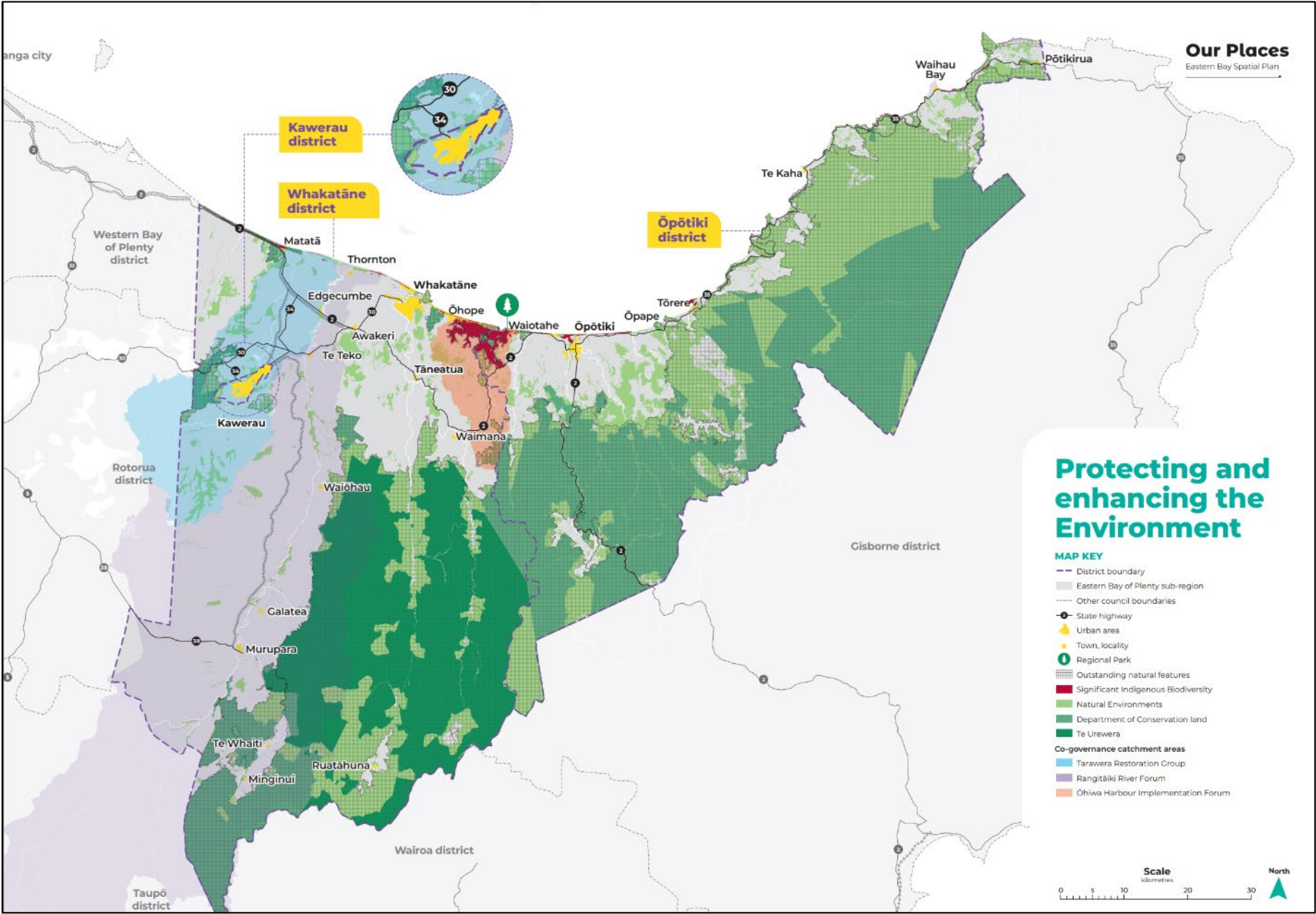


Figure 3: Protecting and enhancing the environment

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

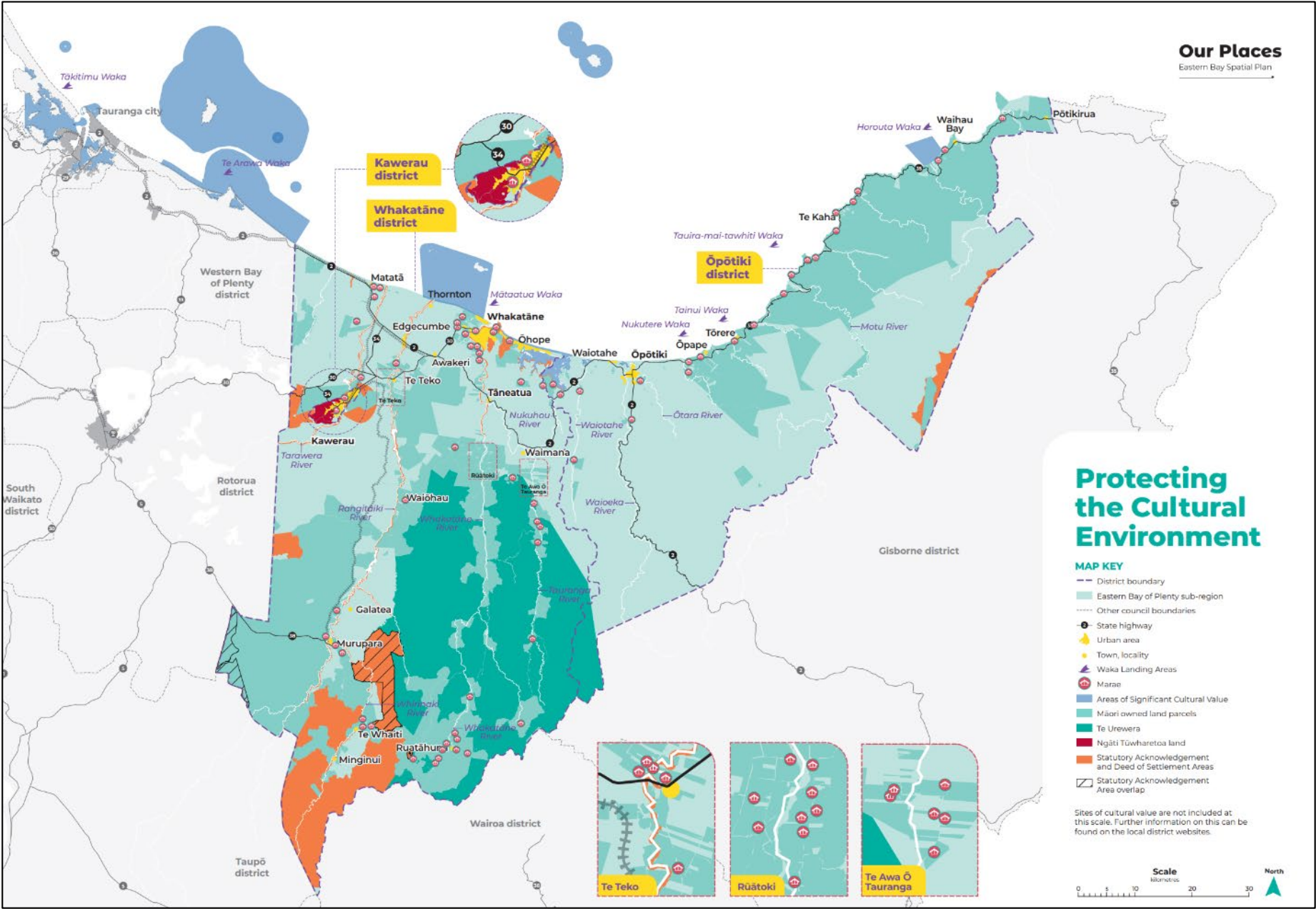


Figure 4: Protecting the cultural environment

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

Sustainable, diversified economy

Economic wellbeing

Economic development is crucial to change the socio-economic deprivation of many people across the eastern bay. Without changes, a lack of suitable housing and infrastructure are a handbrake on the economy. By leveraging key economic drivers and ensuring housing, transport, workforce development, and capital investments, we can unlock growth to benefit the people of the eastern bay.

Where are we now?

The three districts in the eastern bay are all strongly connected, creating economic resilience and a strong foundation for further development. The sub-region enjoys a favourable climate, fertile soils and rich natural resources, including fishery and forestry stocks. There is a diverse and robust industrial base – including nationally and internationally competitive players in horticulture, manufacturing, forestry and wood processing, tourism, energy, aquaculture, and many others.

The eastern bay faces economic challenges including lower GDP growth and median incomes and higher unemployment compared to the national average and has significant potential for growth. This is evidenced through recent Government investments aimed at boosting the local economy. Four key catalytic infrastructure projects are in delivery or completed including the Ōpōtiki harbour / aquaculture cluster, high value horticulture on Māori-owned land, the Kawerau-Putauaki Industrial Development and the Whakatāne wharf / tourism cluster.

The eastern bay faces a range of interconnected challenges – like industrial decline, ageing or absent infrastructure, and socio-economic deprivation. The eastern bay remains one of the nation’s most deprived areas, with an average deprivation score of 8.5/10 versus a national average of 5.6, when considering education and healthcare, employment and income, housing, crime, and access to services. In 2023, unemployment rates were more than twice the national average (7.4% versus 3.3%), and close to one quarter (23.1%) of working-age people were receiving a benefit.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

A significant Māori-owned land and assets base. Continued development of Māori-owned land and economic activities can help to build resiliency and job security through further diversifying the economy. There is no Māori asset base figure for the Eastern Bay of Plenty, but the Bay of Plenty figure provides some insights. The Māori asset base in the Bay of Plenty totals over \$17.5 billion¹ with diverse portfolios covering agriculture, forestry, horticulture, aquaculture, geothermal energy, tourism and hospitality. This significant contribution and the capacity for expansion will have a substantial bearing on the direction of economic growth in the eastern bay.

Aquaculture is a significant contributor to the economy. Ōpōtiki district has a large opportunity to develop the aquaculture industry with a multi-million-dollar annual income potential. According to the Sub-Regional Economic Development Strategy, the estimated growth in the aquaculture industry for the Bay of Plenty will be \$3 billion by 2035, serving local and international markets. Leveraging the \$200 million + investments already made in harbour and processing facilities, this industry will create jobs and boost the local economy.

The eastern bay has a strong focus on primary industries, commercial services and industrial processing, and offers some of the country's most loved domestic tourism destinations. The region contributes significantly to both the regional and national economies. Whakatāne is the main commercial and residential hub, offering a wide range of services and facilities, while Kawerau is known for its industrial activities. Ōpōtiki serves as a secondary centre, especially for areas to the east, with a focus on horticulture, agriculture and an emerging aquaculture industry. There is a high flow of commuters and economic inter-connection between the districts, with goods transported from across the districts to their manufacturing and processing facilities and to the Port of Tauranga.

Primary industries - due to fertile land and favourable climate, the eastern bay is a powerhouse for agriculture, horticulture, dairy farming and forestry. The sub-region helps ensure there is enough food for local use and export, which benefits all of New Zealand, producing high-quality kiwifruit, avocados, and dairy products. The major dairy processing factory in Edgecumbe has a milk collection catchment across almost the whole region. The sub-region's employment landscape is characterised by distinct industry clusters: 37% of jobs in Kawerau are related to manufacturing; 31% of jobs in Ōpōtiki district are related to agriculture, forestry and fishing; and Whakatāne district jobs are mainly a mix of agriculture, forestry, fishing, healthcare, training and education and retail.

The eastern bay is a major forestry region, home to over 20% of the Central North Island's exotic forests, with approximately one-third of this land owned by the Central North Island Iwi Collective. Large plantations, sustainable practices, and efficient timber processing and transportation from Kawerau ensure the forestry industry's long-term success. Many of the sub-region's remote communities are dependent on the forestry sector.

The rivers of the eastern bay of Plenty, particularly the Waioweka and Otara Rivers in Ōpōtiki, are vital sources of industrial aggregate, including shingle and sand, which hold significant commercial value and provides essential materials for construction and infrastructure projects.

¹ [Te Ohanga Māori 2023 report](#)

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

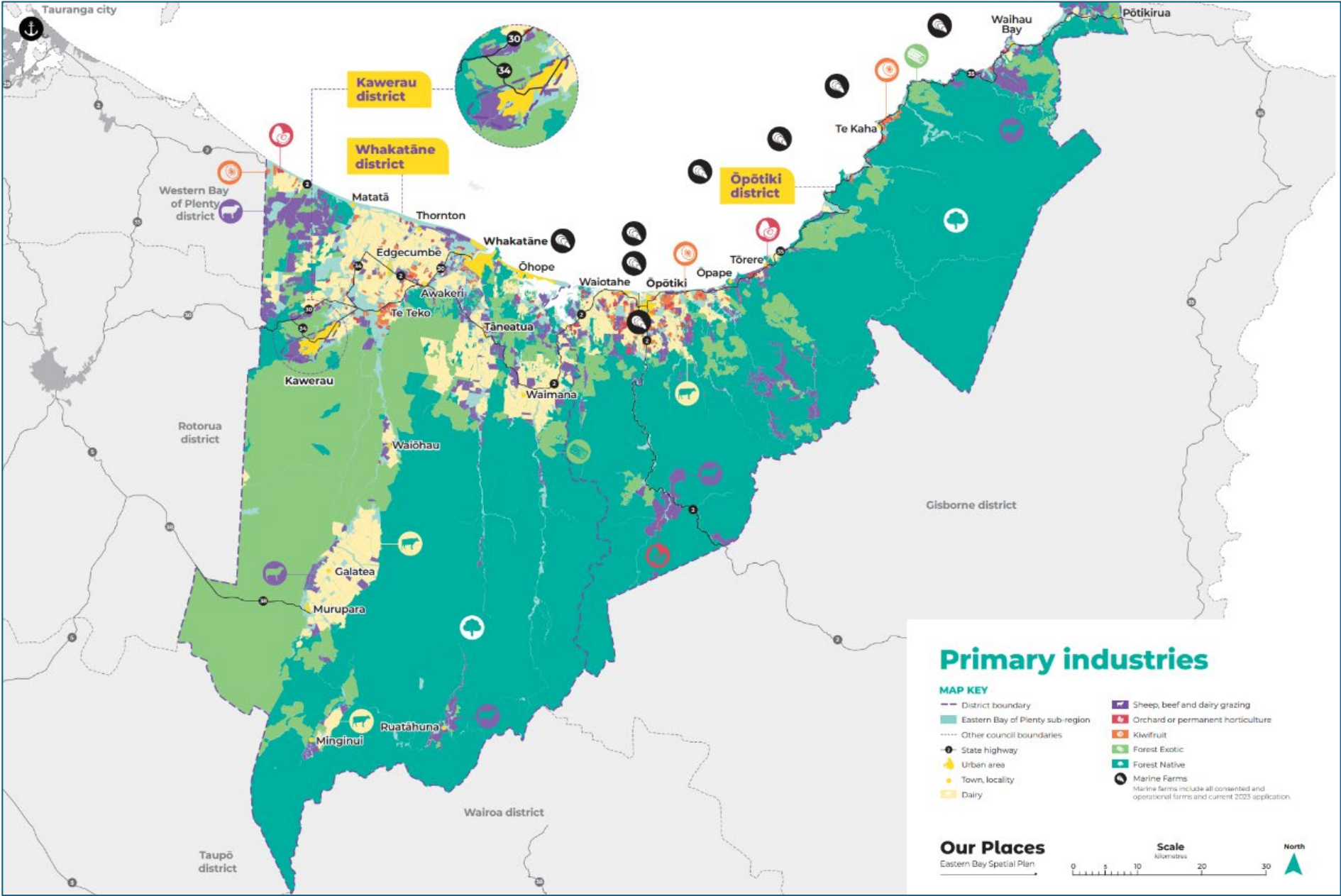


Figure 5: Primary industries

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

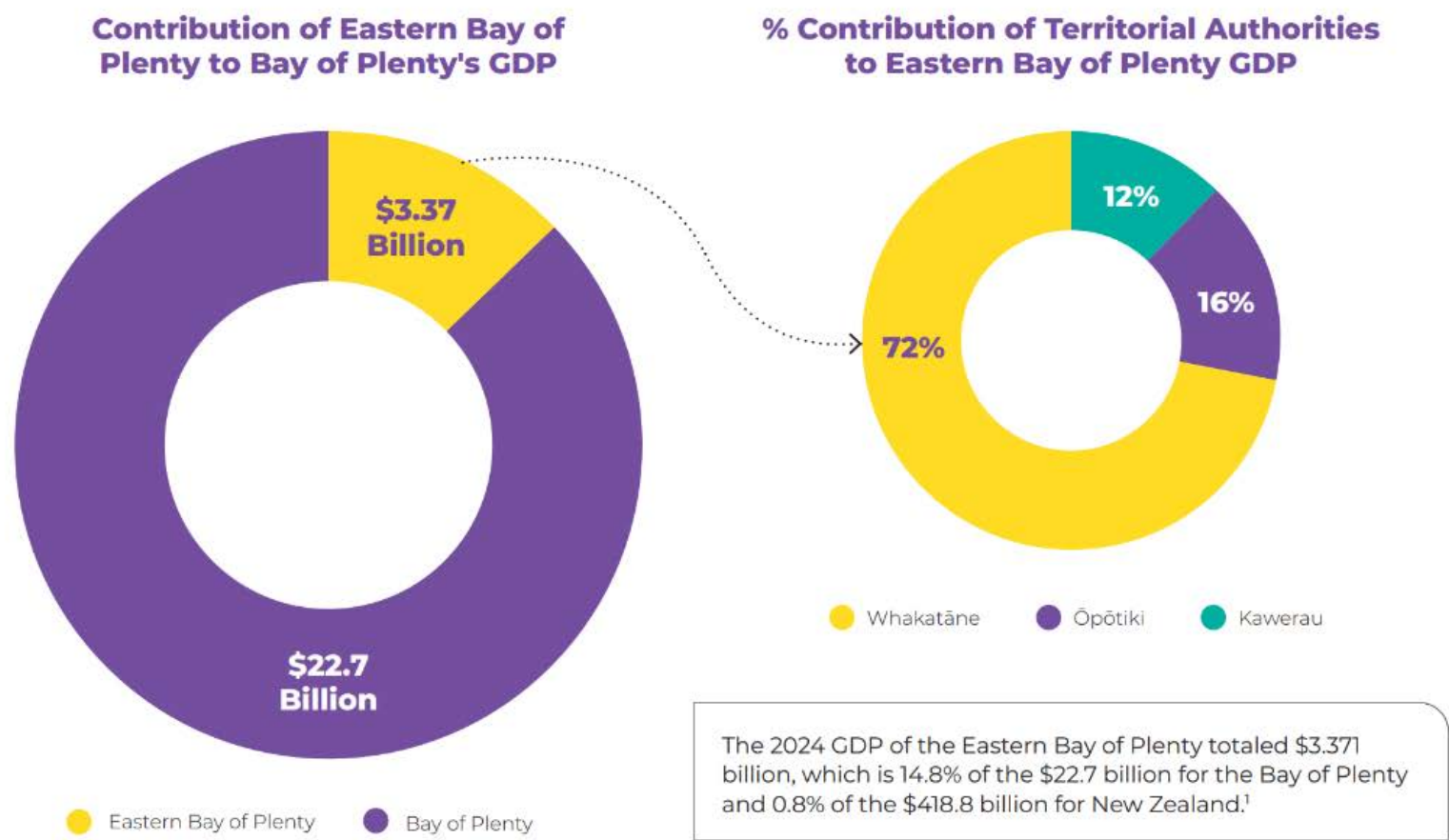


Figure 6: Eastern bay's contribution to GDP

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

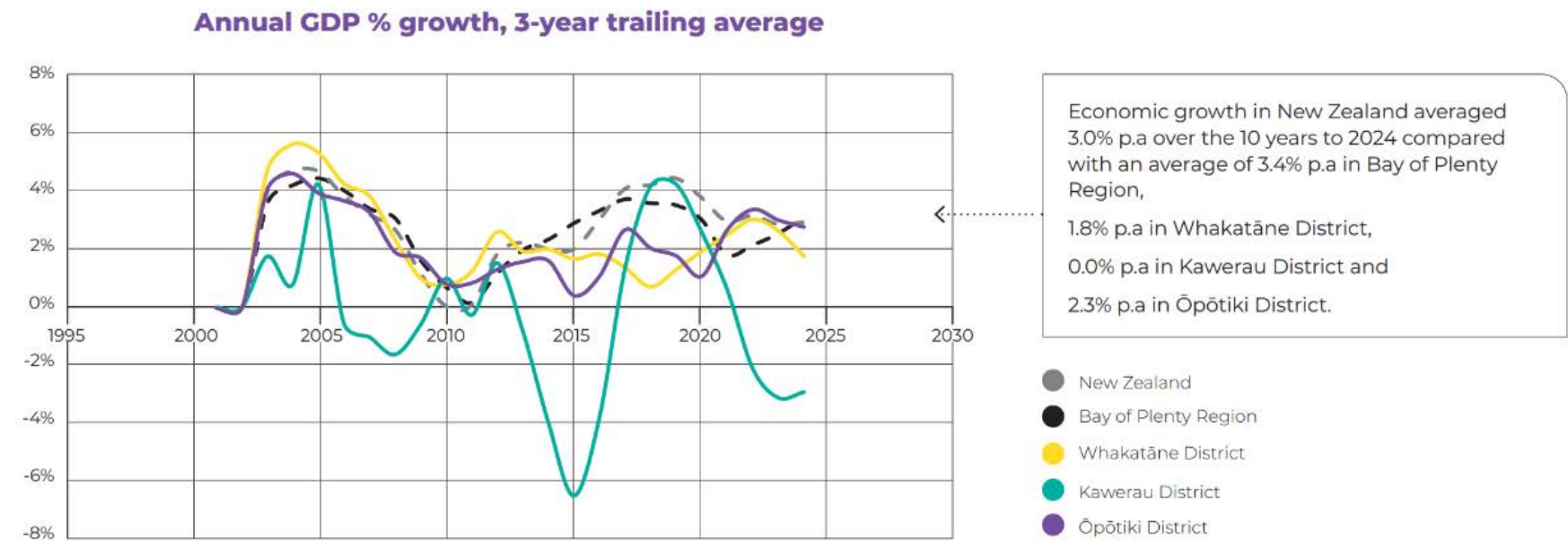


Source: Infometrics; Regional Economic Structure – Industry Structure; April 2025

Figure 7: Economic structure by broad sector (% of total, year to March 2024)

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences



Source: Infometrics; Regional Economy – Economic Growth; April 2025

Figure 8: Annual change in GDP over the past twenty years

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

What does the future hold?

The Sub-Regional Economic Development Strategy (“SREDS”) was refreshed in 2025 and provides direction for economic development opportunities across the Eastern Bay of Plenty at a sub-regional scale.

Economic growth vision

The spatial plan supports the vision of SREDS, including three focus areas to create jobs and accelerate economic growth, by leveraging existing industry specialisations and the unique strengths of each district.

- Aquaculture in Ōpōtiki
- Green industry in Kawerau
- Commercial and residential development in Whakatāne

The SREDS guides and shapes priorities and next steps, including:

- Development of local economic development plans, enabling economic development to be a powerful lever for delivering social, cultural and environmental wellbeing.
- Ameliorating constraints to growth — housing, transport and connectivity, workforce development, and capital. The spatial plan addresses two of these constraints by factoring in population growth, housing and infrastructure needs for the next 30 years.
- Collaboration with central and local government, iwi, and key industry sectors, we can build on our successes and create new opportunities.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

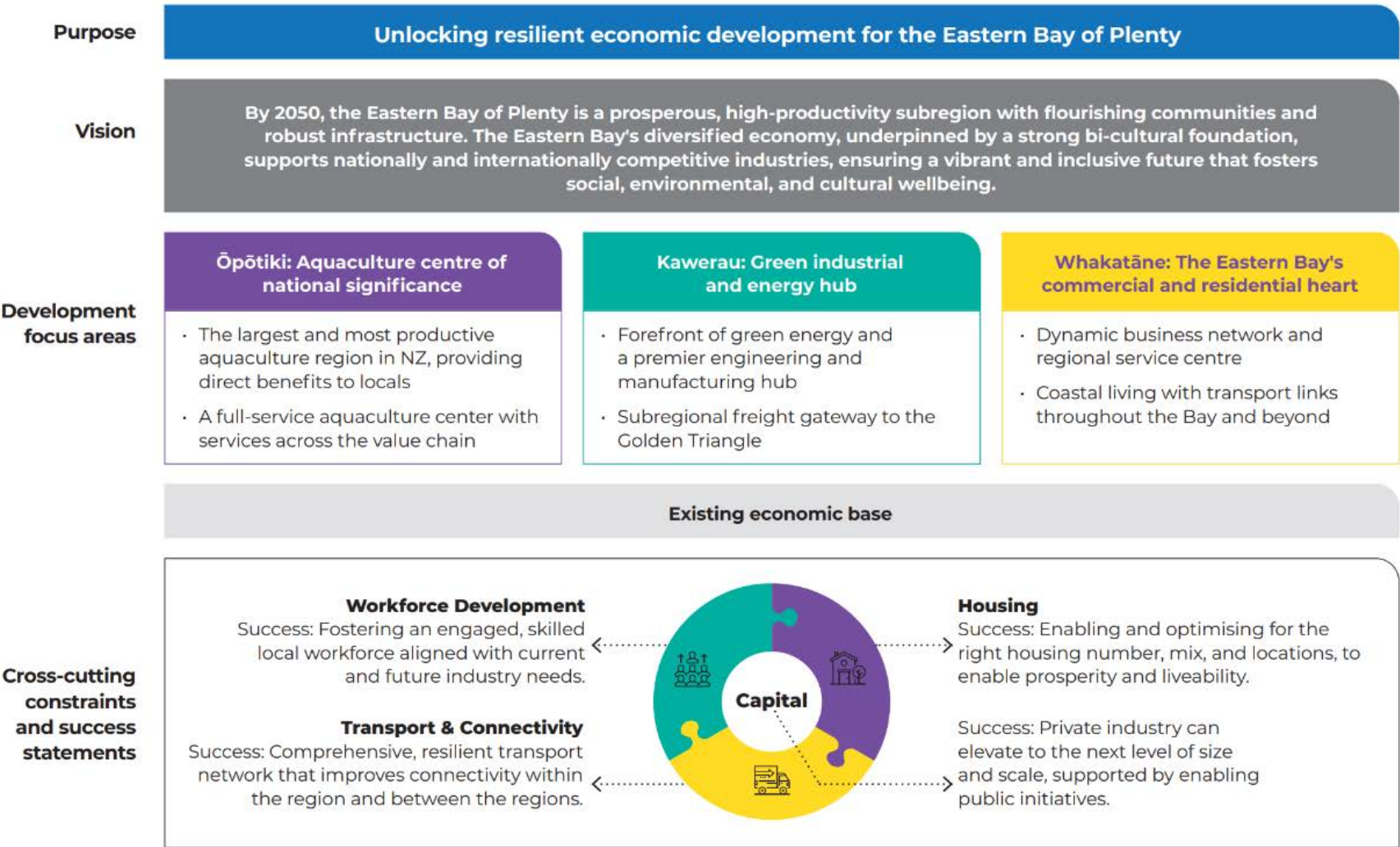


Figure 9: Economic Development Strategy Summary

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

Population growth

By 2055, the eastern bay's population is expected to increase from 56,500 in 2022 to 68,000. This growth could mean we will need more houses and business spaces. The National Policy Statement on Urban Development requires local authorities to always have enough land available for housing and businesses. If we don't plan for growth, we might not have enough land ready for new developments, making housing and infrastructure more expensive.

By 2053, we will likely need between 1,150 and 8,200 new households, with the most likely number being around 5,500. The range reflects variable population outcomes and also a declining household size as the population ages meaning we expect to need more houses for the same number of people. Population change depends on many factors, and we will have to monitor it closely to adjust our planning.

We need to plan for more affordable housing to meet the demand. Over the past decade, housing affordability has decreased significantly, especially in the eastern bay. By enabling more housing options and ensuring there is enough supply, we can help make housing more affordable for more people.

Looking back at how the population has changed

Between 2013 and 2023, our total population grew by more than 9,000 people. Whakatāne district grew by 17%, Kawerau district by 22% and Ōpōtiki district by 24%.

From 2013 to 2018, net migration was a significant driver of population growth in each of our districts, accounting for around 70% of the total increase. During this period, more people moved into our districts than left, reversing the trend of negative net migration from 2001 to 2013.

New Zealand's national immigration policies influence growth in the eastern bay. In the year ending August 2023, New Zealand saw a record net migration gain of 110,200 people. Migration will continue to be a primary driver of population growth for New Zealand, and a main influence impacting the growth and development of the eastern bay. Looking ahead, New Zealand's population, which was 5.13 million in 2022, is projected to be between 5.55 and 6.65 million by 2048, and between 5.62 and 7.86 million by 2073.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences



Figure 10: Number of children born in the Eastern Bay



Figure 11: Birthplace of residents

Looking ahead at how the population could change

Population projections are estimates of future population size and composition based on current data and trends. They help us understand how our community might grow and change over time, but they are uncertain and will be different from what we expect now. Regular monitoring and reporting on population changes through Councils' Long-Term plans and other work programs will inform decisions on how we cater to growing communities and changing rates of growth.

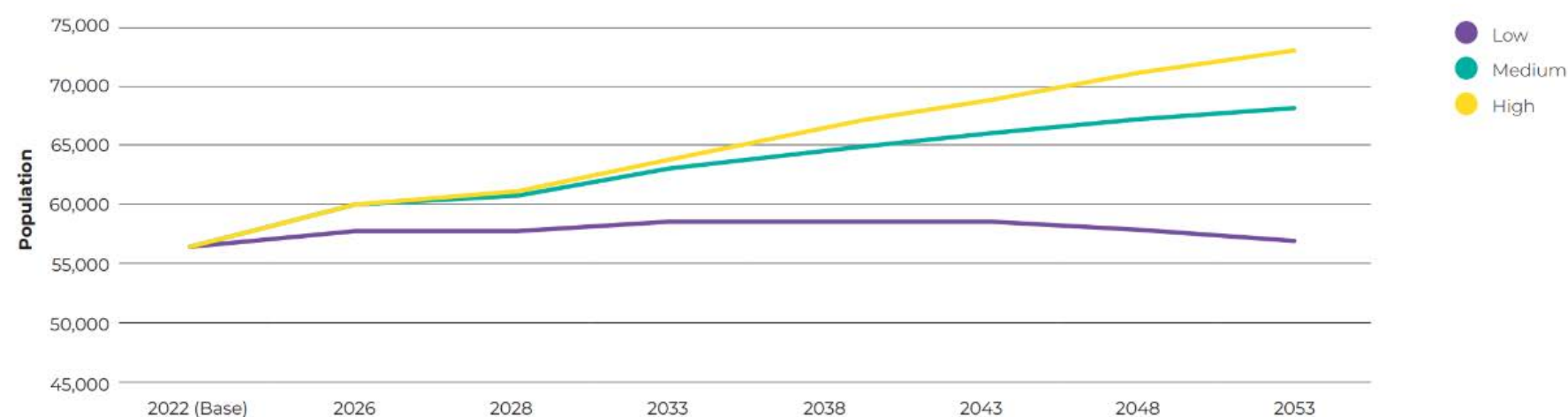
7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

A range of population projections were developed for the spatial plan. Looking ahead at the next thirty years, we expect that population change in the eastern bay will most likely be similar to the medium projection.² The medium projection prepared for the spatial plan is the same as Statistics NZ high projection.

Planning based on higher population growth will ensure we are ready if the growth trend we experienced during the early to late 2010's continues over the long term. In case population change is lower or higher than expected, we need to be able to proactively manage investments into new growth areas and be sure not to lock-in large upfront investments that are funded by growth without a way to manage the risk that the pace of growth slows over time.

Similarly, some areas could experience higher growth than projected. For example, Ōpōtiki District Council is aware of growth potentially being closer to 2,300 dwellings in the coming decades based on building consent and resource consent trends which is much higher than the 1,400 dwellings indicated by the Statistics NZ high projection.



Source: Eastern Bay of Plenty Housing and Business Needs Research Report, MRCagney 2023

Figure 12: Eastern bay population projection range

² The details for this can be found in the Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan - Scenarios and Development Options Report and the Eastern Bay of Plenty Housing and Business Needs Research report (MRCagney, 2022)

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

Growth projection	Description
High +16,500	Predicts rapid population increase due to high birth rates, low death rates, and significant migration. Greater demand for housing, infrastructure, and services, requiring proactive planning.
Medium - +11,500 people by 2055	Reflects moderate population growth with balanced birth, death, and migration rates. Allows for manageable development and aligns with recent trends while being flexible. <i>(the same as Statistics NZ high projection, and the one we are using for planning purposes)</i>
Low, nearly no change	Anticipates slow population growth due to low birth rates, high death rates, or reduced migration. Gradual population increase, easing resource and infrastructure pressures and ensuring quality services.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

Employment growth

The Sub-Regional Economic Development Strategy identifies housing and infrastructure as two of the main handbrakes slowing down economic development. As our community grows and changes, more jobs and more business land are needed. The Scenarios and Development Options report, in addition to the Housing and Business Needs Research report provide details of how much land is needed and when.

The Sub-Regional Economic Development Strategy identifies housing and infrastructure as two of the main handbrakes slowing down economic development. The strategy brings together the districts of the Eastern Bay to focus on shared economic goals. By working together, we can better plan and prioritise projects that will boost our local economy, create new jobs, and attract investments. This collaborative approach is key to attracting further investments and supporting regional development.

The number of jobs in the Eastern Bay is expected to grow by 8% over the next 30 years, which means an average increase of 0.3% per year. With more people living in the Eastern Bay, more jobs are needed which means we need more land for businesses to grow. Based on population projections, we see an increase in employee projections over the next 30 years.

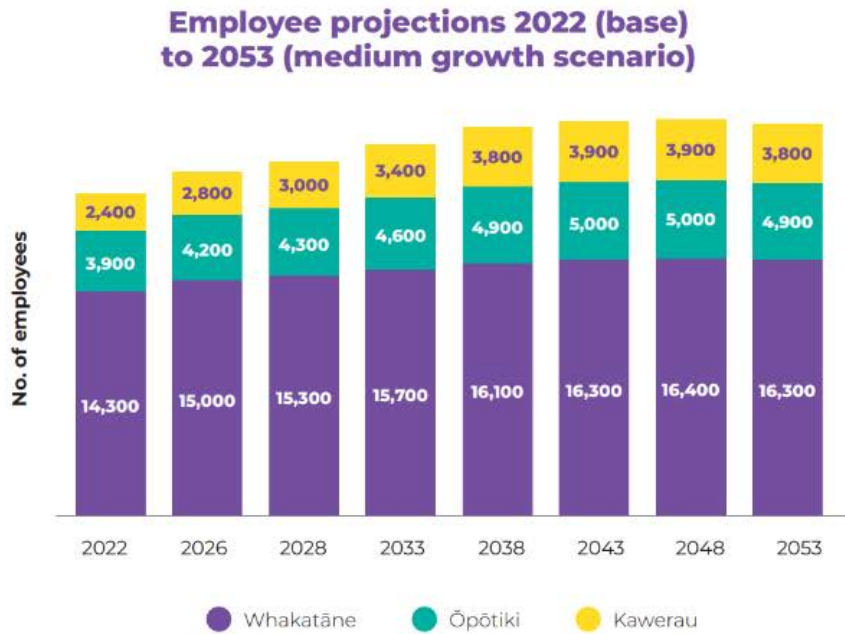


Figure 13: Employee projections 2022-2053

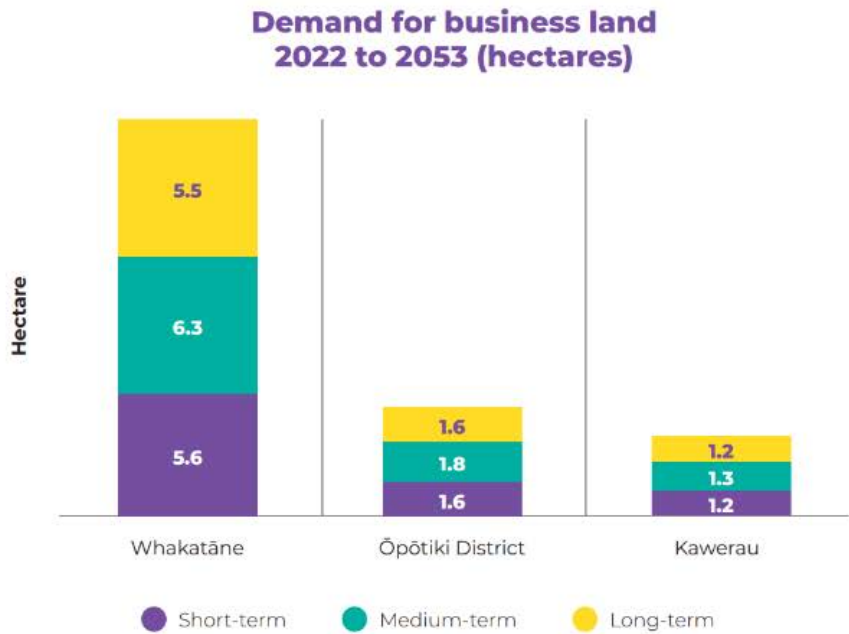


Figure 14: Demand for business land 2022-2053 (ha)

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

Connected and resilient people, places, and communities**Changing housing needs**

An ageing population will require changes in services such as healthcare, but also different housing that is more accessible and enables people to age-in-place in their existing communities.

The growth in a younger Māori population segment means that we will need to plan for a range of different types of housing to support both a growing and ageing population, including papakāinga and other types of Māori-led housing.

Planning for future housing developments will need to factor in affordability as a critical consideration alongside connections to employment opportunities.

An aging population needs accessible housing

The eastern bay is experiencing an ageing population, with a growing proportion of residents aged 65 and older. The median age in the region has increased, reflecting this demographic shift. The median age for all New Zealanders is 38.1, compared to Whakatāne being 40.2, Ōpōtiki 40.1 and Kawerau 38.6.³ By 2053, people aged 65 and older will make up 30% of our community.

This trend has several implications for the community. There will be a higher demand for healthcare services, including hospitals, clinics, and aged care facilities, to support the health and wellbeing of older residents. Housing needs will also change, with a greater demand for accessible and age-friendly homes. The local workforce may experience changes as more people retire, potentially leading to shortages in certain sectors and an increased need for workers in healthcare and aged care. Enhanced community services and activities that promote social interaction and wellbeing for older residents will become increasingly important. Understanding these trends helps us plan for a future that supports and values our older residents, ensuring the eastern bay remains a great place to live for people of all ages.

A growing youthful Māori demographic needs larger homes, and more affordable homes

The eastern bay has a youthful and growing Māori population. Māori make up just over half of the sub-region's population, expected to increase to 60% by 2053. Comparatively, to the Eastern Bay's ageing population, the demographic of the Māori population is much younger.

³ StatsNZ Census 2023, (Usual Resident Population).

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)**Key influences**

Due to their different age profile and cultural practices, many Māori households need larger houses or multiple houses close to each other. Many rural and remote communities are predominantly Māori and are based around whānau, hapū, and marae. Māori in the Eastern Bay have different housing experiences compared to the general population.

- Māori homes reflect traditional whānau structures with multi-generational living. On average, 2.2 generations live in a Māori household. A recent survey in the Whakatāne District showed that 28% of the Māori population wanted larger homes with five to six bedrooms to accommodate multi-generational living.
- 30.3% of Māori own their own home, compared to 64.5% of the general population. 25.2% of Māori live with whānau, at their whānau homestead, or on whānau land.
- Other research shows that Māori households spend about 20% of their income on rent, compared to about 14% for the average household. There is a greater need for affordable housing.

The spatial plan recognises the need for a strategic and culturally responsive approach to Māori housing, highlighting opportunities to support diverse living arrangements, enable papakāinga development, and foster partnerships with iwi. It outlines high-level direction for councils to work collaboratively with Māori to unlock housing potential, improve infrastructure alignment, and ensure planning frameworks are enabling of Māori-led housing solutions.

Affordability of housing continues to be a challenge for everyone

Rising housing prices, high rental costs, high demand for social housing and low home ownership rates are indicators of the affordability challenges in the housing system for the Eastern Bay. In response, household crowding remains a challenge for Eastern Bay communities and the number of applicants for social housing increases over time.

We want everyone in the Eastern Bay has access to safe, affordable, and suitable housing. By planning for more housing options and addressing affordability issues, the spatial plan can help prevent overcrowding and reduce financial stress for residents. New development areas should be planned to create diverse housing types to meet the needs of both a growing and ageing population.

Addressing these challenges through the spatial plan fosters a more inclusive and supportive community, where everyone can thrive and enjoy a high quality of life.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

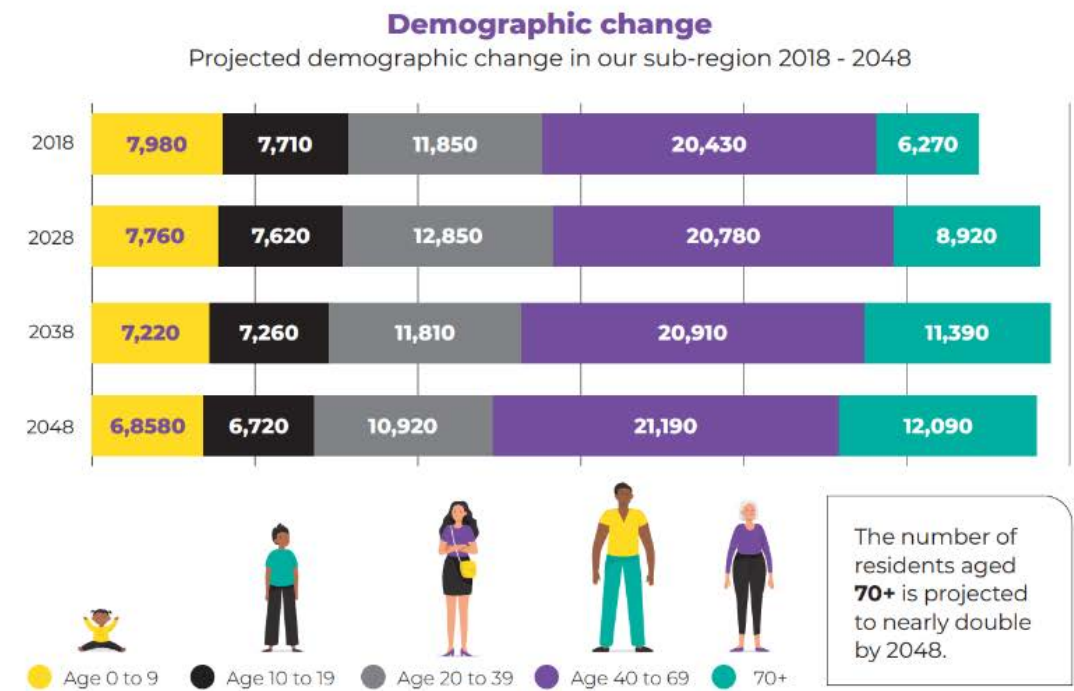


Figure 15: Demographic change

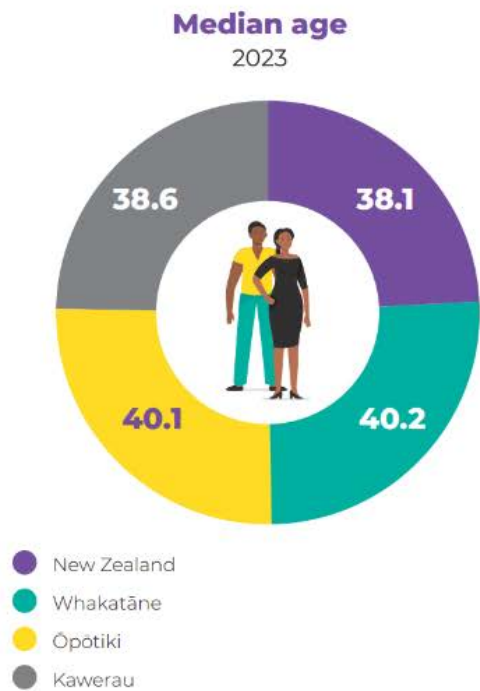


Figure 16: Median age

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

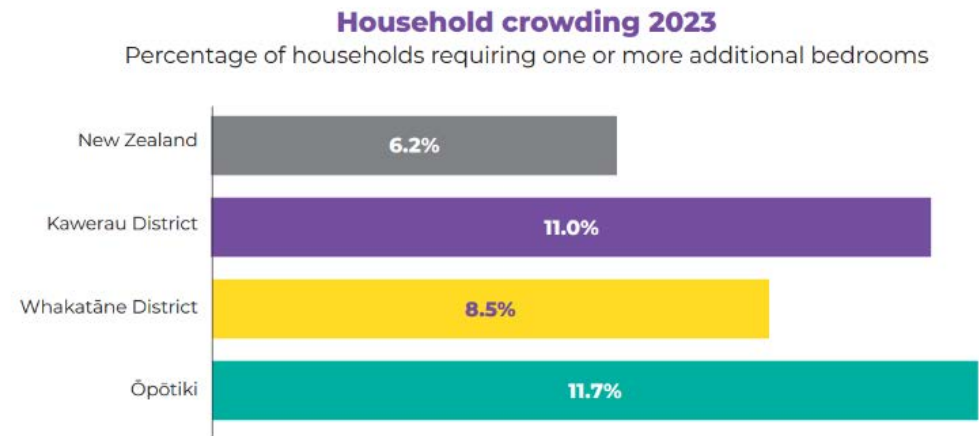


Figure 17: Household crowding



Figure 19: House values



Figure 18: Housing register

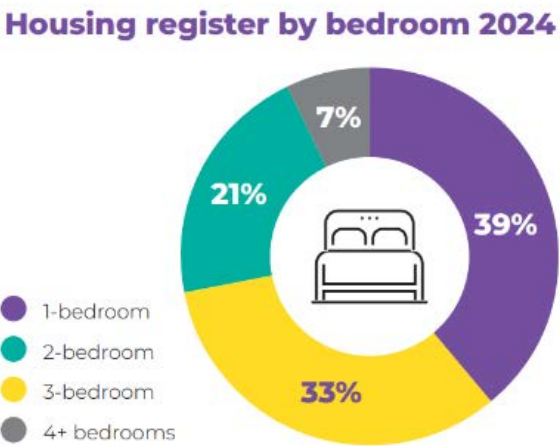


Figure 20: Housing register by bedroom

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

Natural hazards and climate resilience

The Eastern Bay faces various natural hazards such as flooding, landslides, earthquakes, coastal hazards, and rising groundwater, which will worsen with climate change. This means that limited land is available for future growth and some existing communities face growing risk levels.

Flooding, river management and flood protection are key considerations and integrated and adaptive strategies including consideration of management retreat are needed to support future growth to enable resilience in the long-term.

Where are we now?

Eastern Bay is already experiencing the impacts from a changing climate and natural hazards. This includes things like significant flooding events, new pests taking up residence, coastal erosion, greater calcification of the ocean and more drought like conditions. There is a rapidly closing window of opportunity to enable climate resilient development.

Our communities, iwi and hapu, councils and key stakeholders must make well-informed decisions about the levels of risk that we are prepared to accept, now and for future generations. Lessons from past events, both locally and across Aotearoa, highlight the significant economic and social costs of major floods, particularly for communities located in flood schemes. Cyclone Gabrielle alone is estimated to have caused up to \$14.5 billion in damage⁴.

River flooding poses a challenge for Eastern Bay. Rivers are dynamic systems and have the potential to cause damage to people, property, taonga, and infrastructure. New data is being obtained to improve insights into the vulnerability of low-lying settlements to natural hazards and the changing dynamics of large river systems. Affordability, climate change, residual risk are key issues for the flood scheme.⁵

Some existing settlements are subject to residual risk from over-design events. Existing settlements in the Eastern Bay that rely on flood protection schemes, such as stopbanks, are not typically susceptible to smaller events. However, extreme weather events – like Cyclone Gabrielle or Cyclone Debbie – could exceed the system's capacity or cause failures. Therefore, even with mitigation measures like flood defences, land use restrictions, or other engineering solutions, the risk of damage or unforeseen impacts on the wellbeing of the community remains.

⁴ [Impacts from the North Island weather events - Information release - 27 April 2023](#)

⁵ [BOPRC Long Term Plan 2024-2034: Infrastructure Strategy](#)

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)**Key influences**

Climate change affects councils' strategic infrastructure needs and costs. This includes maintenance, renewals and new projects for water supply, stormwater, wastewater systems, transportation. For stormwater, it involves planning for larger capacity pipes and overflow areas in master planning, and wastewater treatment plants will need to be in climate-safe locations. Transport decisions include where to build new roads or bridges and choosing suitable sealing materials. Long-term solutions might involve shifting or reducing access to high-risk roads. Other responses include finding alternative freshwater sources, monitoring saltwater intrusion, and preparing for microbial spread in drinking water during warmer weather.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

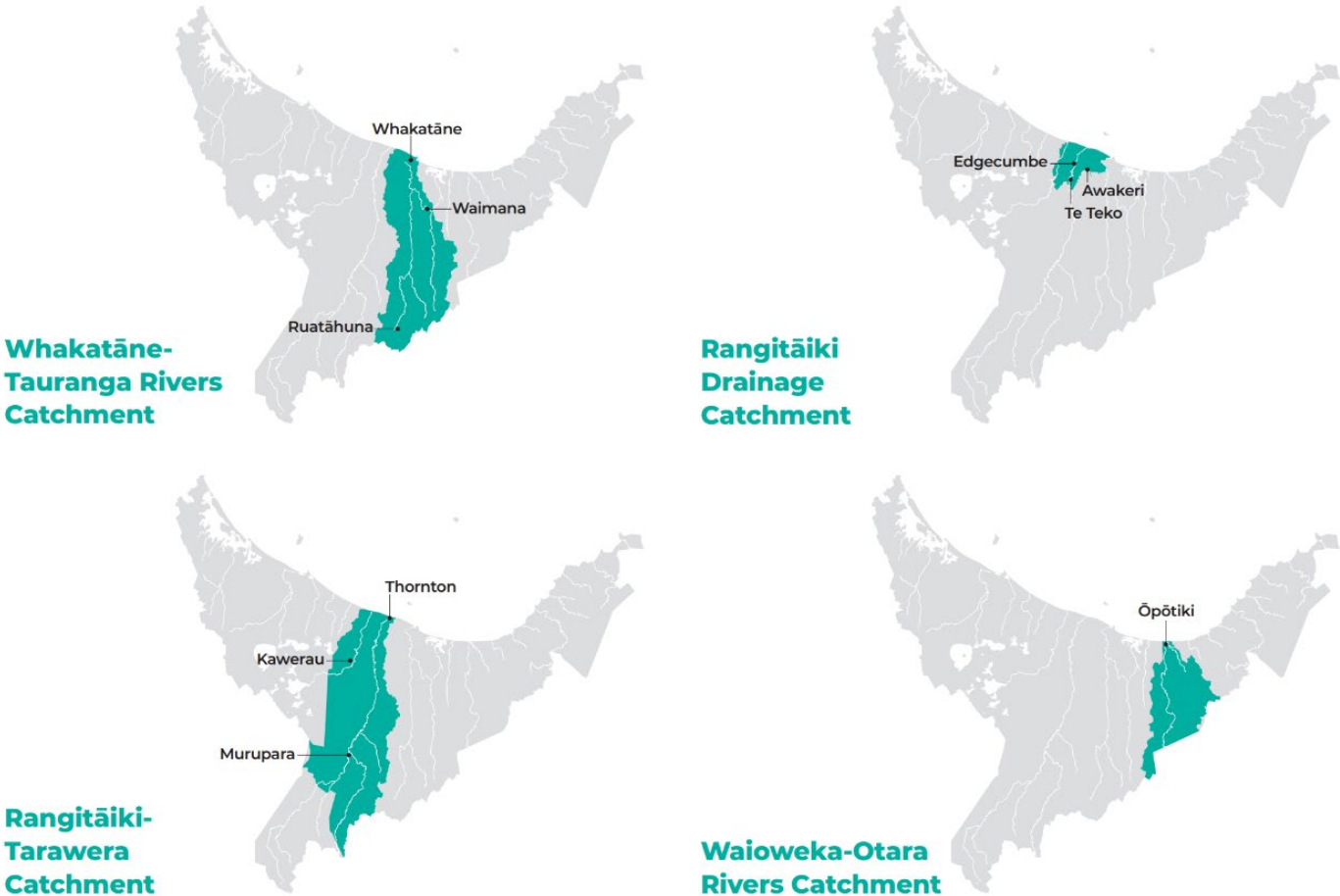


Figure 15: Catchment locations

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

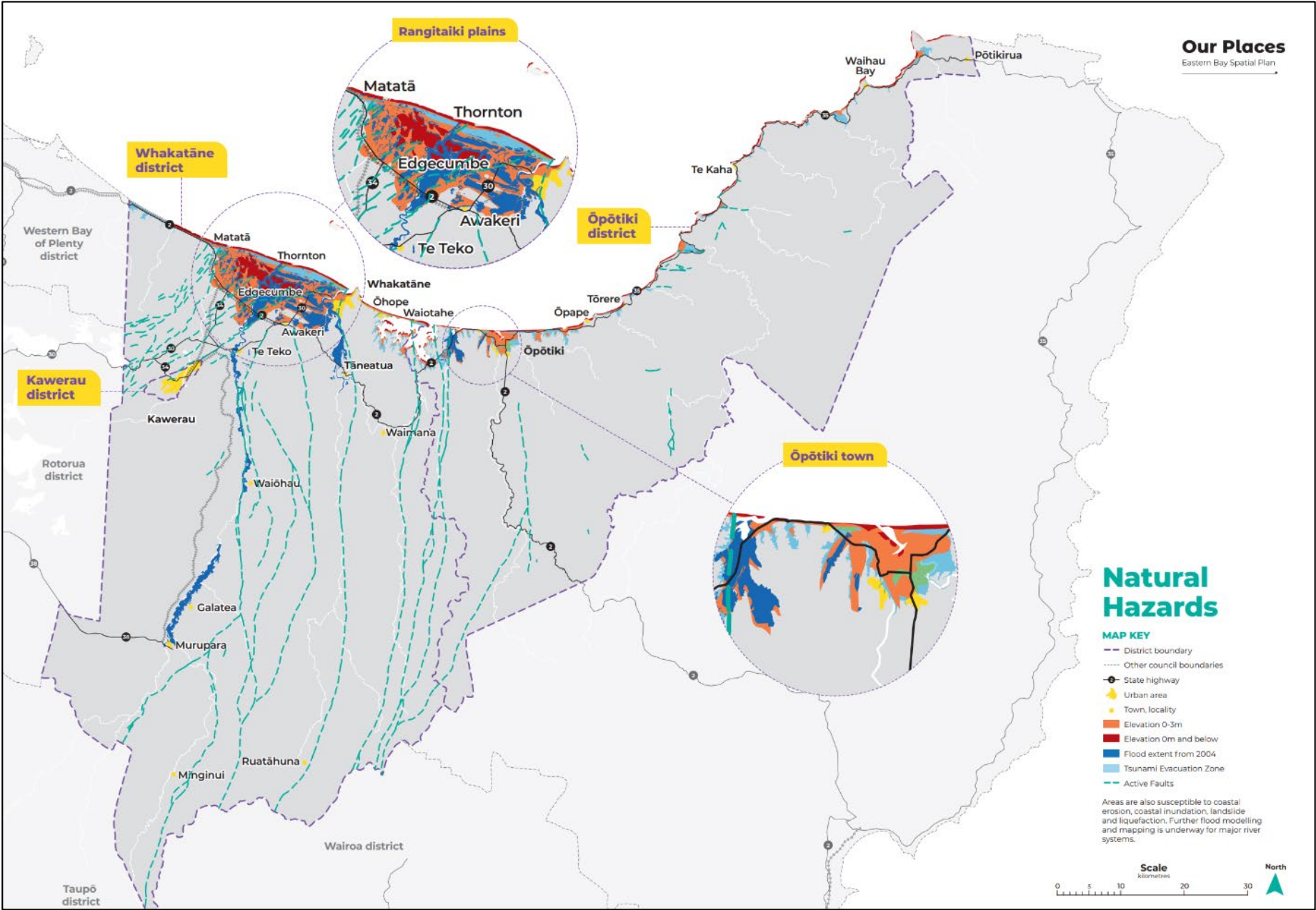


Figure 16: Natural hazards

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

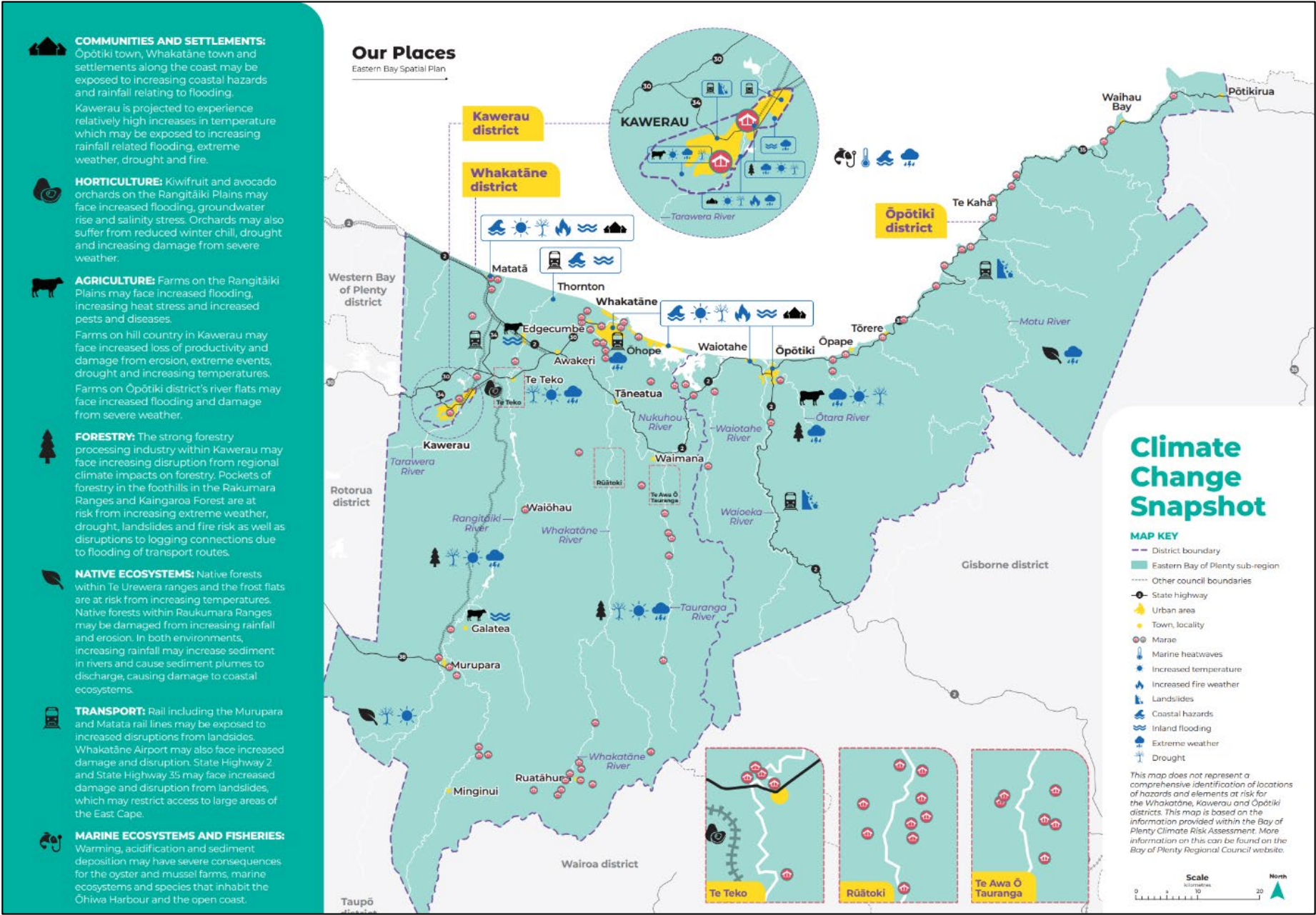


Figure 17: Climate change risks

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

What is being done?

A lot of work is taking place currently to address the risks from natural hazards and climate change. Some of the ones related to the spatial plan are included here:

Whakatāne District Council has developed a Climate Change Action Plan focusing on transport, energy, water services, waste management, land-use, and the built environment. These considerations are now part of climate action plans informing Council's planning processes, integrated into Asset Management Plans, the Long-Term Plan 2024-34 and the Infrastructure Strategy. Additionally, Whakatāne's Climate Change Risk Assessment identifies and prioritises climate risks to develop local adaptation plans with the community. Over time, these plans will be incorporated into major documents like the spatial plan.

Ōpōtiki District Council has initiated a workstream in its Long-Term Plan (2024-34) to understand the risks and hazards the district is most exposed to and investigate mitigation measures such as additional stop banks and temporary stormwater storage solutions. This includes gathering place-based research to inform adaptation planning for the township and coastal communities and inform long-term infrastructure planning. The findings will help determine potential costs for replacing infrastructure assets, explore options for property buy-outs in the event of major flooding, and define the role of other agencies including Central Government. As a first step, Opoitiki District Council (ODC) in partnership with the Bay of Plenty Regional Council (BOPRC) are scoping a risk assessment for the existing township.

Kawerau District Council (KDC) is preparing stormwater modelling to inform future planning decisions.

Long-term river management planning is underway as part of the Bay of Plenty Regional Council's River Scheme Sustainability Project. This will ensure the long-term viability and effectiveness of flood schemes with a focus in the Whakatāne–Tauranga, Rangitāiki-Tarawera and Waiwoeka- Ōtara catchments. Where possible, options will be considered to make 'room for the river', particularly in rural areas where land can be utilised for flood management without impacting existing townships while risk management responses are developed.

Evacuation mapping is being prepared for flooding and tsunami to inform emergency and evacuation planning for rural and urban areas. This work is likely to identify welfare centres, safe evacuation routes and safe locations to support emergency preparedness. Civil Defence and Emergency Management also play an important role in ensuring lifelines such as power, internet and mobile phone providers are resilient in the case of extreme natural hazard events.

Climate change is likely to have significant impacts on Māori and their role as kaitiaki and will be impacted by risks posed to the natural environment to which they have an innate connection. Climate change is expected to increase existing inequities and vulnerabilities within communities in the Eastern Bay of Plenty. It is likely to have a greater impact on Māori due to current income levels, health statistics, and unemployment levels. Local iwi and hapū are beginning adaptation planning with support from BOPRC community-led adaptation funding and other Central Government agencies. Iwi-led approaches in Maraenui, Ōpape and Tōrere in the Ōpōtiki District are leading the way for localised adaptation planning in the Eastern Bay of Plenty.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

Climate change is also anticipated to impact on the productivity of rural areas that support local rural economies and sustain nearby townships and require investment in water storage solutions and essential and supporting a diverse range of energy systems and grid resilience. To support this, councils may need to support industry actions for climate-resilient infrastructure and sustainable agricultural land-use practices. This includes promoting agricultural diversification and other economic strategies to reduce vulnerability to climate impacts, ultimately strengthening long-term economic resilience.

What does the future hold?

Flood protection, and more adaptive approaches: Flood protection will continue to play a key role in supporting community wellbeing. However, as conditions change, more adaptive and resilient approaches may need to be explored to ensure communities remain safe and resilient to the effects of natural hazards and climate change in the long term.

Integrated stormwater management: Recognising the increasing costs to maintain the flood schemes and managing climate-related risks to people, property and infrastructure, the spatial plan promotes integrated stormwater management as a key component of future growth planning and provide opportunities for the community input into the planning of new growth areas including Awakeri, Hukutaia, and Matatā.

Improved information about risk: Natural hazard mapping is required by the Bay Plenty Regional Policy Statement and will soon become available for flooding, coastal erosion and inundation and tsunami mapping. Once this information is accessible, technical risk assessments can be undertaken for at-risk locations to increase community awareness and inform future planning decisions.

Integrated adaptive planning responses: As a starting point, assessing the natural hazard risk is critical to better inform councils and communities at a local scale. For townships defended by stop banks, a range of risk reduction responses will be required and have implications for:

- River management planning
- Asset management planning
- Adaptation planning
- Emergency management planning
- Land-use planning

Adaptation planning is an iterative process and will rely on a whole of community approach for solutions to eventuate. Ultimately, risk management responses will reflect the level of risk the community is willing to accept and can afford.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)**Key influences**

The community must be at the centre of all solutions: In priority areas with existing recognised risks, such as Ōpōtiki and Whakatāne townships, risk assessments are to be prepared in accordance with the Regional Policy Statement to inform the development of adaptive planning responses to manage natural hazard risk. Additional risk assessments may be progressed for other at-risk locations across the sub-region including Tāneatua, Te Teko and Edgecumbe.

Where appropriate, some communities may need to consider long-term strategies to ensure existing areas are resilient, and where affordable or feasible solutions are not available, to move away from highly vulnerable locations.

Since future risk management decisions will have significant implications for community wellbeing and livelihoods, the outcomes of these assessments will need to be carefully balanced alongside other local priorities including housing supply, economic growth, and social wellbeing. Whatever the strategy, the community must be at the centre of any future adaptation planning.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

Climate change adaptation roadmap

As we better understand the impacts of hazards and climate change, what does this mean for local communities, iwi and hapu, stakeholders. Experts and decision makers play a key role at all stages of the process?

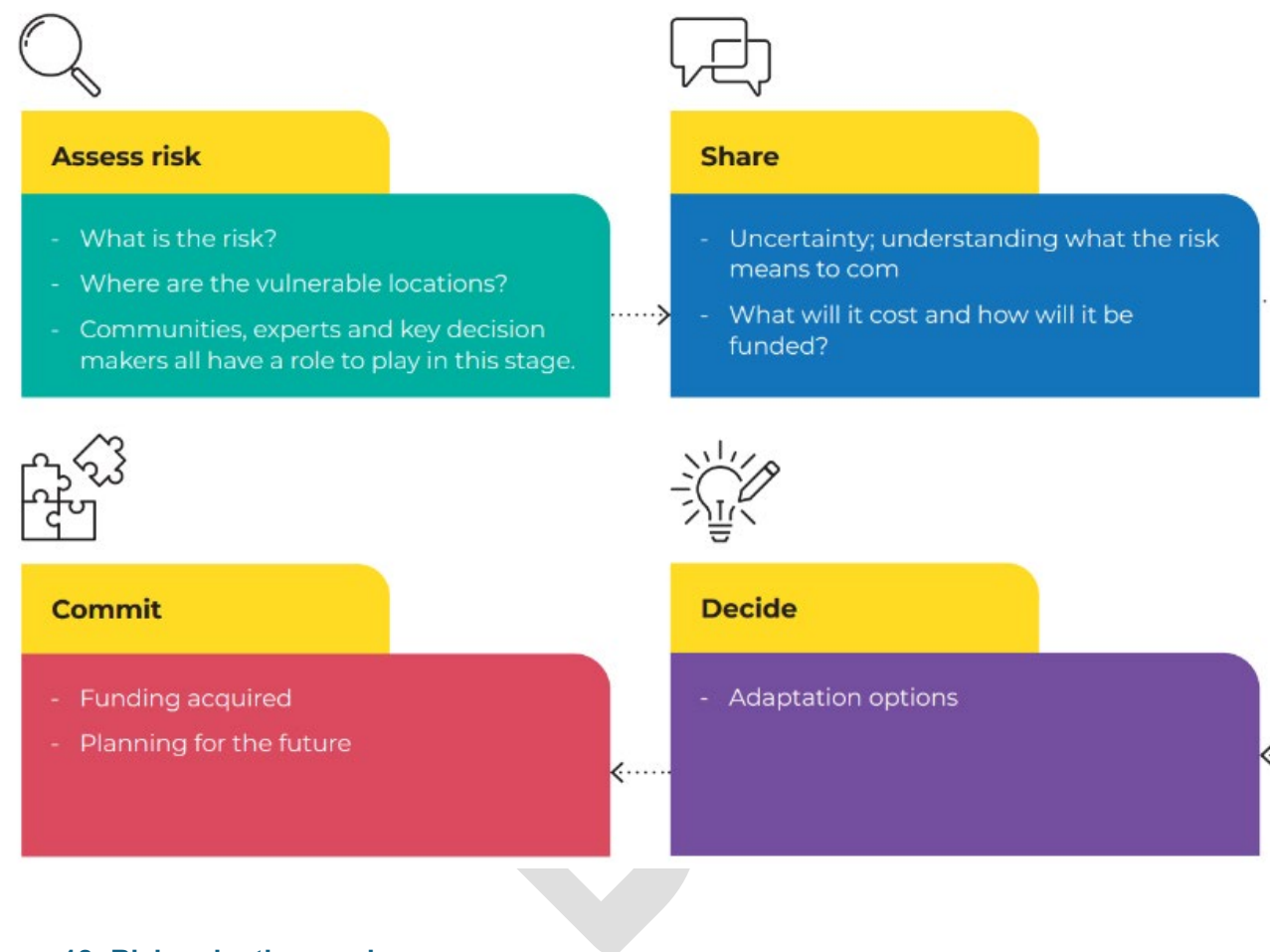


Figure 18: Risk reduction roadmap

Rural Environment

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

The Eastern Bay's rural environment will remain a cornerstone of our region's prosperity, identity and lifestyle, supported by access to goods, services and community amenities in vibrant urban centres. We need to continue priority efforts towards:

- **Minimising land fragmentation**
- **Managing incompatible land uses**
- **Unlocking Māori land for development**
- **Fostering strong links between rural and urban areas**

Where are we now?

The sub-region includes vast rural areas of native forest and bush, plantation forestry, pastoral agriculture, horticulture and other primary industries. Extensive forestry uses dominate the less fertile areas in the south and south-east of the sub-region, dairying is predominantly located on fertile, mid-coastal lowlands. Rural land use plays a crucial role in our economy.

Highly productive land protection

Versatile and productive soils are essential to the primary production industry in the Eastern Bay. Highly productive soils are ideal for growing a wide range of crops due to their fertility and favourable physical properties. They require less mitigation to be productive, making them highly valuable for agriculture.

The National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land (NPS-HPL) protects these valuable soil resources. It provides guidelines for local authorities to identify and manage these soils, balancing the need for urban growth with the preservation of land essential for food production. The NPS-HPL categorises soils into different classes based on their productivity and aims to protect these soils for their on-going use in land-based primary production while avoiding inappropriate subdivision, development and use. Highly productive land has been mapped for Land Use Capability classes 1, 2 and 3 in accordance with the current NPS-HPL. Amendments have been signalled to remove class 3 land but are not currently in effect.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

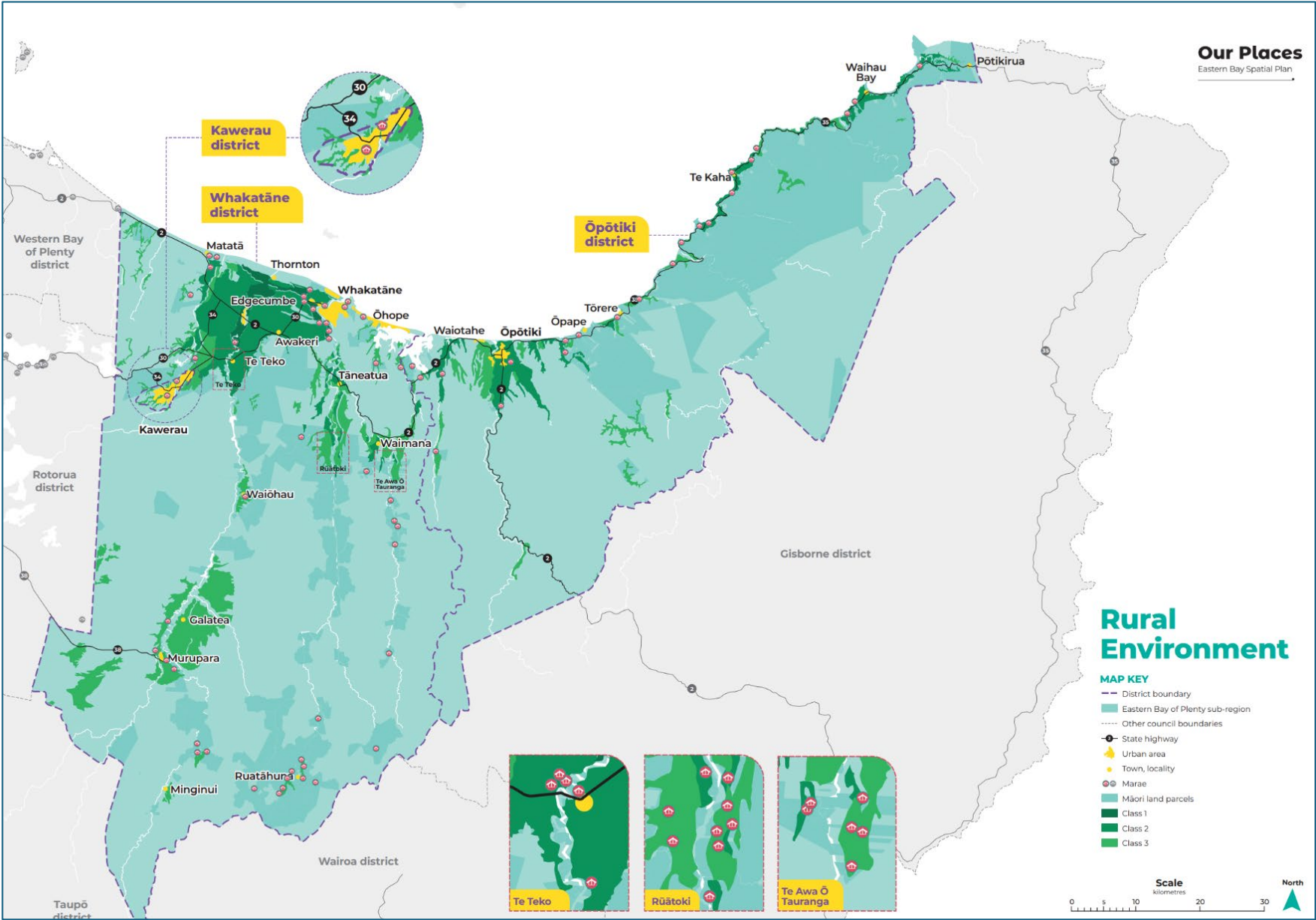


Figure 19: Rural environment

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

Māori freehold land is mainly in rural locations

The dispossession of land through confiscation and associated land use change has led to the loss of Māori owned land and in a lot of cases where land has been given to iwi, this has been in a different location to their traditional rohe. Most iwi in the Eastern Bay have settled their Treaty claims and have their Treaty Settlements enacted through legislation. Today, 22% of land in the Eastern Bay is Māori freehold land, being 168,987 ha in total⁶, with most of this being in the rural environment. Tāngata whenua as landowners have varying interests across the sub-region, recognising that Māori housing and business development is intertwined with the growth of the Eastern Bay.

Biodiversity and open spaces

There is 758,899 ha of land in the Eastern Bay. Several defining areas set the broad structure of the rural environment. The largest of these include Te Urewera, covering 127,845 ha, Department of Conservation (DOC) land covers 200,891 ha and plantation forestry land covers 152,713 ha.⁷ These are important culturally, for biodiversity or economic reasons and shape the rural character of the Eastern Bay.

Te Urewera: The Te Urewera Act was a key part of the Treaty of Waitangi settlement negotiated between Tūhoe and the Crown. In brief, Te Urewera Act 2014 recognises:

- Te Urewera is, and has always been the homeland of Tūhoe.
- Te Urewera is recognised in law as an identity and legal person in its own right.
- Tūhoe are the tangata whenua (host) and kaitiaki (guardians) of Te Urewera.
- Te Urewera Board is appointed to represent the legal personality of Te Urewera and to provide governance over Te Urewera.
- Te Urewera Board may grant permits to manuhiri (visitors) on behalf of Te Urewera and Tūhoe (Tangata Whenua and kaitiaki of Te Urewera) for activities such as hunting.

(Source: www.ngaituhoe.iwi.nz)

⁶ This does not account for all land owned by Māori or Māori trust land, as some of this is held under general freehold title including large parcels of land owned by Ngāti Tūwharetoa ki Kawerau.

⁷ The Eastern Bay of Plenty sub-region includes Whakatāne District, Kawerau District and Ōpōtiki District. The geographic boundaries are as of 1 January 2023. Data sources: Land Information New Zealand, Department of Conservation and Te Puni Kōkiri.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Key influences

What does the future hold?

Effective management of growth and development is crucial, given the importance of primary industries to our economy and the need to maintain and improve the ecological qualities of these areas.

Some of the things we need to do include:

Minimising land fragmentation	Managing land fragmentation becomes a critical challenge due to subdivision and residential development, threatening the productive value of rural land and complicating sustainable growth management.
Managing incompatible land uses	Unplanned rural lifestyle living can cause incompatible adjacent or nearby land uses, creating reverse sensitivity concerns and negative effects on residents' wellbeing. Structure planning for new development areas must consider reverse sensitivity effects early in the planning process to identify spatial solutions like buffers or separation distances to create good outcomes.
Unlocking Māori land for development	Includes complexities different from general title land development, such as multiple ownership complexities, governance, financing challenges, planning restrictions, and infrastructure investment.
Fostering strong links between rural and urban areas	The connections between rural communities and townships and other services centres like Te Kaha and Murupara are important to recognise. A stronger focus on improving transport accessibility and resilience is also important.

Contents

Part 3: Our Growth Plan 5

Overview..... 5

 Getting to a growth plan..... 7

 Decision-making principles about development 8

 Three different Strategic Corridors..... 9

Central Urban Corridor..... 11

 More business land is needed 13

 Māori Land Trust and owner aspirations 13

 Priority growth areas in the central corridor..... 14

 Awakeri 15

 Whenua Māori (West of Coastlands)..... 17

 Matatā 19

 Pūtauaki (Industrial Area)..... 21

 Kawerau Residential Infill/Intensification 22

 Hukutaia growth area 23

 Whakatāne (Kopeopeo infill) 24

Existing urban areas in the Central Corridor that are constrained 25

 Ōpōtiki township..... 26

 Whakatāne (Infill) 27

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

Te Teko..... 28

Edgecumbe..... 29

Southern Rural Corridor..... 30

Where are we now?..... 30

Iwi aspirations 30

What does the future hold for the Southern Corridor? 32

Minginui and Te Whaiti..... 32

Murupara..... 32

Tāneatua..... 32

Te Awa O Tauranga, Ruatoki, Ruatāhuna..... 32

Eastern Coastal Corridor 33

Where are we now?..... 33

Iwi aspirations 35

What does the future hold? 39

How will this be achieved? 40

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

Figures

Figure 1: Priority growth areas	6
Figure 2: Sub-regional corridors	10
Figure 3: Urban Central Corridor	12
Figure 4: Awakeri location	15
Figure 5: Whenua West of Coastlands Location	17
Figure 6: Matatā location	19
Figure 7: Pūtauaki location	21
Figure 8: Kawerau location	22
Figure 9: Hukutaia location	23
Figure 10: Whakatāne (Kopeopeo infill) location	24
Figure 11: Ōpōtiki township location	26
Figure 12: Whakatāne (Infill)	27
Figure 13: Te Teko location	28
Figure 14: Edgecumbe location	29
Figure 15: Rural Southern Corridor	31
Figure 16: Eastern Coastal Corridor	34
Figure 17: Ōpōtiki iwi pipeline projects Kererutahi to Opape	36
Figure 18: Ōpōtiki iwi pipeline projects Ōmarumutu to Hawai	37
Figure 19: Ōpōtiki iwi pipeline projects Haupoto to Whangaparāoa	38

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

Part 3: Our Growth Plan

Overview

This section outlines how development could be accommodated across the sub-region, based on the projected population and employment requirements, technical assessment of the performance of different locations, and feedback through engagement. An overview of the decision-making principles and process behind the strategy is explained.

To communicate the growth strategy, the sub-region has been segmented into three corridors of different characteristics: the central urban corridor, rural southern corridor, and the coastal eastern corridor. Infrastructure is mainly addressed in Part 4 – Infrastructure considerations.

The following Priority Growth Areas provides an overview of where new growth is expected to occur.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

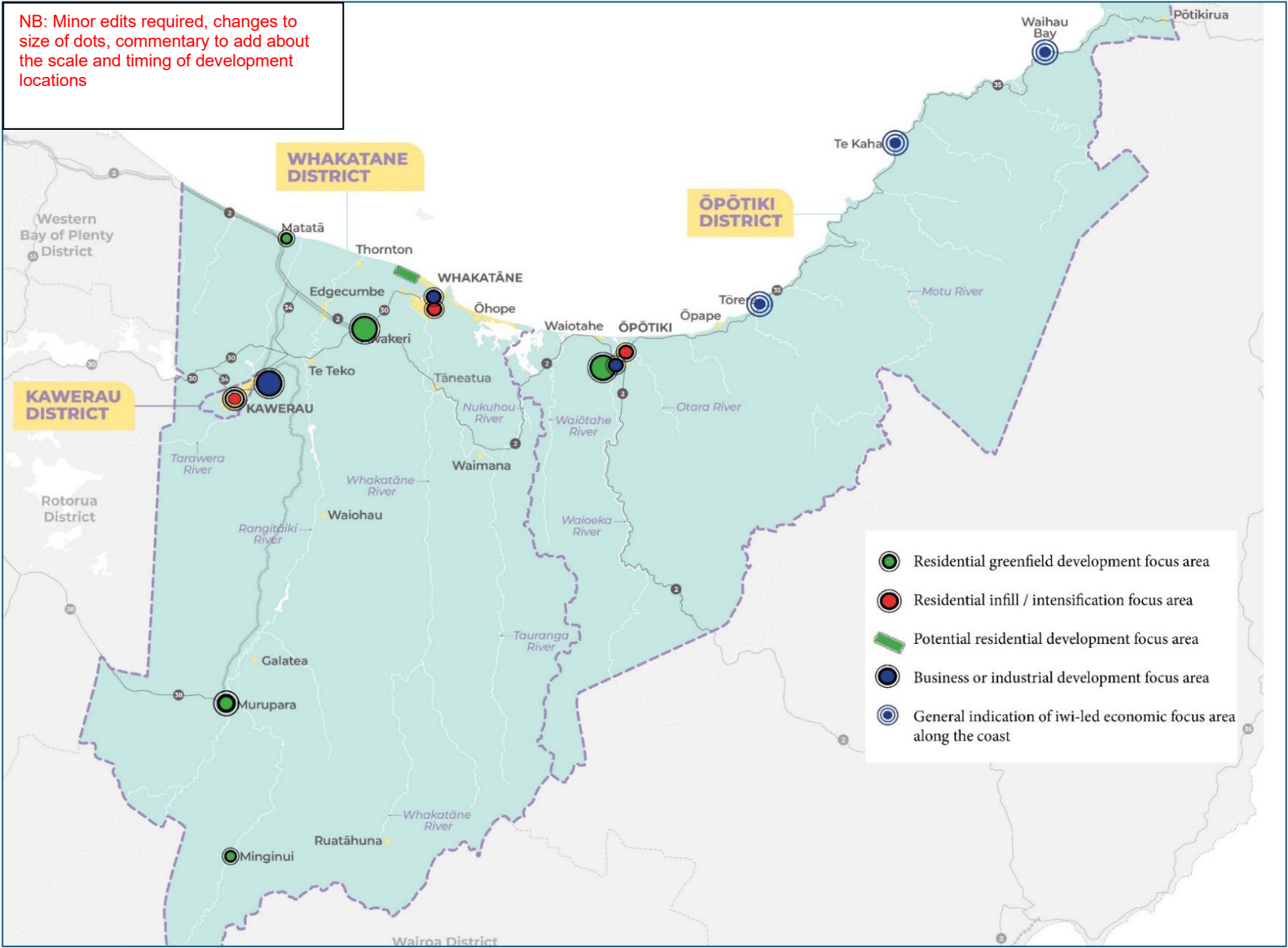


Figure 1: Priority growth areas

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

Getting to a growth plan

To provide the inputs for the land use changes proposed through the growth corridors, various scenarios were explored to see how different land use changes might work. Further information about the process can be found in the Scenarios and Development Options Report. Here's how we did it:

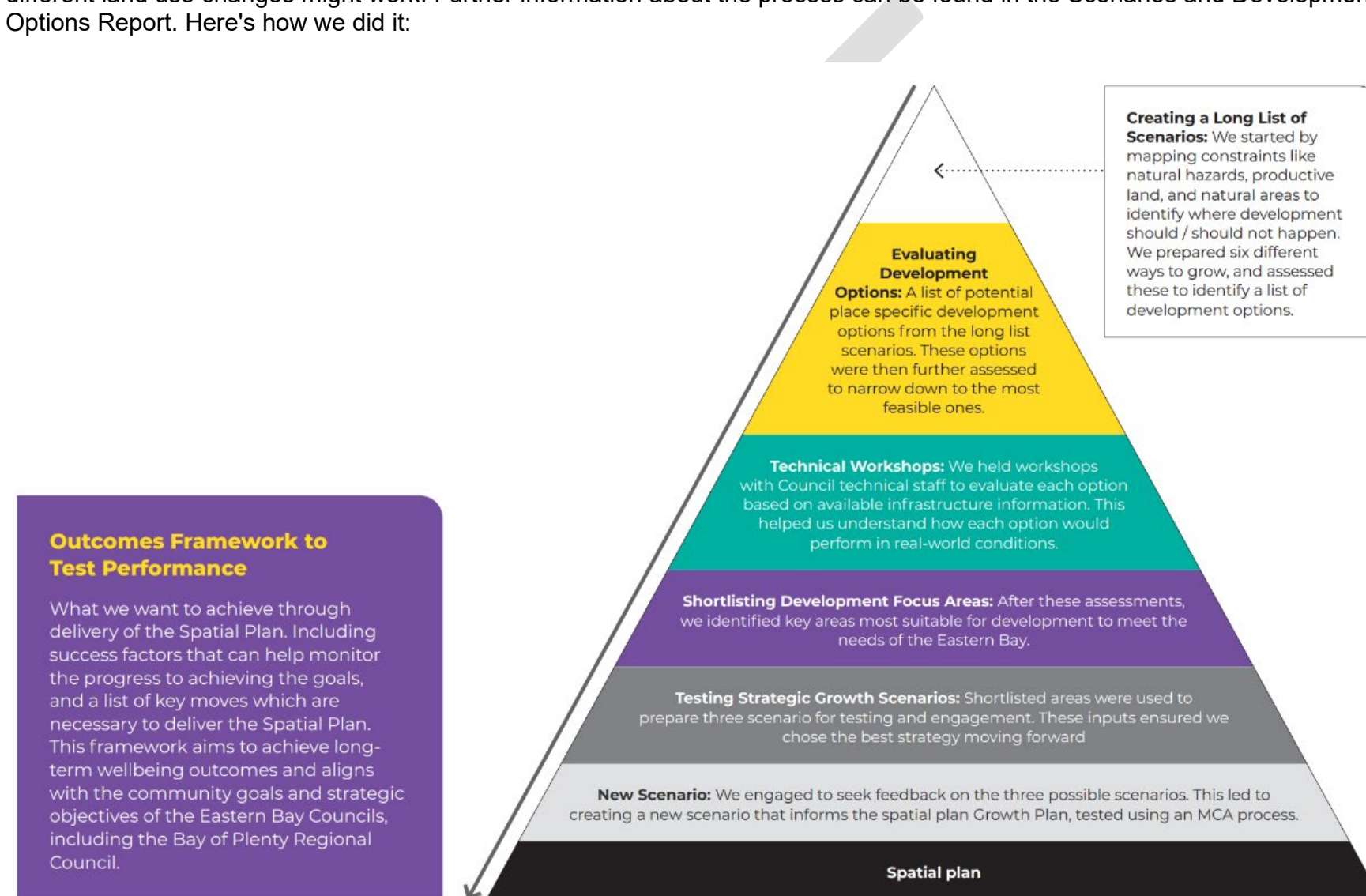


Figure 2: Scenarios and Development Process

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

Decision-making principles about development

Based on the goals and public engagement feedback, a set of decision-making principles was adopted to determine where development could be located and to guide how it should happen. These were applied to prepare the new scenario, including to assess new land areas identified through submissions.

Principles that direct where we want development to happen

- 1 First, consider development locations where there are existing settlements and infrastructure before contemplating new growth areas and infrastructure.
- 2 Avoid locations where man-made and natural hazard risk (including residual risk) and effects of climate change cannot be practicably and equitably managed.
- 3 Urban development locations should have good connections or access to employment, services and schools, and have affordable community infrastructure to support community wellbeing.

Principles that are ‘givens’ that apply in all locations

- 1 Avoid and mitigate impacts on natural areas to protect and conserve.
- 2 Protect culturally significant areas from development.
- 3 Minimise urban development on Highly Productive Land and ensure no rural residential development on Highly Productive Land (excluding papakāinga).

Principles about what we want to achieve

- 1 Enable and support iwi/hapū to use their land for their aspirations and unlock opportunities and ensure engagement reflects this intention.
- 2 Cost of infrastructure is feasible and affordable.
- 3 Enable a certainty of zoned and serviced land supply for residential and business purposes for a thirty-year period.
- 4 Locations that enable residential development and economic development opportunities are preferred, including iwi/hapū development.
- 5 Consider the changing needs of housing types due to shifts in demographics.
- 6 A settlement pattern that supports achievement of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- 7 Community wellbeing outcomes can be supported by great placemaking.

Part 3 - page 8 (DRAFT)

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

Three different Strategic Corridors

The Eastern Bay of Plenty is a diverse and vibrant sub-region, characterised by its three main urban centres and numerous smaller villages and coastal settlements. Spread across the entire Eastern Bay are 92 marae, focal points for Māori communities, providing spaces for gatherings, ceremonies, and cultural activities. The sub-region includes areas of plantation forestry, pastoral agriculture, horticulture, and natural areas. These varying urban and rural environments form the backbone of our community, each contributing uniquely to the region's identity and prosperity.

The sub-region is organised into three main corridors. These corridors facilitate movement, economic activity, and sustainable growth, ensuring that both urban and rural areas thrive. Each corridor identifies **priority growth areas** that are recommendations for where to focus additional planning and investments to enable development or other related aspirations for change.

- **Urban Central Corridor:** includes the townships of Kawerau, Whakatāne and Ōpōtiki and extends along the coast, capturing main rail routes to the port and connection to SH 2. It is expected to see the most development activity.
- **Rural Southern Corridor:** includes the large southern extent of the Whakatāne district, including the villages of Tāneatua, Waiōhau, Galatea, Waimana, Murupara, Minginui and Ruatāhuna with linkage to Rotorua from SH 38. This corridor emphasises iwi-led housing and development opportunities to support rural communities, forestry and horticulture industries.
- **Coastal Eastern Corridor:** includes the coastal strip extending from Ōpōtiki township to Pōtikirua. The Coastal Eastern Corridor has a focus on iwi-led housing and economic initiatives specifically for horticulture and aquaculture industries and is anchored by Te Kaha as the main service centre.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

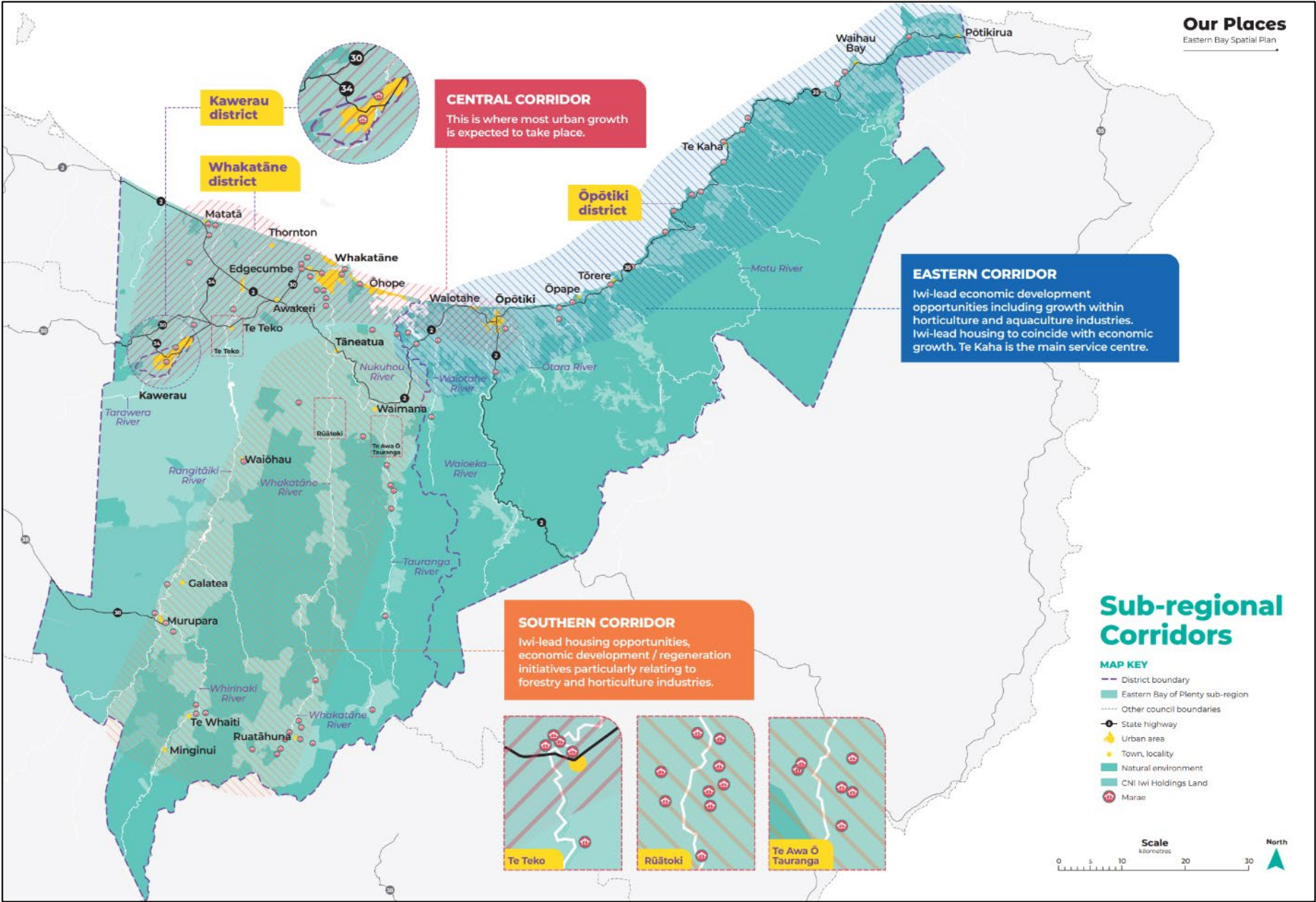


Figure 3: Sub-regional corridors

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

Central Urban Corridor

The Central Urban Corridor is the area with the largest current and projected urban growth in the subregion. The three main townships of the sub-region are within this corridor:

- Kawerau township – is in the heart of the sub-region and offers a variety of services and amenities. The Kawerau township supports around 8,000 residents and those working in the commercial and industrial areas, including the fast-developing Putauaki Trust Industrial Zone.
- Ōpōtiki township - is near the coast adjacent to the Ōtara and Waioweka rivers, defended by stop banks. The township serves as a key hub for local and rural communities. The Ōpōtiki Wharf provides access to the coast, enhancing recreational and economic activities. Residents also connect with the Ōtara and Waioeka rivers, which converge near the town, offering opportunities for fishing, kayaking, and other water-based activities.
- Whakatāne township – is near the coast and adjacent to the Whakatāne River. It is also defended by stop banks. Whakatāne offers a wide range of services and amenities for both residents and visitors, as the primary sub-regional centre.

The central corridor is rich in highly productive soils and rural farming activities, with the sub-regions most significant industrial land agglomeration located in Kawerau. The Putauaki industrial area in Kawerau is a priority for industrial growth. The area benefits from excellent transport links via State Highways 2 and 30, and a railway connecting directly to the Port of Tauranga. SH 2 connects Tauranga in the west to Gisborne in the southeast, while SH 30 links Rotorua in the southwest with Whakatāne. These transport connections are vital for the industrial and farming sectors.

The Tarawera, Rangitaiki, and Whakatāne rivers flow through the Rangitaiki Plains into the Pacific Ocean, making the land rich in alluvial deposits but also prone to flooding during heavy rains which are currently managed by flood schemes. River flooding is a significant challenge for the Eastern Bay. Flood protection will continue to play a key role in supporting community wellbeing for existing settlements, including Whakatāne and Ōpōtiki townships. However, as conditions change, more adaptive and resilient approaches may need to be explored to ensure communities remain safe and resilient to the effects of natural hazards and climate change in the long-term. There are limited opportunities for expanding development areas within this corridor due to broad constraints like flood hazards or highly productive lands.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

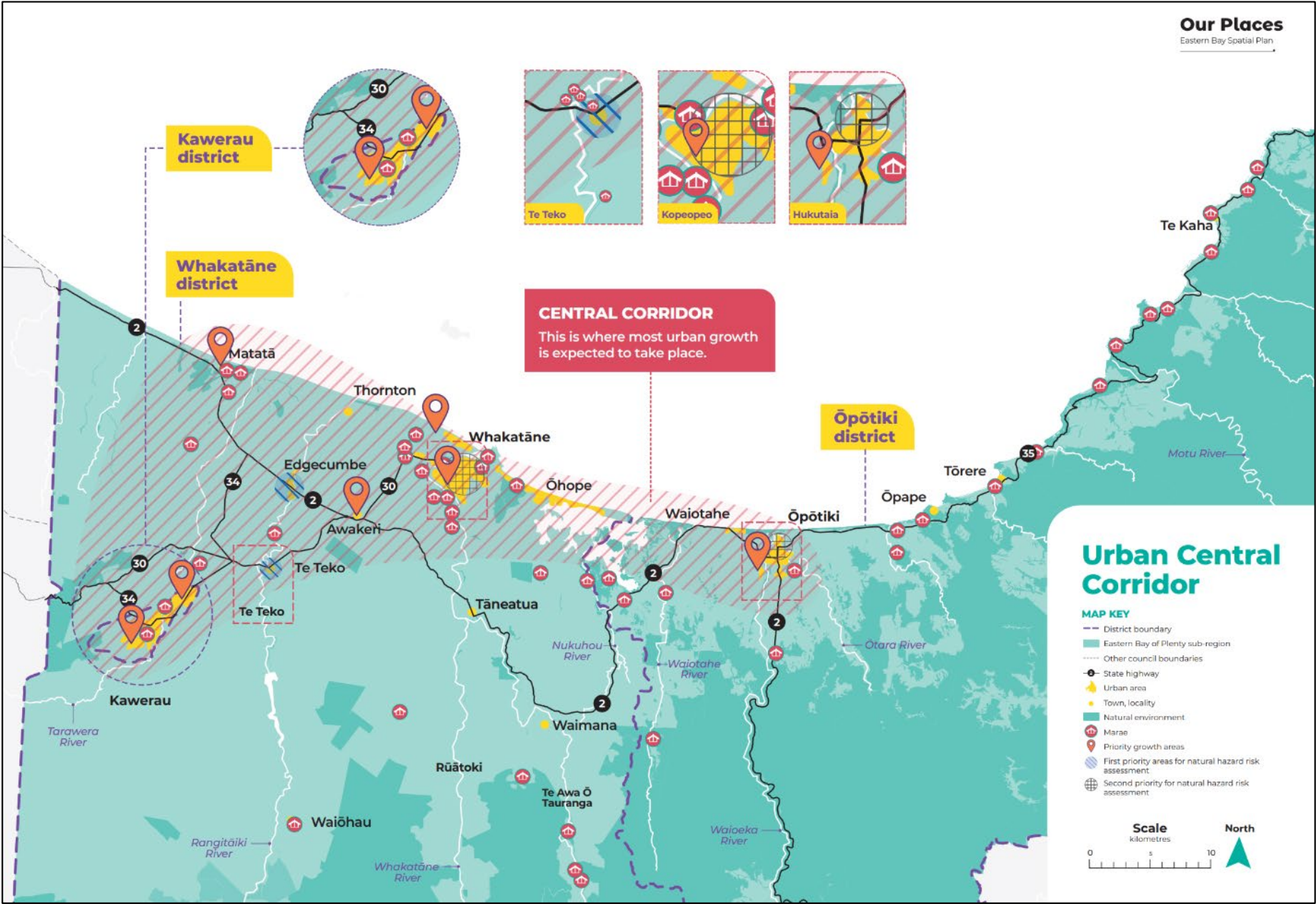


Figure 4: Urban Central Corridor

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

More business land is needed

By 2053, Whakatāne district is projected to require 2,000 new jobs, 1,000 new jobs in Ōpōtiki and 1,400 in Kawerau. This means that an additional 57.8 ha of land is needed across the sub-region for both industrial (40 ha) and commercial (17.8 ha) purposes. This growth is primarily anticipated to focus around new growth areas, with some rejuvenation within existing urban centres. Major industrial growth will be focused on Putauaki Trust Industrial Zone.

Whakatāne township is the primary sub-regional service centre and given that space within the existing urban centre is finite (although there is still growth potential) additional commercial land will likely be required over the term of the plan near to the township. A 2022 survey by Whakatāne Council estimated 8 ha of light industrial land and 2 ha of commercial land available throughout the Whakatāne district for development. Much of this was available on redevelopment sites. With a forecast demand of 18 ha of commercial business land and a potential supply of 10 ha, there is likely a need for to 10-18 ha more commercial business land (e.g., commercial and light industrial activities).

Ōpōtiki township currently has insufficient land for industrial activities but can meet future commercial land needs through redevelopment or infill within the township, and as part of planning for new development at Hukutaia. At the time of this plan's preparation, ODC is undertaking a specific planning investigation into industrial land supply which will make recommendations for re-zoning actions.

Māori Land Trust and owner aspirations

One of the goals of the spatial plan is to work with Māori landowners to enable development of their land in alignment with their aspirations. A key part of the planning process has been engaging with local iwi. Many iwi and hapū provided submissions through Te Au o Te Awa Punga in the public consultation period in 2024, identifying key priorities and opportunities for development partnerships.

Many landowners and trusts have not yet fully explored development opportunities or funding mechanisms for their land. Continued dialogue is essential as development aspirations evolve over time and constraints posed by natural hazards and climate change must be carefully considered. Specific areas of interest within the Central Urban Corridor include Māori land near Awakeri, Whenua Māori west of Coastlands, and land to the east of Matatā. In Ōpōtiki, development aspirations include areas around Hukutaia, the Totara Block, and further development towards the coast, including the Marina and Industrial Park.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

Priority growth areas in the central corridor

Area	Timing	Notes
Awakeri	Short-Medium term	Develop into an urban township of more than 2,000 dwelling units
Whenua Māori West of Coastlands	Medium term	Explore opportunities based on Land Trust and hapu interests, with substantial potential for development of 190 ha
Matatā	Medium-Long term (Infill) Long term (Expansion)	There is existing zoned capacity requiring centralised wastewater treatment to be realised, and a long-term opportunity to expand eastward
Putuaki (Industrial Growth Area)	Ongoing	Continued ongoing development
Hukutaia	Ongoing	Develop into an urban community of 2,000 dwellings
Whakatāne (Kopeopeo infill)	Ongoing	Ongoing infill of Whakatāne township in locations safe from natural hazards

Note: Long term (10-30 years), Medium term (3-10 years), Short term (0-3 years)

The next steps are being worked through by each Council and while the priority growth areas would be the areas where larger changes might occur to enable more development, these will be supported through the ongoing infill and intensification of townships, through rural residential development, pāpakainga, and ongoing infill of smaller communities as already enabled through district plan provisions.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

Awakeri

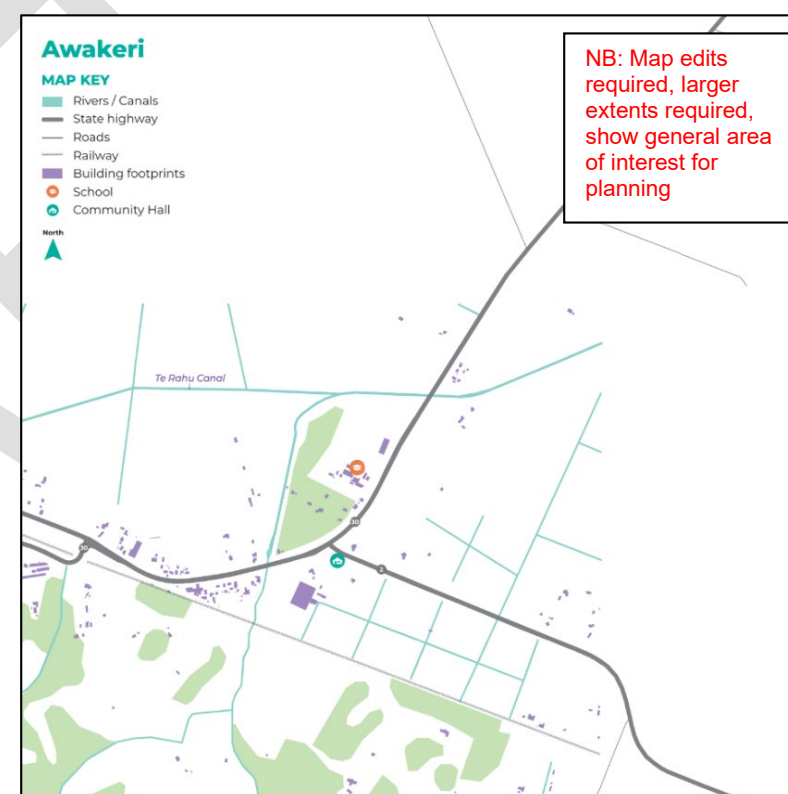
Today, Awakeri has a small permanent population focused around a school and community recreation centre. The intersection of SH 2 and SH 30 is a major transport node within Awakeri, encouraging a high volume of through traffic, approximately 8.5 km southwest of Whakatāne and 25 km to Kawerau. The land is generally flat, backstopped by hills. It is located within a flood scheme, and stormwater management planning is needed to inform future growth planning to manage the effects of climate change, protect the levels of service of the flood scheme and manage downstream risk.

What growth could look like in Awakeri

By 2055, Awakeri could develop into an urban community with a centre focused on commercial and community amenities. Development could be more than 2,000 residential lots, supported by investments into enabling infrastructure like transport, three waters, and public facilities.

Awakeri is a priority for development because of a relatively low flood risk profile enabling resiliency, a consolidated land ownership pattern, existing community facilities, and excellent transport connections to employment locations in urban areas and more broadly throughout the sub-region. This means residents will have a choice of employment, schooling, services, and recreational options.

As Awakeri grows, it will build on its own unique identity, complete with new parks and open spaces created through careful master planning and placemaking. There are schooling options to meet roll requirements, and good bus options to other schools in the district including secondary schooling. An approach to stormwater management that relies on natural systems and interlinked parks and natural open spaces can become part of the identity for the place. Expanded public transport services to main employment locations in Kawerau and Whakatāne townships can offer transport choice.



7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)**Our Growth Plan**

Sustainable development in Awakeri can be part of addressing the need for more employment opportunities in the sub-region. Providing appropriate land for commercial and small-scale industrial activities can promote local employment. Commercial activity needs to be planned with care to reinforce the primacy of Whakatāne township as the prime sub-regional commercial services centre, and to maintain Kawerau and Putauaki Industrial Area's role as the industrial hub for the sub-region. Additionally, commercial development needs to help make Awakeri an in-demand place for people to live through quality urban design and place-making approaches. Future residential use could be supported by commercial and small-scale industrial development to boost employment and commercial land supply.

Māori landowners in the area are actively exploring opportunities for development that uphold te taiao, ensuring future growth does not come at the expense of the whenua or wai. The Kiwinui Trust wish to see inclusion of a large area of Māori land as part of the development at Awakeri. While currently used for carbon forestry, over time there are broad opportunities for this area to facilitate pāpakainga, provide for open spaces, or other development formats and activities that can complement the village's expansion into an urban town and strongly inform the community's identity, including a commitment to sustainable land use and intergenerational wellbeing.

The area will continue to benefit from a rural aspect with proximity to farming and agricultural activities, as much of the surrounding land classified and protected as highly productive. Reverse sensitivity issues between agricultural and urban activities will be proactively addressed through careful structure planning, which is likely to require a sufficient buffer space.

The existing school and community events centre provide a focus for the existing community life and future ones. Located approximately 500-600 m northwest from the core of the residential growth area, this will promote walkable connections, but careful management of the highway network will be needed to promote safe speeds and pedestrian friendly access. Planning will need to consider the tension between local access and through-trips on the highway network.

Next steps

The next steps will be determined by Whakatāne District's local growth strategy in consultation with the community. These steps are expected to include integrated catchment management planning, advancing feasibility studies, a masterplan and plan changes, assessments for infrastructure and other matters like environmental outcomes, and securing funding for key infrastructure interventions. Both the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) and the Ministry of Education will be key players in the future planning.

With careful planning and collaboration with iwi, hapu, and the community, Awakeri can become a resilient community playing a vital role in the sub-region's future. Community facilities, open spaces, and local services will play an integral part alongside development, to create a place people are proud to live. Collaboration with iwi and hapū and Māori landowners is essential to shaping an inclusive, culturally enriched, and sustainable future.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

Whenua Māori (West of Coastlands)

A 190 ha area of land was raised by landowners through the submissions stage of the spatial plan for consideration of its development potential. The land is west of the Coastlands community near Whakatāne township.

The land is owned by Māori Land Trusts and is within the Ngāi Taiwhakaea rohe. Currently undeveloped, the land could result in a sub-regionally significant contribution to the forecasted housing requirement and business opportunities for landowners. The land is naturally elevated with slight undulations forming part of the natural dune area. Its elevation means it is substantially more resilient to flood risks.

The land is centrally located with a coastal position. This coastal location is expected to support a good degree of commercial opportunity for landowners. To develop the land, work will need to be done to integrate hapū perspectives and ensure wāhi tapu and sites of cultural significance are protected. The priority for Ngāi Taiwhakaea is to protect, preserve and restore te taiao in any development. Currently, there is not clear agreement around the future use of the lands. To illustrate the scale of the opportunity, a very conservative five residential unit per ha gross density would yield 950 dwellings.

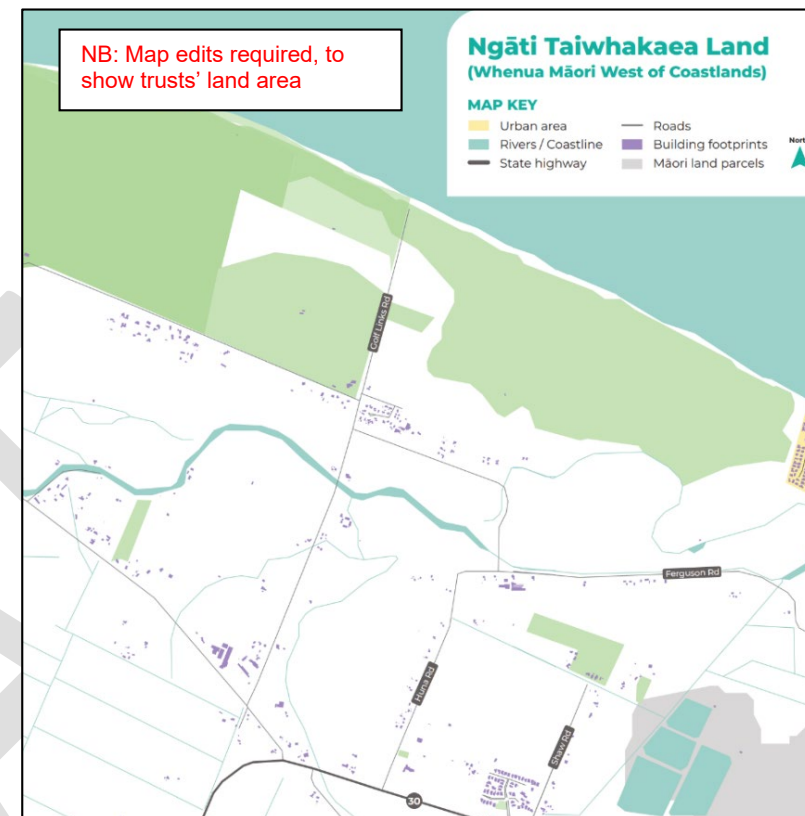


Figure 6: Whenua West of Coastlands Location

What growth looks like

The area is a strategic opportunity for housing and socio-economic activities. The area could remain in its current state or be developed for a wide range of uses from pāpakainga through to institutional activities. A masterplan by Māori Land Trusts and hapū would need to be undertaken to inform subsequent district plan changes. A structure plan will inform potential development of this area, conceptualise the intended development proposal, infrastructure approach, and related funding proposals. Whakatāne District Council would have a role to enable and help manage the provision of infrastructure to service the location as well as related regulatory functions.

Next steps

The next steps involve WDC working closely with the Māori Land Trusts, iwi, and hapu, to support the development of aspirations and site feasibility. This will inform a structure plan or master planning that can then guide potential zoning changes and infrastructure considerations.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)**Our Growth Plan**

Key priorities include securing three waters considerations and funding possibilities such as private funding agreements. The masterplan should consider logical planning boundaries and not be drawn solely on land ownership patterns. This may result in extensions of the area initially defined and require broader engagement with adjacent landowners.

Consideration of Local Waters Done Well will be needed, along with catchment wide stormwater management plans that help support resilient management of stormwater and maximising the existing drainage schemes while minimising effects on it. There are options to connect to existing water and wastewater services in Coastlands or to extend services along Golf Links Road. Given the coastal dune landscape, stormwater management must align with natural drainage systems.

Further feasibility studies and infrastructure assessments will be essential to unlocking sustainable development while ensuring alignment with community and environmental priorities.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

Matatā

Matatā is a coastal village located in the west of the district, at the foot of the Matatā Scenic Reserve (Whakapoukarakia) and the north-western edge of the Rangitaiki Plains. It has an existing community of around 1,700 residents¹. It is an important gateway to the eastern bay from the west with SH 2 passing through the town. Matatā is rich in cultural heritage and natural beauty.

What future growth might look like

Matatā's future will be influenced by population growth driven by nearby employment hubs. Increased activity in the Putauaki Industrial Area in Kawerau, business development at Rangiuru (east of Papamoa), and continued growth within Whakatāne township are expected to create new employment opportunities within a reasonable commuting distance (approximately 25 minutes). This will likely attract new residents to Matatā, reinforcing the need for a coordinated and sustainable approach to township development. As a gateway to the eastern bay, there are strong ambitions amongst the community for local economic development, and to develop eco-tourism opportunities.

The Tarawera Awa River Strategy Group are developing plans to return the nearby Tarawera River to its natural watercourse. The lower catchment area also drains into the Te Awa o Atua and the Tarawera River and is subject to coastal processes. Iwi are leading efforts to restore the mauri of the Tarawera Awa to Te Awa o Te Atua and out to te Mihinimino.



Figure 7: Matatā location

The residential zone in the Whakatāne District Plan for Matatā is larger than the current developed urban footprint. Subject to the development of a reticulated wastewater system, the town is anticipated to grow from approximately 260 homes to 600–700 homes. This is expected to happen through a mixture of infill and subdivision of existing residential properties over the long term of 10-30 years. A fragmented and complex land ownership, emphasis on protection of the natural environment, stormwater management, and natural hazard risks suggest development and changes will initially be slow.

¹ 2018 Census, Stats NZ

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)**Our Growth Plan**

Additional to the existing capacity provided for in the district plan, there is elevated land suitable for future new growth further east of the existing residential zone. This area could accommodate another 700–800 homes and should be preserved for future urban development consideration by avoiding low density residential uses.

Where to next?

To guide the future development of Matatā, a master plan for Matatā should be progressed to ensure future development protects and enhances the town's natural character and enables sufficient development opportunities. A new wastewater treatment plant that services Matatā is critical to enabling development and achieving environmental outcomes.

The community was clear through engagement that the character of Matatā is paramount. Planning will need to take a placemaking-first approach that interweaves changes with existing development to support the town's unique character. Economic development activities and detailed planning should also consider how to leverage the role of the community as a gateway to the eastern bay.

The community is interested and needs to be highly involved in directing the future of Matatā. A local economic development plan should be prepared to direct Matatā's future, in tandem with any local growth strategy. There is a strong concern that successful development and new economic activity may price out existing residents, and this needs to be a consideration in planning.

Partnerships with iwi, hapū, and Māori Land Trusts will be critical to the township's ongoing development. Opportunities include exploring lease structures that preserve Māori land ownership while enabling development. A slow, careful approach to planning the future of Matatā is preferred.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

Pūtauaki (Industrial Area)

The Pūtauaki Industrial Zone in Kawerau originally covered approximately 171 ha. In 2024, a boundary adjustment with Whakatāne district approved the transfer of an additional 311 ha to the west of the existing site into Kawerau District, part of which will be rezoned for expansion of this industrial area.

What Growth looks like

Kawerau will continue to be the sub-region’s premier industrial growth area. The Sub-Regional Economic Development Strategy identifies future development as a green industry hub with geothermal and bioenergy facilities.

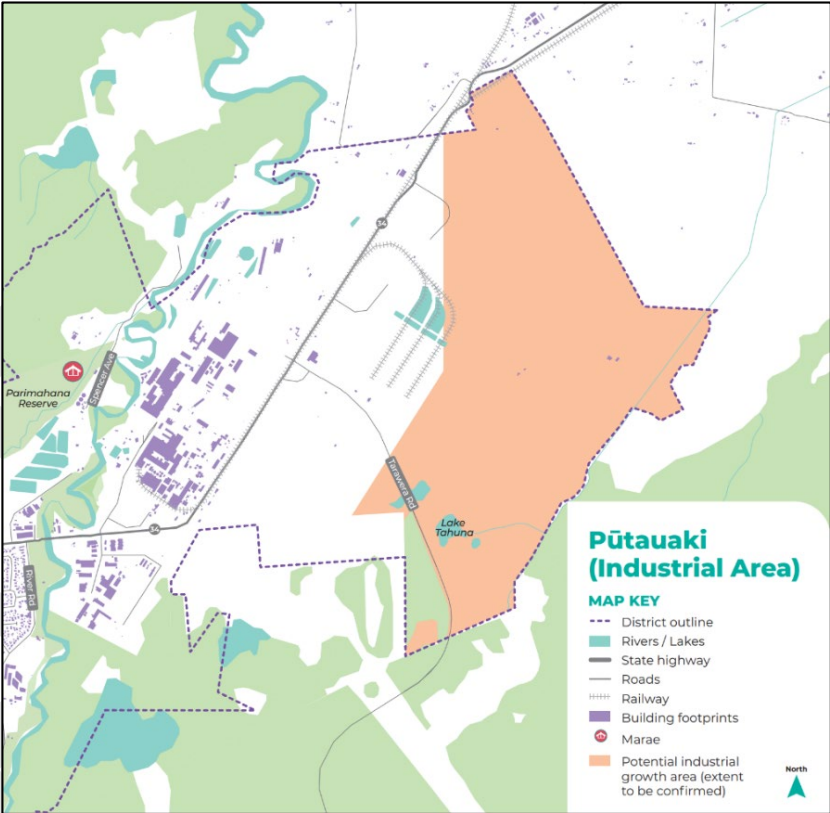


Figure 8: Pūtauaki location

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

Kawerau Residential Infill/Intensification

Kawerau district has limited opportunities for greenfield residential development, so increasing housing will require infill or intensification of existing residential areas. Stoneham Park is one of the remaining greenfield opportunities and is nearly into development stages.

What growth looks like

Kawerau’s growth will be driven by market forces and will be largely dependent on infill development capacity. There are some opportunities for the development of Māori-owned land for papakāinga or other Māori-led housing initiatives. District-wide stormwater flood modelling will inform the review of the district plan and include provisions to manage flood risk.

Where to next?

For Kawerau, residential growth will focus on development of Stoneham Park, infill and intensification of existing residential areas, papakāinga or other Māori-led housing initiatives. Collaboration with iwi and strategic upgrading of infrastructure in relation to demand will be key to unlocking sustainable growth in Kawerau. Between 1990 and 2021, Kawerau averaged about 5 new dwellings consents per year.² Stoneham Park will enable around 104 residential units.

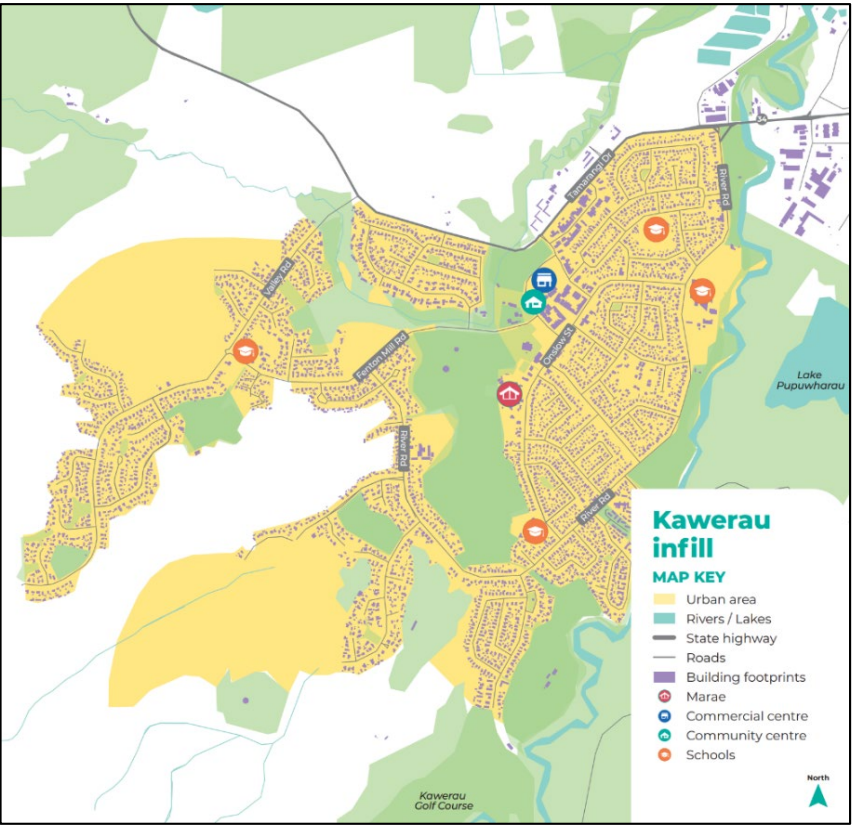


Figure 9: Kawerau location

² Kawerau District Council Stoneham Park Residential Development Property Market Report, Veros

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

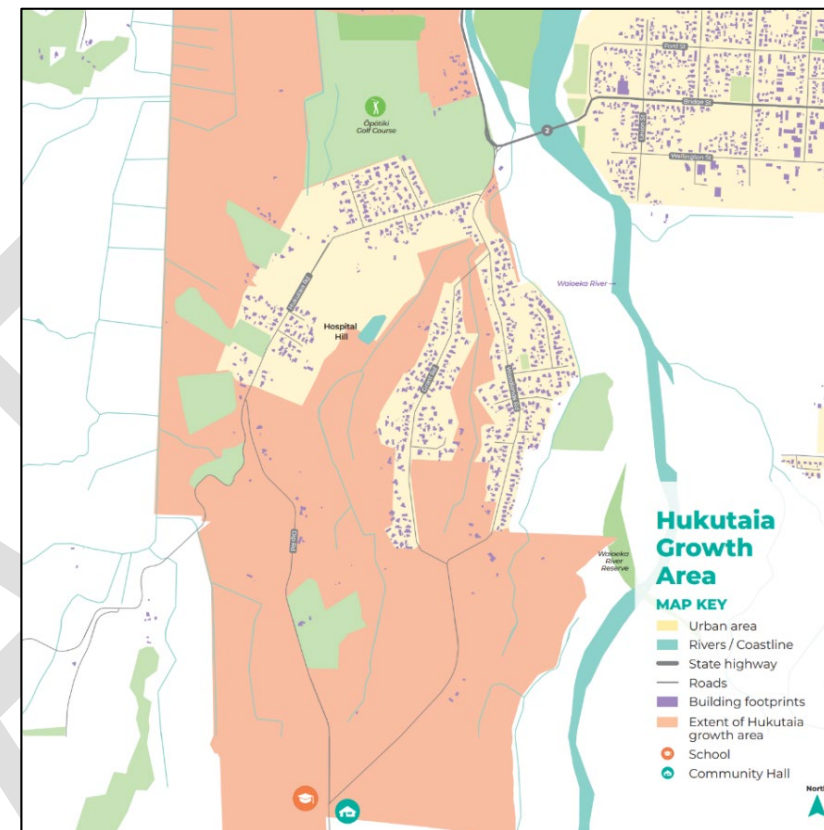
Our Growth Plan

Hukutaia growth area

Located southwest of Ōpōtiki, the Hukutaia area is currently bounded by Woodlands Road, Hukutaia and Dip Roads, and Grant Road and is located above the Otara-Waioweka flood scheme. It currently has a mix of urban residential around Hospital Hill and rural land uses. With an elevated position it sits outside most flood hazard risk areas and is better positioned in this respect than the township.

What growth looks like

The area has the capacity to provide for 2,000 residential dwelling units by 2055. Local commercial opportunities will create employment and contribute to the vibrancy and resilience of the new area. Development concepts have identified smaller-scale commercial opportunities to support the area's employment growth. A district plan change and new structure plan will rezone and unlock the land within Hukutaia Growth Area. However, future planning will need to consider impacts on the Otara-Waioweka flood scheme and the existing Ōpōtiki township. Hukutaia will develop into a vibrant new growth cell with land for social infrastructure and facilities made available as growth and demand increase. Growth in Hukutaia will be steady, with a mix of residential density dwellings providing a safer retreat for some existing residents and natural growth for others working in the township.

**Figure 10: Hukutaia location****Where to next?**

For Hukutaia, the next steps focus on unlocking its potential as a key growth area. A district plan change and structure planning will be essential to rezone land, ensuring sustainable and well-integrated development. With capacity for 2,000 new homes by 2055, growth will be staged to align with infrastructure upgrades and community needs.

Key priorities include securing resilient water supply solutions, evaluating wastewater treatment options, and implementing effective stormwater management and manages downstream risk to existing Ōpōtiki Township. The planned Stoney Creek utilities bridge will enhance water supply resilience, while electricity upgrades will support increasing demand.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

Ongoing collaboration with iwi, landowners, and stakeholders will guide growth, ensuring Hukutaia develops as a vibrant, well-serviced community with local employment and commercial opportunities.

Whakatāne (Kopeopeo infill)

Unlike the wider Whakatāne urban area, Kopeopeo (along with other higher elevated areas like Hillside) presents a safer opportunity for infill development as it is less exposed to natural hazard risks compared to other lower-lying areas of Whakatāne township.

Kopeopeo sits on land elevated above the flood hazard risks of stop bank failure or an overtopping event from a storm exceeding a 1/100 year annual exceedance probability (AEP) intensity.

What growth looks like

As an established community, there is unlikely to be a substantial or quick increase in infill and intensification. Kopeopeo, and similarly elevated areas, present an opportunity for gradual continued infill or intensification development over the timeframe of the spatial plan.

While there is existing water and wastewater capacity for infill development, there are constraints. For example, existing urban water mains will eventually require upgrades to meet increased demand, and the potential expansion of the Whakatāne Wastewater Treatment Plant will need to accommodate additional capacity for the area.

Where to next?

Kopeopeo and other similarly elevated areas offer a strong opportunity for continued infill and intensification in the short to long term, given its elevation and lower exposure to natural hazard risks. However, long-term growth will depend on shifting public and developer perceptions toward higher density living. Infrastructure planning will focus on ensuring water supply resilience, with potential connections to primary and secondary mains from Paul Road or Braemar Road. Upgrades to ageing asbestos cement water mains may also be required to support increased demand.

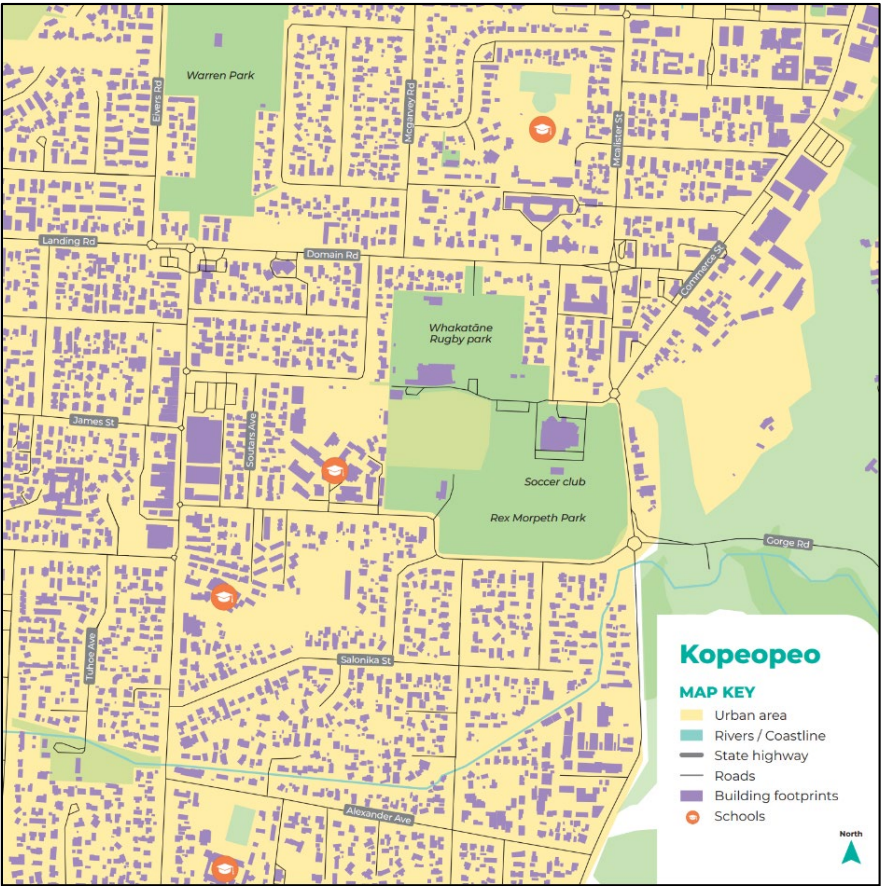


Figure 11: Whakatāne (Kopeopeo infill) location

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)**Our Growth Plan**

Wastewater capacity is currently being assessed, with further modelling needed to determine if upgrades to pump stations and rising mains are necessary. The potential expansion of the Whakatāne Wastewater Treatment Plant could accommodate future growth, ensuring long-term service reliability.

Stormwater management remains a priority, with ongoing reviews to enhance system performance and maintain effective drainage. While Kopeopeo sits at a higher elevation than the Whakatāne CBD, it remains within key river catchments, requiring ongoing flood risk considerations as part of broader spatial planning efforts. Future development of stormwater systems should promote catchment wide blue green network consideration.

Existing urban areas in the Central Corridor that are constrained

The Central Corridor has several villages and townships that have developed over time around rivers in low lying areas. These areas have been previously zoned for a range of land use activities. These places have been home to communities for generations. Continued collaboration with iwi, landowners, and key stakeholders will shape a sustainable path forward.

In some locations such as Tāneatua or Ōpōtiki township, the spatial plan has adopted a precautionary approach that acknowledges that natural hazard constraints apply and there are no planned or funded mitigations to fully address risks. Full mitigation may not be feasible or affordable. As such, these are not included as priority growth areas.

The spatial plan takes the position that areas promoted for new growth need to be ones that are demonstrably resilient. The spatial plan does not change zoning in the district plan and it does not on its own create or prohibit additional development at these locations. A future district plan review or plan change would be needed to make a change like that.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

Communities that are not being promoted for additional development capacity, beyond what is already enabled through the current district plans, include:

Ōpōtiki township

Ōpōtiki township is surrounded by the Waiwoeka and Ōtara rivers and defended against adverse flood conditions by stop banks on either side of the urban area.

Ōpōtiki will continue to provide for infill development at a controlled pace in the short term. In the medium to long term, as flood risks and management options including funding are better understood and implemented, development potential within the township may change. Hukutaia will enable a resilient development option nearby the township to absorb population and commercial growth, including from possible managed retreat from natural hazards.

Risk assessments will inform river management planning, infrastructure planning, adaptation planning, emergency preparedness, and land use planning and will guide future growth decisions, ensuring that Ōpōtiki remains a resilient and well supported township.



Figure 12: Ōpōtiki township location

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

Whakatāne (Infill)

Lower lying land within the Whakatāne urban boundary (excluding Kopeopeo and similarly elevated areas) and adjacent to the township is subject to natural hazard risks associated with the Whakatāne River and its potential for flooding. As a result, other locations such as Matatā and Awakeri have been identified for future growth.

As further investigations are undertaken to understand natural hazard risk and, as future risk management strategies evolve, district plan provisions may be changed to address better understanding of the risk.



Figure 13: Whakatāne (Infill)

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

Te Teko

Te Teko has capacity for small scale growth within the existing urban area on land currently zoned for residential development. The existing settlement is defended in some locations by stop banks and is unprotected in other areas meaning parts of the settlement are susceptible to large flooding events.

For these reasons, the community remains vulnerable and therefore, Te Teko is not progressed as growth option in the spatial plan. In the interim, natural hazard risk assessment and resilience planning is promoted.



Figure 14: Te Teko location

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

Edgecumbe

Edgecumbe is a vibrant community nestled along the banks of the Rangitaiki River, with a strong sense of connection to its natural environment. The settlement is defended from the risk of flooding by stop banks along the river's margins, as well as being part of the Rangitaiki River and Drainage Scheme.

In 2017, Edgecumbe faced a significant challenge when heavy rains from Cyclone Debbie led to a breach in the stop bank, causing the Rangitaiki River to flood much of the village. Edgecumbe is not progressed as viable as a growth area for new urban development.

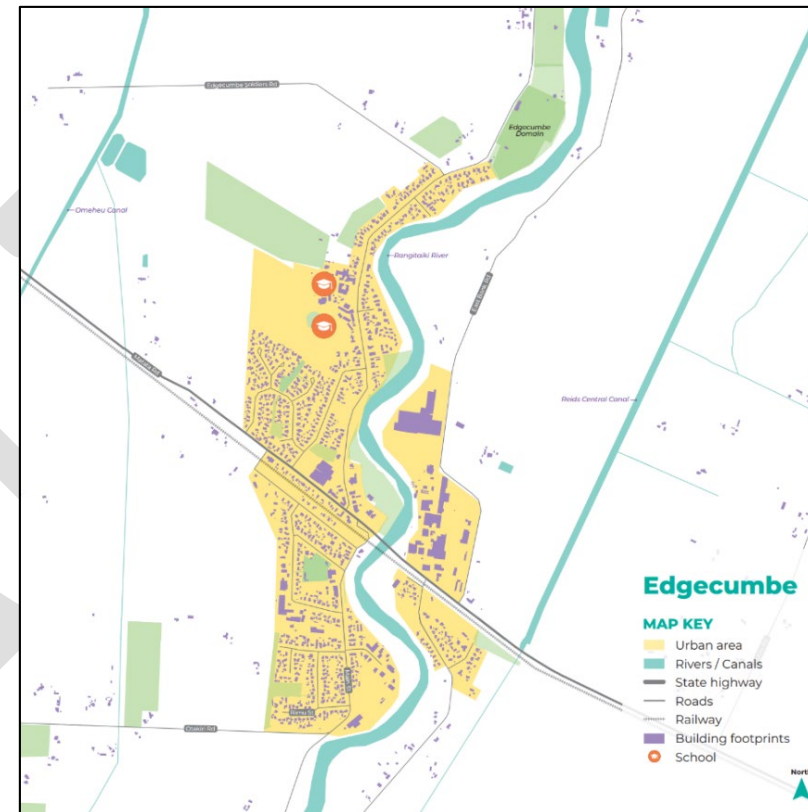


Figure 15: Edgecumbe location

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

Southern Rural Corridor**Where are we now?**

The Rural Southern Corridor stretches from Tāneatua in the north to Minginui in the south, including areas like Murupara, Waimana, Waiōhau, Ruatāhuna, and Galatea. This area is known for its small rural towns, agriculture, forestry, and large areas of protected indigenous forest, including Te Urewera and Whirinaki Forest Park. Tourism here focuses on these beautiful natural areas. The three main iwi in this corridor are Ngāti Manawa, Ngāti Whare, and Ngāi Tūhoe.

The Galatea Valley is a productive area with dairy farms, while the Kaingaroa Forest and Central North Island (CNI) Iwi Collective Forestry Lands lie to the west. The Rangitāiki River, along with the Ōhinemataroa (Whakatāne), Whirinaki and Tauranga rivers, flows through this corridor, playing a significant role in the corridor. The Rangitāiki River is co-governed by the Rangitāiki River Forum and has hydro-electric power stations at Aniwhenua and Matahina.

Key transport routes include SH 38, connecting Murupara to Rotorua, the Te Urewera Rainforest Route, and Galatea Road linking to the Rangitāiki Plains and the north. Tāneatua and Waimana are served by SH 2 and Tāneatua Road, which connects to Whakatāne. There's also a rail line from Murupara to Kawerau and Tauranga.

Iwi aspirations

The three main iwi in the Southern Rural Corridor have specific aspirations:

- Ngāti Manawa aim to uplift health and wellbeing in Murupara, by supporting economic development and creating a thriving community that acts as the service hub for the Southern Rural Corridor. This includes establishing a service centre on SH 38, revitalising the town centre, improving community infrastructure, progressing the housing development at Miro Drive and developing housing at Evans Park.
- Ngāti Whare have goals for Minginui and Te Whaiti which support self-sufficiency and include sustainable waste and water management, upgrading homes, developing papakāinga, renewable energy projects, ecotourism, revitalising the town centre, and strengthening educational facilities.
- Ngāi Tūhoe have documented their aspirations in Tūhoe - Te Uru Taumatua and tribal authorities' publications. Ngāi Tūhoe's long-term housing goals are outlined in the Tuhoe Blueprint: Housing 40 Year Vision.

Ongoing conversations with iwi are crucial to identify how councils and others can support these aspirations.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

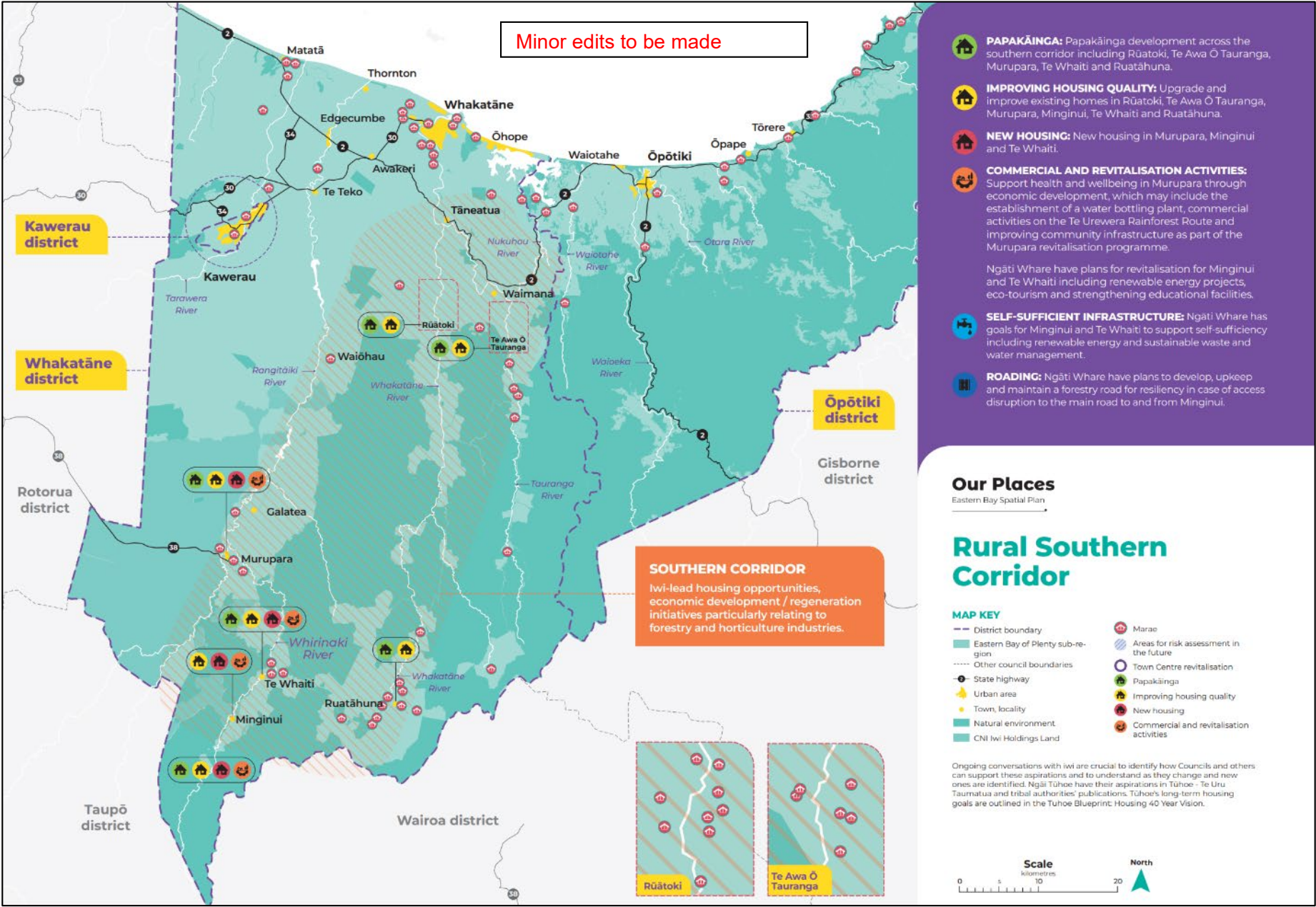


Figure 16: Rural Southern Corridor

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)**Our Growth Plan****What does the future hold for the Southern Corridor?**

The focus for the Rural Southern Corridor is on iwi-led housing and economic opportunities, particularly in tourism, forestry, horticulture, and potential new ventures like sustainable water bottling. The main emphasis is on supporting iwi-led initiatives.

Growth in this corridor means resilience, revitalisation, and supporting iwi aspirations. The focus for Three Waters Infrastructure is improving existing systems or self-sufficiency. Marae must be supported as cultural and community hubs, including for emergency management. Community facilities are co-located and appropriately service the needs of each community.

Minginui and Te Whaiti

By 2055, increased Māori housing and papakāinga will support the growth of Ngāti Whare descendants living within the Minginui and Te Whaiti communities. Marae and surrounding areas will be prepared as emergency hubs. Minginui will grow sustainably, providing for whānau needs and creating a central recreation area and essential services accessible to the Te Whaiti community.

Murupara

By 2055, Murupara will have improved public facilities and community spaces. Key changes proposed for consideration include the conversion of Evan's Park into a residential zone and enabling a commercial area on the Te Urewera Rainforest Route. Both require initial feasibility assessments.

Tāneatua

By 2055, flood mapping and natural hazard risk assessments will inform the feasibility and affordability of any risk management planning and decisions to be considered in the future. There have been prior documented flood events affecting this community. Due to known flood risk and the absence of mitigation measures to manage that, Tāneatua it is not progressed as a viable growth area. A natural hazard risk assessment is required to understand the extent of risk and to inform the feasibility and affordability of any future risk management responses. In the interim, some limited low-density development may occur in safe areas already enabled in the district plan-where there is available infrastructure capacity.

Te Awa O Tauranga, Ruatoki, Ruatāhuna

By 2055, Ngāi Tūhoe will have advanced their aspirations to establish pāpakainga goals outlined in the Tuhoe Blueprint Housing Strategy in locations resilient to natural hazard risk and climate, to ensure existing and future communities are safe and resilient in the long-term. Infrastructure will be self-sufficient and sustainable, with resilient transport connections.

Eastern Coastal Corridor

Where are we now?

The Eastern Coastal Corridor stretches from Ōpōtiki township west to Kererutahi, south to Waiwoeka Pa, and east to Pōtikirua. This area is known for its rural and coastal charm, with a strong focus on iwi-led housing and economic development.

Ōpōtiki District Council has worked closely with Ngāitai, Te Whānau ā Apanui, and Whakatōhea to inform the content of this plan. These iwi groups own 60% of the land in the district and are responsible for major economic drivers in the area. With 66% of the district's population being Māori, their partnership with local, regional, and central government plays a crucial role in how the future development of the Eastern Corridor will take place.

Te Kaha serves as the main service centre, with coastal marae and settlements along SH 35. There is limited flat land for development along the coast, but it is rich in versatile soil. The mountainous Raukumara Forest Park and conservation land to the south are rich in indigenous vegetation and recreational reserves. These areas attract people from all over the country for cycling, hiking, and fishing. Ngāti Porou land within Ōpōtiki district is mostly located within these mountainous areas.

State Highways 2 and 35 are vital for connecting the Eastern Corridor internally and to external markets. However, the area is vulnerable to coastal flooding and landslides, which can disrupt access, especially east of Ōpōtiki. Development south of Ōpōtiki is also limited by the Waiwoeka River floodplain and protected versatile soils.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

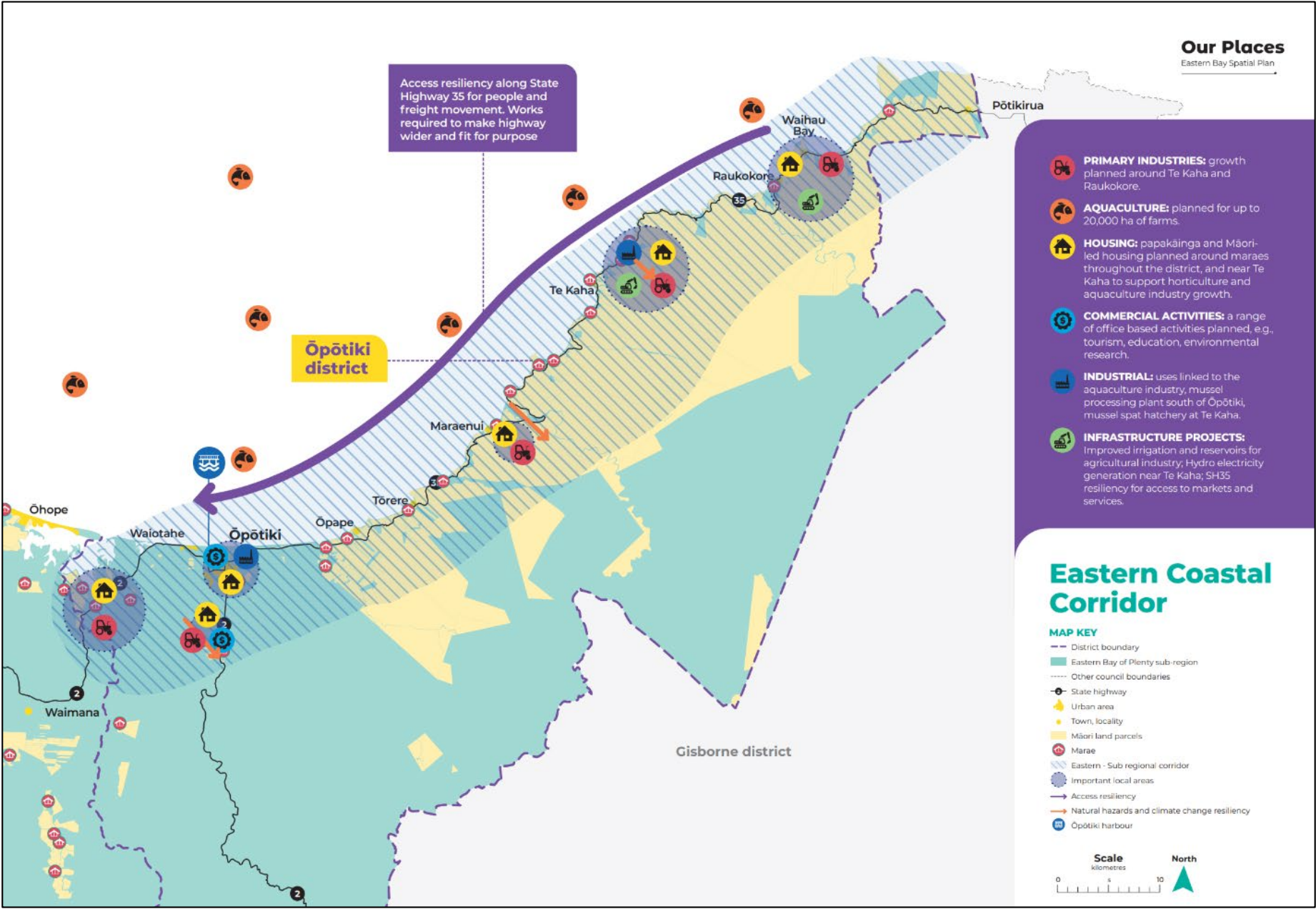


Figure 17: Eastern Coastal Corridor

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

Iwi aspirations

Iwi in the Eastern Corridor have big plans for housing and businesses that would contribute to economic growth in the area. They aim to establish papakāinga and Māori housing near marae and near Te Kaha to support local industries. Recent Treaty Settlements with Te Tāwharau o Te Whakatōhea and Government grants for Te Whānau-ā-Apanui have boosted these plans.

Important projects that have the potential to enhance the community's economic, social, and cultural wellbeing in the Eastern Corridor include the following:

- Whakatōhea were the first in the world to develop an Open Ocean Greenshell Mussel farm, with their 20-year journey beginning in the late 1990s. Their mussel processing facility in Ōpōtiki has the most modern mussel processor in New Zealand and has the potential to have the largest production capacity in the southern hemisphere.
- Te Whānau-ā-Apanui have applied for the largest single seawater consent for aquaculture in New Zealand, are planning an on-land mussel spat hatchery and research hub near Te Kaha and exploring the seaweed industry. To avoid reliance on the often closed state highway network, they are also investigating sea freight options from Te Kaha for mussel transport.
- The Mahi Haurahi Horticulture Centre between Omaio and Waihou Bay includes multiple kiwifruit, macadamia and truffle orchards.
- Raukokore/Waihou Bay community water storage projects to support new kiwifruit orchards.

Aquaculture is primarily led by iwi, with Māori wellbeing deeply connected to the land and sea. The Crown invested \$164.34 million in a group of projects across Ōpōtiki district to enable sustainable aquaculture industry in the Eastern Bay of Plenty. It includes the Whakatōhea aquaculture farm and processing facility (opened in 2021), harbour development (the harbour opened in 2024), Ōpōtiki Town Wharf Upgrade (completed for temporary boat launching of mussel boats), the Marina and Wharf Development for industrial uses and commercial/recreational boats (scheduled to be undertaken in 2025), and Te Hauata Mussel Spat Hatchery near Te Kaha (in planning phase).

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

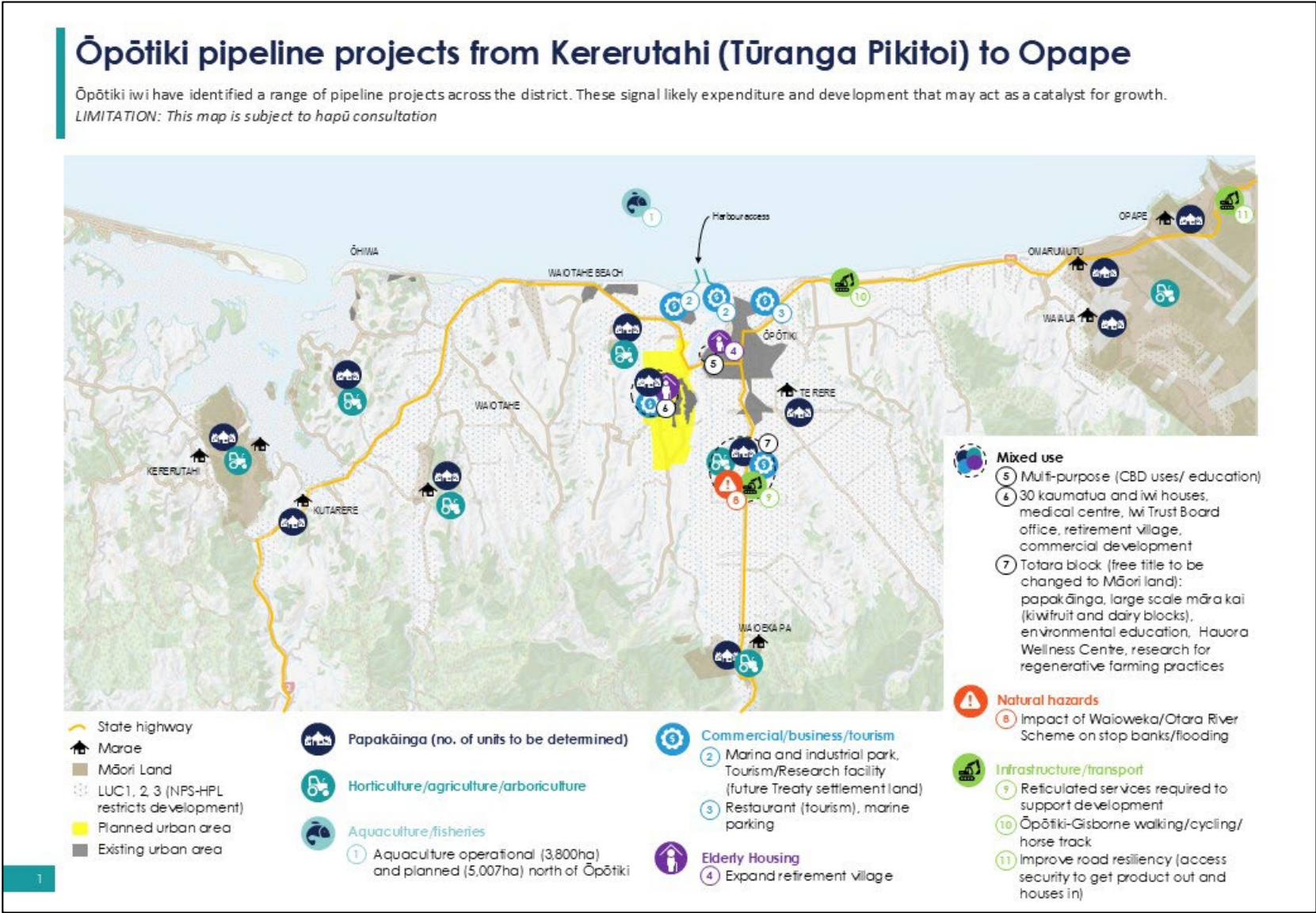


Figure 18: Ōpōtiki iwi pipeline projects Kererutahi to Opape

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

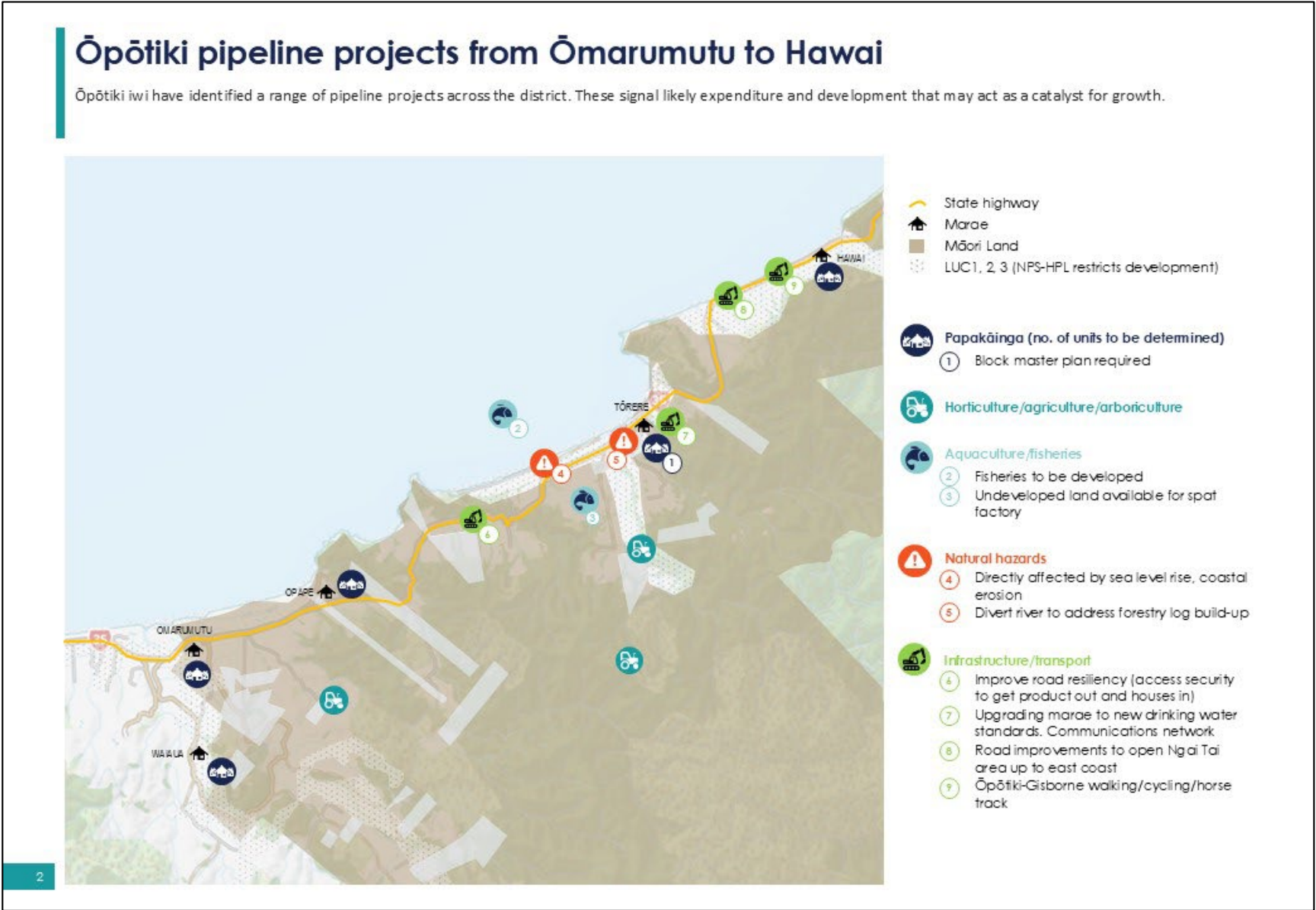


Figure 19: Ōpōtiki iwi pipeline projects Ōmarumutu to Hawai

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

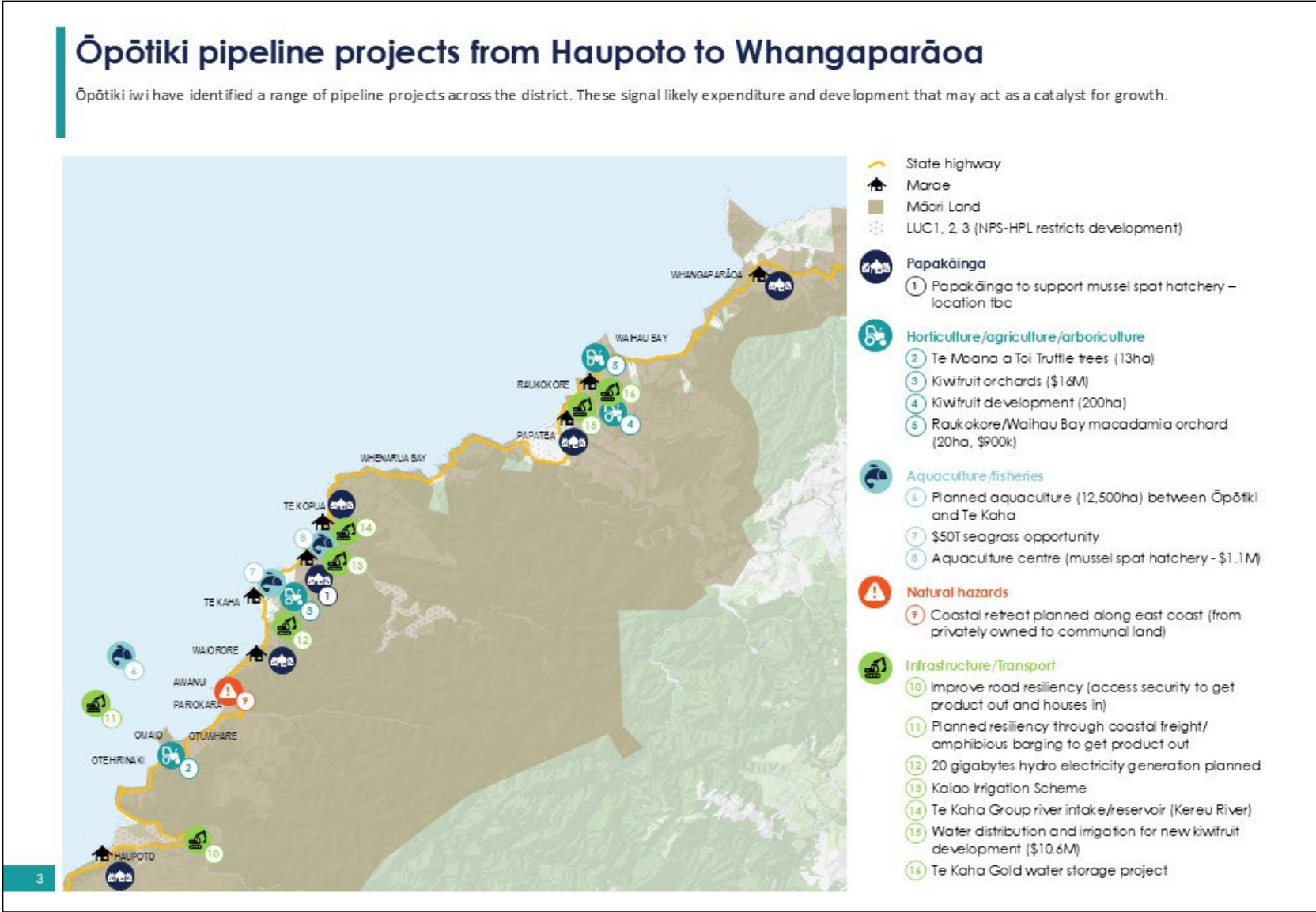


Figure 20: Ōpōtiki iwi pipeline projects Haupoto to Whangaparāoa

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Our Growth Plan

What does the future hold?***Pāpakāinga***

Māori-led housing is set to play a significant role in the Eastern Corridor's housing supply. There are plans to develop over 200 papakāinga units in the next five years, providing homes for tangata whenua returning to the area. These developments will generally be close to rural work opportunities and marae. Community feedback has highlighted the need for infill in smaller settlements and rural residential development along the coast. This approach supports the sustainability of small communities and allows people to live near their whānau and cultural heritage.

Business and development

Iwi will continue to be key players in various business ventures within the Eastern Corridor. Primary industries will continue to be a significant economic driver across the Eastern Corridor. Central Government investments are supporting the development of kiwifruit, macadamia, and truffle orchards, as well as infrastructure for these industries. Whakatōhea is planning large scale māra kai (kiwifruit and dairy blocks) south of Ōpōtiki, supported by environmental education, Hauora Wellness Centre and research for regenerative farming practices.

Aquaculture is a major focus, with investment into over 20,000 ha of water space planned for mussel farming north of Ōpōtiki township and Te Kaha. Ōpōtiki Processing Facility will be expanding its operations and the mussel spat hatchery will be established near Te Kaha to support the aquaculture industries. The Ōpōtiki Harbour Development Project enables Ōpōtiki to become a service and processing base for recreational and commercial vessels to support tourism, aquaculture and other marine related industries (including boat building/servicing).

Reliable transport connections, and reticulated services

State Highway 35 improvements to stabilise embankments is the key focus for the east coast to ensure access for people and products. State Highway 2 also needs to be secured against slips, but alternative routes need to be upgraded to provide more options and resiliency to the Ōpōtiki township. Most areas are remote and lack reticulated services, but some areas south of Ōpōtiki may connect to existing services. Infrastructure for smaller settlements can be managed through renewals programs.

Social and community infrastructure

Ōpōtiki township is the main centre for social and community services. There are various schools, holiday parks and a few small dairies within the Eastern Corridor and a medical center and hotel in Te Kaha. There is a shortage of commercial shops and employment opportunities along the East Coast, but Te Kaha has the potential to become a larger service centre with more offerings.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)**Our Growth Plan**

Marae play a vital role in supporting communities, especially during natural disasters. The Eastern Corridor's rich Māori heritage, along with the sea, expansive native bush and rivers provide opportunities for kai foraging, hiking, hunting, fishing and recreational activities. The area is part of the Nga Haerenga, the New Zealand Cycle Trail, which attracts visitors from across the country and internationally. The Motu Trails have boosted Ōpōtiki's regional identity, being accorded The Great Ride status in 2012. It generates annual visits of up to 20,000, supporting local businesses. There are opportunities to further develop eco-tourism opportunities.

How will this be achieved?

Transport network resiliency. Economic growth in the Eastern Corridor will increase the need for housing and put more demand on the transport network. The spatial plan highlights the need for secure access and improved road networks to support transportable dwellings and product transportation. The products being prepared in the Eastern Corridor can be very time sensitive to reach markets, and disrupted transport connections due to natural hazard events posing an ongoing challenge. Continued emphasis on improved resiliency of SH 2 and SH 35 is important for the economic development of the corridor.

Increasing industrial land supply. More industrial land is needed because of the expected demand for local industries to expand and new ones to establish. Ōpōtiki District Council is in the process of identifying land around the township, while development around Te Kaha will happen based on site specific opportunities taken forward through an enabling planning framework.

More housing supply and greater choice. Economic development plans for the corridor are also supported through the establishment of the Hukutaia development area to provide more housing choices for people who may work in these areas.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Infrastructure considerations

Contents

Contents 1

Part 4: Infrastructure considerations..... 3

Overview..... 3

Social infrastructure 4

 What is Social Infrastructure? 4

 Social Infrastructure in response to growth..... 6

Transport and accessibility 7

 Where are we now? 7

 Response to growth 10

 Transport and accessibility for priority growth areas..... 11

Three Waters Network 13

 Where are we now? 13

 Three waters for priority growth areas 16

 Whenua Māori Land (West of Coastlands)..... 17

Electricity networks 18

 Where are we now? 18

 Response to growth 20

 Electricity infrastructure for priority growth areas 20

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Infrastructure considerations

Figures

Figure 1: Social infrastructure	5
Figure 2: Transport and accessibility	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Figure 3: River and drainage schemes	14
Figure 4: Three waters service areas and plants	15
Figure 5: Existing energy infrastructure network	19

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Infrastructure considerations

Part 4: Infrastructure considerations

Overview

This section outlines important considerations for infrastructure in response to Part 3 – Our Growth Plan. It includes details on social infrastructure, transport and three waters infrastructure, and electrical networks and what will be needed to respond to growth.

The Spatial Plan looks at how the sub-region will grow over the next 30 years and where this growth will happen. This helps developers and infrastructure providers understand the sub-regions future growth better. It also enables infrastructure providers to plan ahead for where major investments are needed to support growth.

Adopting a prioritised, staged approach to servicing future growth offers a more realistic and achievable basis to ensure adequate funding is included in future Long-term plans to address infrastructure needs in priority growth areas.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Infrastructure considerations

Social infrastructure

We need to be realistic about expectations for the extent and quality of social infrastructure that we can afford while providing for overall wellbeing and quality of life in our communities. The quality and extent of social infrastructure varies across the sub-region and will continue to do so due affordability challenges.

We need to make good decisions to maximise the benefits of available investment, such as multi-use community hubs and open spaces, including opportunities for recreation and public use in development, providing for diverse needs of the community (including an ageing population). This includes supporting marae as community hubs, particularly in rural areas.

Our natural environment is integral to our lifestyle, social wellbeing and what makes the Eastern Bay of Plenty special. Ensuring good access to parks, reserves and open space (including forests and coastal areas) is key.

What is Social Infrastructure?

Social infrastructure includes:

- Public amenities: Parks, reserves, playgrounds, libraries, sports facilities, halls, museums, community centres, and pools owned by councils.
- Government services: Schools, education, and healthcare facilities.
- Marae: Central to iwi and hapū identity and maintaining cultural practices.

These facilities support strong, healthy, and vibrant communities. They are crucial for our social and cultural wellbeing. Marae and community halls also help during natural hazard and other emergencies. Providing these amenities and services is essential for supporting current residents, attracting new ones, and maintaining our lifestyle in the eastern bay.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Infrastructure considerations

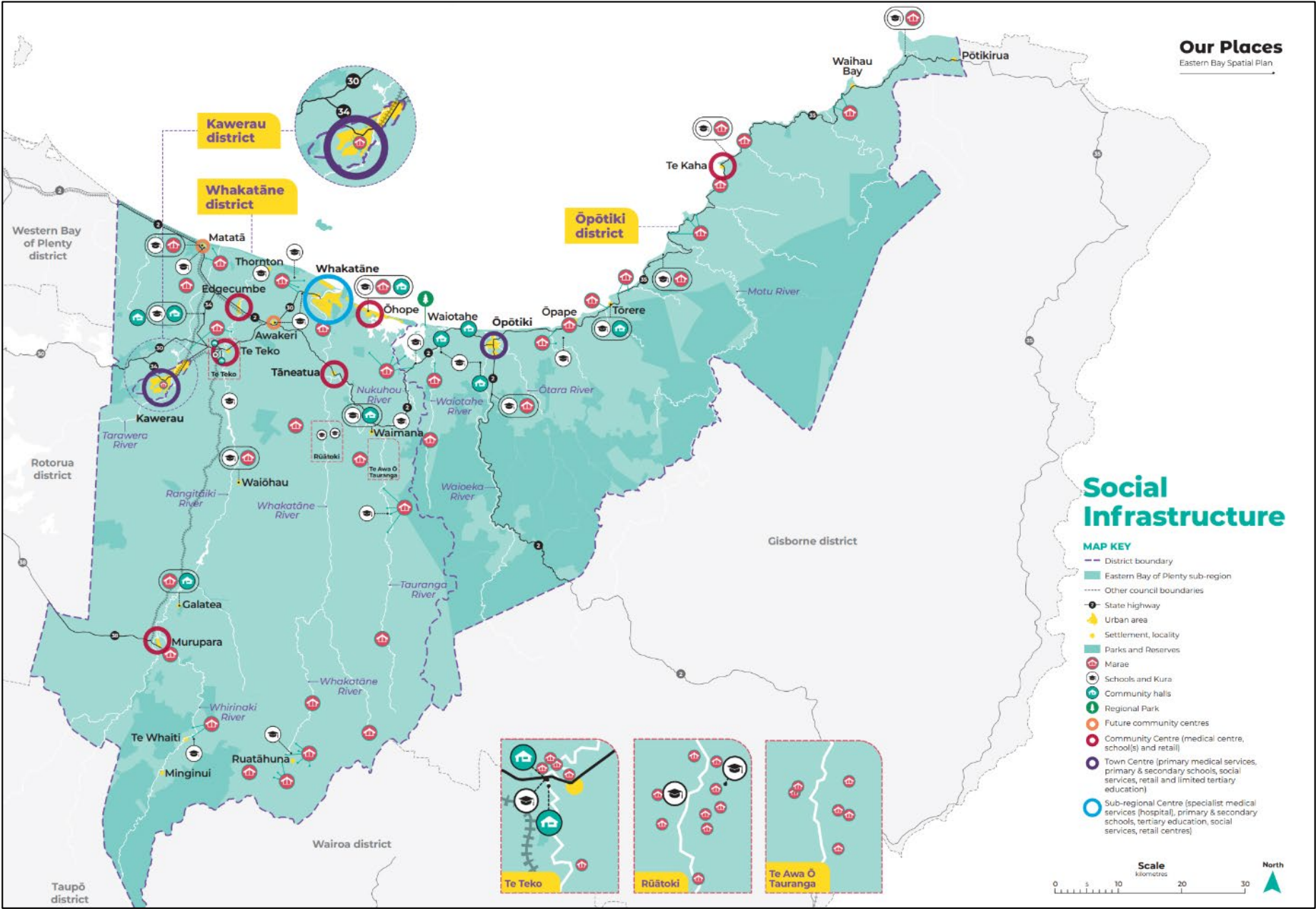


Figure 1: Social infrastructure

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Infrastructure considerations

Social Infrastructure in response to growth

In the future, social infrastructure actions will focus on:

- Existing schools generally have some capacity for growth to meet roll requirements and there are good bussing options. Building new schools is expensive, so we will make best use of the capacity across the school network and expand existing ones first. New public schools are unlikely to be required to meet the expected growth.
- For Priority Growth Areas, new facilities will be planned to service those areas relative to the planned scale of the growth area. An example is Awakeri, which has some existing social infrastructure (school and community hall) and will require new parks and reserves as the area grows.
- Co-ordinate and target investment for facilities: Community infrastructure is predominantly funded by ratepayers and grants from various organisations, including charities. Marae are funded through a combination of self-funding (by iwi, hapu or whanau) and Government grants. Directing investment through a strategic facilities plan is key to making the best use of available funding.
- Supporting Marae as Community Hubs: Marae hold deep significance in Māori culture and play a crucial role in the eastern bay's social and community infrastructure. Marae often serve multiple functions, including as civil emergency hubs for their local communities. Marae are central to cultural wellbeing, focus points for community gatherings and events (hosting a range of activities from weddings, tangihanga, hui, and other celebrations. Other services such as education, kohanga reo, support services, haora (medical centres) can be located with marae, along with kaumatua housing and other papakāinga.
- Meeting diverse needs: We need to support both an aging population and young Māori and provide facilities for all ages, from children to seniors. Indoor sports facilities are increasingly in demand, and activities like walking, cycling, and swimming are important for all ages.
- Local placemaking and community plans: Revitalising communities requires local projects and involvement from residents. Community plans document and prioritise community aspirations and provide a pathway to achieve those aspirations. Partnership between councils and communities are key to achieving aspirations.
- Good access to parks, reserves and recreation facilities: It is important to maintain and improve access to active and passive recreation for peoples' mental health and social wellbeing. This includes walking and cycling networks. Recreational facilities need to be accessible and provide for diverse uses. New greenfield areas will be structure planned to include parks and recreation opportunities. Reserve management plans cover existing urban areas.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Infrastructure considerations

- Creating multi-use open spaces: Parks and reserves are likely to support a diverse range of uses and values. This includes passive and active recreation, walking and cycling connections, community gardens, ecological corridors, social and cultural gatherings, sustainable water and energy infrastructure (e.g., solar panels, rainwater collection), climate resilience and adaptation (e.g., shade, stormwater management), connection to nature and celebrating local cultural identity.
- Recognising the value of our Natural Environment for social wellbeing: Outdoor activities like hunting, fishing, and boating are integral to our lifestyle and what makes the Eastern Bay of Plenty special. We have extensive open spaces, forests, rivers, and coastlines. There are walking and cycling trails across the eastern bay such as Motu Trails (cycleway) and tracks within Te Urewera and Whirinaki Forest Park. Using these natural assets and existing parks and reserves for recreation benefits our wellbeing.

Transport and accessibility

Well-functioning transport infrastructure is essential to the continued sustainability, growth and economic success of the eastern bay.

Existing industries and new development opportunities are expected to impact on the amount of freight moved in the Bay of Plenty.

The state highways, the rail network and key local roads are vulnerable to damage and closure from rainfall related flooding, landslides, coastal erosion, sea level rise and coastal flooding.

Providing safer, more reliable and affordable access to transport services and choices will unlock opportunities for people and communities.

Where are we now?

The eastern bay has a substantial road network including several state highways (SH 2, SH 30, and SH 35). Daily heavy commercial vehicle movements have key strategic routes toward the Port of Tauranga and along the East Coast, southeast to Gisborne and south towards Murupara. Commuting also takes place between different locations within the sub-region. The Whakatāne and Kawerau districts are quite interdependent labour markets, however, Ōpōtiki district is more independent with few people commuting either in or out¹. External to the sub-region, urban growth and commercial development around Paengaroa at Rangiuru Business Park and along Rotorua’s Eastern Corridor will also influence commuting patterns on the road network.

¹ Stats NZ (Census 2023)

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)**Infrastructure considerations**

The East Coast Main Trunk line carries over a third of New Zealand's rail traffic and is 182 kms long, from Hamilton through to Kawerau and Murupara. From Kawerau, there is a direct link to the Port of Tauranga enabling the delivery of products for export. This extensive infrastructure plays a pivotal role in connecting people and freight. A well-functioning road and rail network is a crucial element in supporting the sub-region's economic growth and development.

As growth has taken place, higher volumes of traffic have created capacity issues in some areas, which has led to traffic congestion. It has also created safety risks for some communities. The Whakatāne Bridge is a key link into Whakatāne town and carries infrastructure including Three Waters, telecommunications, gas and power to residents and businesses. Entry onto the bridge is congested during peak travel times and having a single point of access across the Whakatāne River creates vulnerability, particularly in case of emergencies or natural hazards. Communities dissected by state highways such as Ōpōtiki, Matatā, Awakeri, Edgecumbe, Tāneatua and Te Teko, also face increasing safety risks at intersections and for walkers and cyclists crossing these main thoroughfares. New Zealand Transport Agency plans to complete designs for safety improvements on SH 30 between Awakeri and Whakatāne within the current Long-term Plan period. At present, this design process does not consider projected growth in the corridor and there is a significant risk that the roundabouts proposed as part of this process will be over capacity once implemented or shortly thereafter.

The state highways, the rail network and key local roads are vulnerable to damage and closure from rainfall related flooding, landslides, coastal erosion, sea level rise and coastal flooding. These hazards are also being exacerbated by climate change. This impacts on travel reliability and safety and increases maintenance and reinstatement costs. There are also significant safety issues on some parts of the road network.

There is a regular public transport service connection from Whakatāne to Tauranga, however, services between other townships are currently only limited and without daily coverage. Only Whakatāne has an internal bus service that can service residents within the town. Consideration will be needed on how public transport can support growth, particularly as townships grow and services become more cost effective to operate, and an ageing population requires transport services to maintain accessibility and social connection.

Existing urban areas have good walking connections and there has been progress to deliver cycling facilities that improve safety and encourage more uptake in active transport modes (walking, cycling, using a scooter or skateboard). However, connections between townships is currently limited outside of the Motu Trails Cycleway that link coastal communities in Ōpōtiki between Waiōtahe and Tirohanga.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Infrastructure considerations

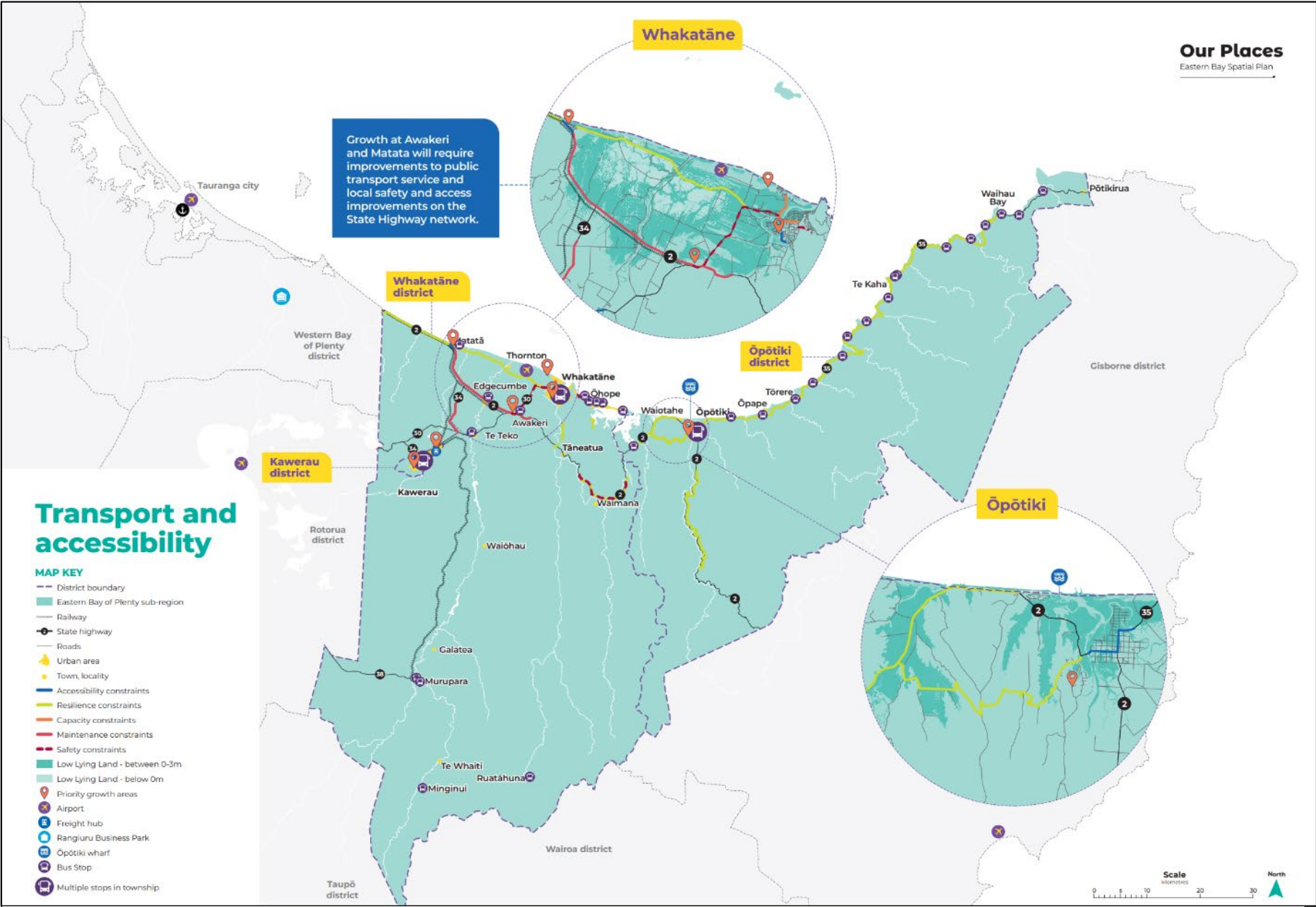


Figure 2: Transport and accessibility

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Infrastructure considerations

Response to growth

Safeguarding the strategic road network to ensure that existing and new industries have good, reliable transport access will be a key focus. Several existing industries and new development opportunities are expected to impact on the amount of freight moved in the Bay of Plenty. Freight and resilience are closely linked because the reliability of a transport network significantly impacts transport costs for businesses. Reliability also gives businesses the confidence to plan and invest for the future. New Zealand Transport Agency's role in safeguarding the strategic road network for freight, involves a multi-faceted approach that includes safety improvements, resilience building, capacity enhancements, collaborative planning, and strategic decision-making to ensure the efficient and reliable movement of goods.

Ensuring the road network can handle enough traffic without long delays is crucial. Further work is needed to understand the capacity limits and vulnerability of transport networks and infrastructure, such as the Whakatāne Bridge. The outcomes of this work will be critical in assessing the amount of growth the eastern bay can sustain before key pieces of infrastructure start to limit growth. Growth in areas that will put increased pressure on the transport network or create unsafe situations for people needs to be considered and opportunities to mitigate or remove these risks evaluated and planned for.

We must ensure people and goods move more efficiently and effectively along transport routes. Priority growth areas will need to lessen the demand on the transport network by providing safe, attractive and connected active travel choices, catering for all ages and abilities, from existing and new residential areas, to jobs, schools, services, and leisure facilities to reduce the need for long-distance travel. With many townships less than 30 minutes apart by bike, there is potential for a linked network of bike paths, or trails connecting townships and main centres to provide better choices for low emissions transport for work and education trips. Generally, there will be a need for increased public transport options for the eastern bay communities as the population ages and more people are unable to drive to essential services.

Further work is needed to identify the next generation of substantial transport investments and large projects. The three district councils have work underway addressing infrastructure and service provision to reflect anticipated growth and demographic needs. The next few years will focus on delivery of already committed transport projects which largely target improving resilience and maintaining service levels. Work will commence on the development of a Transport System Programme to support the growth components of the spatial plan and improve network resilience. Continuing to work in partnership with NZTA will support the delivery of a high-quality, integrated, safe and efficient transport network.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Infrastructure considerations

Transport and accessibility for priority growth areas**Awakeri**

Safety	Awakeri is dissected by SH 2 and SH 30 which are key freight routes which create safety risks for walkers and cyclists crossing these main thoroughfares. The stretches of highway between Rotoma and Awakeri (SH 30), Awakeri to Ōpōtiki (SH 2) and Matatā to Awakeri (SH 2) all experience safety issues. State Highway 30 between Awakeri to Whakatane has significant safety issues and has been identified as a high-risk rural road by NZTA. As the main transport route between Rotorua, Whakatāne and the East Coast, the road is used by a range of users including daily commuters, freight, local traffic, cyclists and motorcyclists, tourists, and agricultural machinery. The roads leading to Awakeri will need to be prioritised for NZTA state highway improvements to ensure that future growth does not worsen the risks already present for road users.
Capacity and accessibility	While Awakeri is well connected to employment locations, future employment growth throughout the sub-region is likely to increase traffic volumes on the state highways, which could lead to severance issues for residents to access facilities in the community. Infrastructure investment to improve connectivity throughout the settlement will be required. Planning an urban form that reduces travel demand by including walking and cycling infrastructure is a priority. Further investigation into improving public transport connectivity to Whakatāne and Kawerau once the population grows will be required.
Resilience	State Highway 2, Awakeri to Ōpōtiki, has a range of resilience challenges, with limited local road detour options, which impacts on accessibility into Awakeri. A long-term view of the future of this network is required to provide reliable access into the future. New Zealand Transport Agency has allocated funding to investigate resilience improvements required for SH 2 between Awakeri and Opotiki, as well as for the Waioeka Gorge between Opotiki and Gisborne, however, there is no committed funding for implementation. Resilience improvements will need to focus on addressing areas at risk of slips, flooding, coastal erosion and coastal inundation.

Whenua Māori Land (West of Coastlands)

Capacity and accessibility	Housing growth west of Whakatāne is expected to place increased pressure on the Whakatāne Bridge and this will require assessment as part of planning. Investigation into the design of specific investments for additional Whakatāne access to support growth and improve network resilience is needed. There are likely to be localised capacity constraints at key intersections accessing the area, that will require infrastructure investment that can be staged alongside additional growth. Walking and cycling infrastructure will be a key component of the growth area with links into Whakatāne township.
Safety and resilience	The design and planning for the new growth area will need to include resilient and safe road infrastructure, integrated with the surrounding network to ensure continuous mobility for residents.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Infrastructure considerations

Matatā

Capacity and accessibility	Growth at Matatā will be influenced by increased employment opportunities in Kawerau, Rangiuru Business Park and Whakatāne township. There are likely to be localised capacity constraints at key intersections that will require infrastructure investment.
Safety	Increasing traffic volumes along SH 2 which runs through the settlement will require investment in the road infrastructure to reduce safety risks at intersections and for walkers and cyclists crossing this main thoroughfare.
Resilience	State Highway 2 west of Matatā is vulnerable to landslides, localised flooding and coastal inundation with the road susceptible to closures. New Zealand Transport Agency will need to investigate options to improve resilience along this route.

Hukutaia Growth Area - Ōpōtiki

Safety	The growth area is separated by SH 2 into Ōpōtiki township and safety risks at intersections for walkers and cyclists will need to be identified and addressed through investment.
Capacity and Accessibility	The Hukutaia growth area is close to town services and many trips can be contained within the local area for employment, services and education reducing the need to travel. To unlock the area for development, projects will need to include an intersection upgrade of SH 2 / Woodlands Road, establishment of a key road link from the growth area to the north to access employment areas along SH 2 and improvements for pedestrians, cyclists and mobility users. There is potential for a new walking/cycling link to be established across the Waioeka River at Stoney Creek Road, to enable connection to an employment area.
Resilience	State Highway 2, Ōpōtiki to Awakeri and the coastal section of SH 2 is vulnerable to damage and closure from rainfall related flooding and landslides which impacts on accessibility into Ōpōtiki (see Awakeri comments).

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Infrastructure considerations

Three Waters Network**Where are we now?**

The Three Waters network and its infrastructure include drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater assets, including piped networks, treatment plants and pumpstations. These utilities are essential for unlocking areas for growth. Finding the right design solution, at an appropriate level of investment, at the right time will be necessary to support growth. Council managed three waters infrastructure exists in some form in all urban spaces within the sub-region.

The Regional Council also manages river schemes across the sub-region which defend several existing settlements and rural land users from river flooding. The schemes are identified as regionally important infrastructure and include the Whakatāne-Tauranga River Scheme, Waioveka- Ōtara Rivers Scheme, Rangitaiki Drainage Scheme and the Rangitaiki Tarawera Rivers Scheme.

The Bay of Plenty Regional Council Infrastructure Strategy identifies affordability, climate change and residual risk as some of the significant issues for the river scheme. For this reason, it will be critical to ensure integrated planning processes protect agreed level of service to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the community and are affordable now, and in the future. For the foreseeable future, flood protection will continue to play a key role in supporting community wellbeing. However, as conditions change, more adaptive and resilient approaches may need to be explored to ensure communities remain safe and resilient to the effects of natural hazards and climate change.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Infrastructure considerations

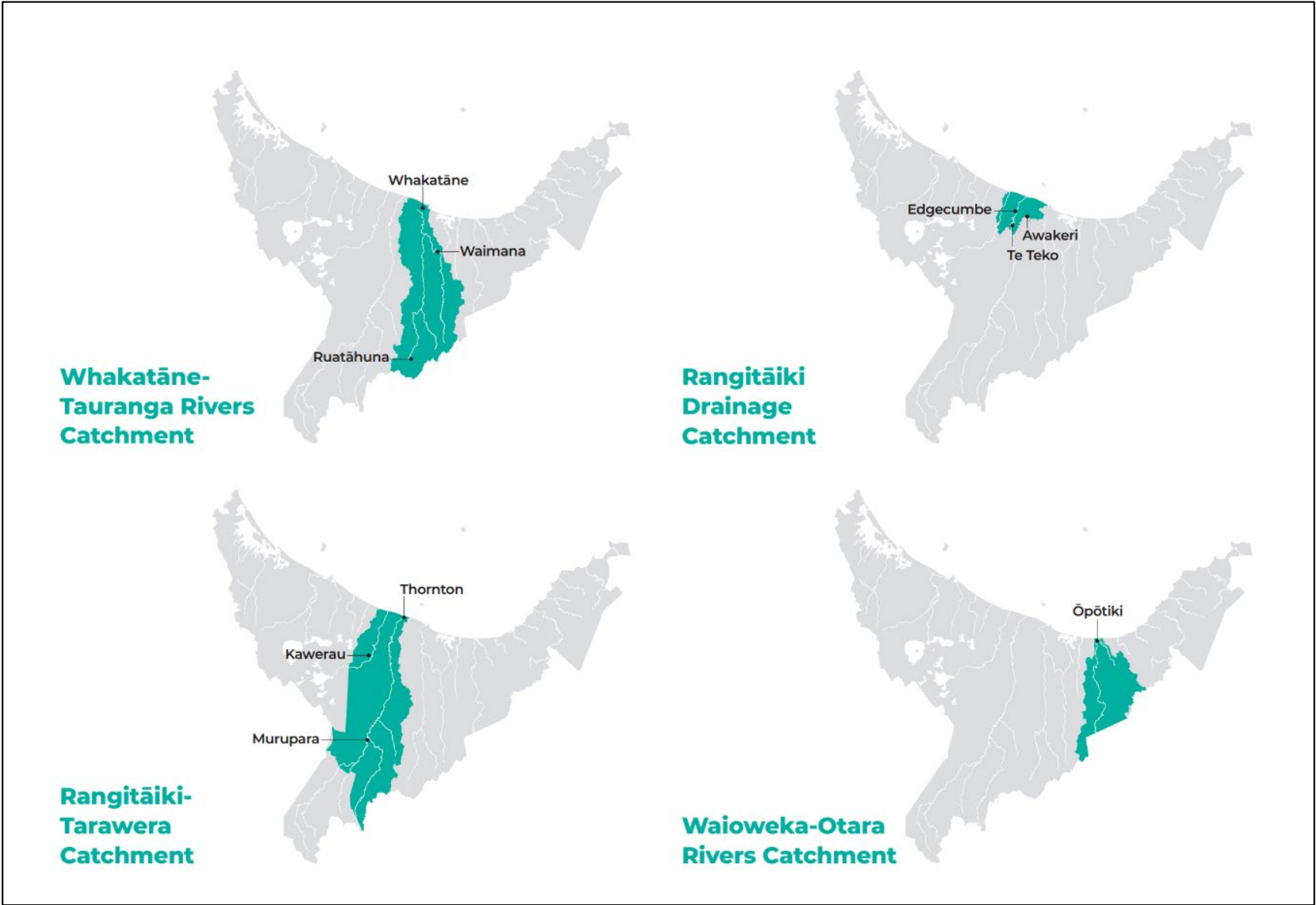


Figure 3: River and drainage schemes

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

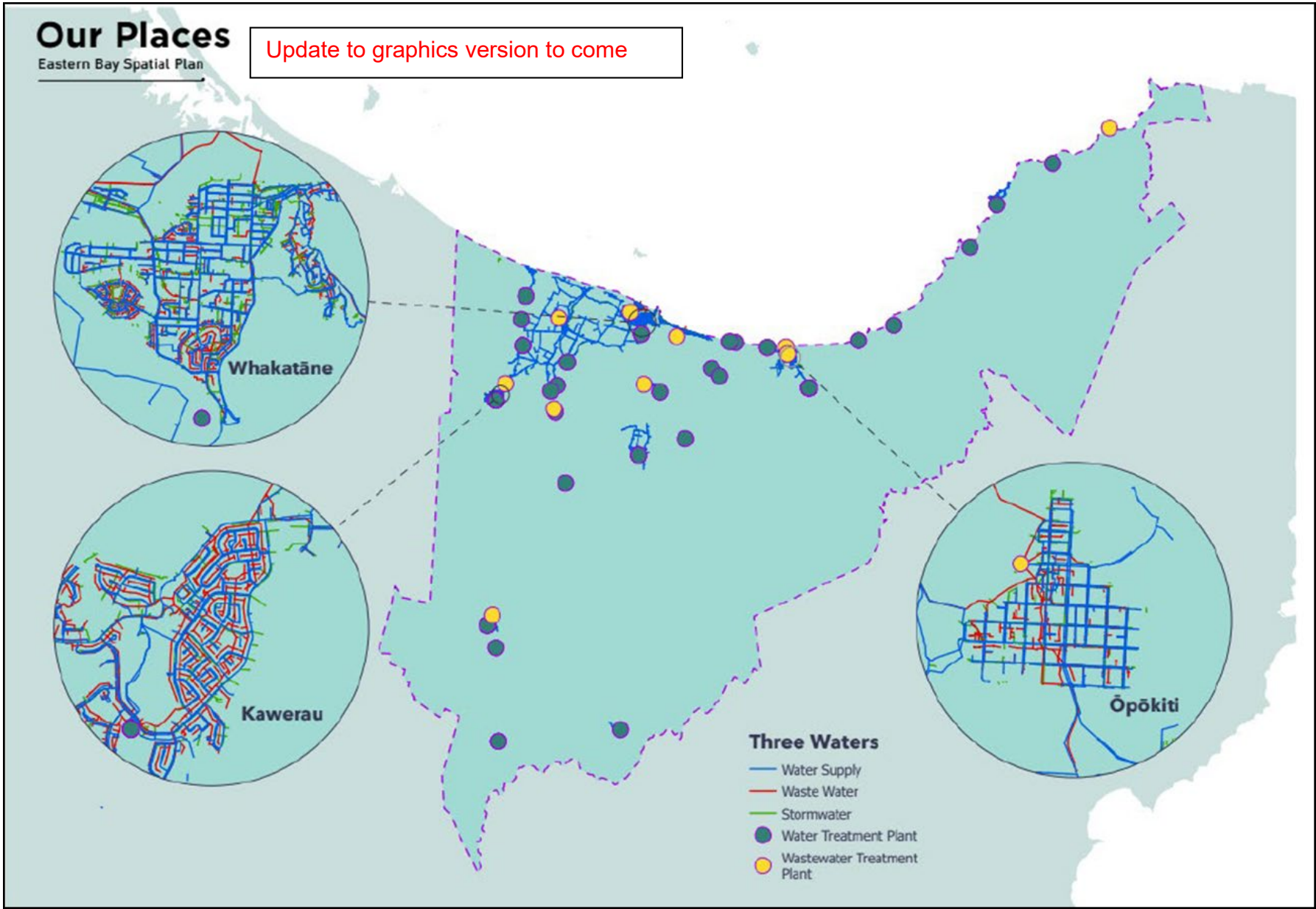


Figure 4: Three waters service areas and plants

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Infrastructure considerations

Three waters for priority growth areas

Awakeri

Water supply	Longer-term growth projections would be supported as part of the wide Whakatane-Plains water strategy which would link Otumahi with Whakatane via Awakeri. Upgrades will be required to the trunk mains that currently serve Awakeri. There is an existing reservoir in the hill above Awakeri which will help support increased demand in the future. A new reservoir, in the hill above the Otumahi Water Treatment Plant will be commissioned in the middle of 2025. This can support growth in Awakeri as well as wider plans to integrate the Whakatane and Rangitikei Plains water schemes
Wastewater	Awakeri could be served by a standalone treatment plant or integrated with Edgecumbe (or Whakatane). There will need to be further feasibility studies around treated wastewater discharge to achieve the intended scale of development. Two primary options are being considered, including pumping raw wastewater to the Whakatāne Treatment Plant, which would require a new pipeline and pump station or developing a new wastewater treatment plant locally, with the potential to accept wastewater from nearby communities. Iwi have highlighted a preference for a best practice approach that delivers environmental outcomes. Generally, treating wastewater at source is seen as a more preferable option to conveying untreated wastewater large distances.
Flood management	As Awakeri is located within the Whakatāne-Tauranga River Scheme, an integrated stormwater catchment management plan will be needed to take a catchment-based approach to inform future growth planning. This will consider the agreed level of service of the existing flood scheme are protected including the Te Rahu Canal, and downstream flooding risk is managed to ensure existing and future communities are resilient to the effects of climate change. This approach will guide best practicable options for managing stormwater runoff within the new growth area and take a holistic approach to water sensitive urban design to manage flood risk.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

Whenua Māori Land (West of Coastlands)

Development involving Whenua Māori Land west of Coastlands would benefit from further details feasibility on impacts with the existing scheme and overall network for water and wastewater.

Water supply	While existing water connections serve the nearby Whakatāne Golf Course, existing properties currently receive a low service level from the reticulated water network with consumers often experiencing low water pressure, particularly during summer high demand periods. This existing limitation restricts Council's ability to connect additional properties to the network. Where they are permitted, properties are asked to install on-site water tanks, connected to the network via restricted feed. In the longer term, more intensive housing growth would need to be supported by network upgrades as part of the wider Whakatane/Plains scheme integration strategy.
Wastewater	Existing wastewater infrastructure serves the Coastlands area and Shaw Road but does not extend down Thornton or Golf Links Roads.
Flood management	Existing stormwater infrastructure serves the Coastlands area and Shaw Road but does not extend down Thornton or Golf Links Roads. The area, predominantly coastal dunes, relies on ground soakage and natural drainage to the Orini Canal.

Matatā

Water supply	The water supply from Jennings Spring is sufficient for short to medium-term growth. Integrating Matatā with the plains scheme would be a necessary option. This would also increase the resilience of the Matatā supply as it would not be reliant on a single water source.
Wastewater	<p>The planning for a new wastewater system is currently underway but it is not fully funded. Matatā growth would be incorporated into the future Matatā scheme which would have growth provisions at the start.</p> <p>The current wastewater management system in Matatā is failing. Despite ongoing efforts over several decades to establish a centralised wastewater solution, the town continues to struggle with poor wastewater management. The high groundwater levels and proximity to sensitive environmental areas render the current individual property septic tanks and disposal fields ineffective and unsuitable for the local environment. As a result, effluent from these ageing systems is seeping into the environment, contaminating land and water that are crucial to the community and mana whenua relationships and connection with their rohe.</p>
Flood management	Stormwater management in Matatā is sensitive and can be influenced by inland and coastal flooding, with runoff draining through wetland areas to the coast. This means that development in the eastern area will require a comprehensive catchment-wide stormwater management approach to ensure existing and future risk and effects on sensitive receiving environments, including Te Awa o Atua are managed to inform future growth planning.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Infrastructure considerations

Hukutaia Growth Area

Water supply	Hukutaia has enough water capacity to support low levels of growth, and planned upgrades will facilitate staged development. A utilities bridge river crossing from Stoney Creek Road will improve water pressure and increase resilience for Hukutaia, Ōpōtiki, and Waiotahe. As Hukutaia’s development options and growth phasing become more defined, further investigations into water demand management measures can be explored to optimise supply and mitigate future risks.
Wastewater	For wastewater, two primary options are being considered: upgrading existing infrastructure to transport waste to the upgraded Wastewater Treatment Plant in Ōpōtiki or establishing a new treatment plant in Hukutaia. The latter option would offer resilience and reduce the burden on the existing infrastructure.
Flood management	An integrated catchment management plan will be developed that takes a catchment-based approach to inform future growth planning to effects of climate change are managed, the agreed levels of service of the flood scheme are protected and to manage any increases in downstream risk including any increases in risk to the existing Ōpōtiki Township. An integrated catchment management plan will also consider guide best practicable options for managing stormwater runoff within the new growth area and take a holistic approach to water sensitive urban design.

Electricity networks

Where are we now?

Electricity infrastructure plays a crucial role in supporting both existing communities and future development. Our sub-region is currently serviced by Horizon Energy, which owns and operates the electricity distribution network, and Transpower, the state-owned enterprise responsible for New Zealand’s high-voltage transmission network, known as the National Grid.

The transmission network in the Bay of Plenty consists of both high-capacity 220 kV and lower-capacity 110 kV circuits. Electricity generation is concentrated in the eastern part of the region, particularly around Kawerau, while demand is higher in the central areas, Whakatāne and Ōpōtiki. This results in a predominant east-to-west power flow, connecting major hydro and geothermal generation to the North Island’s transmission backbone.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

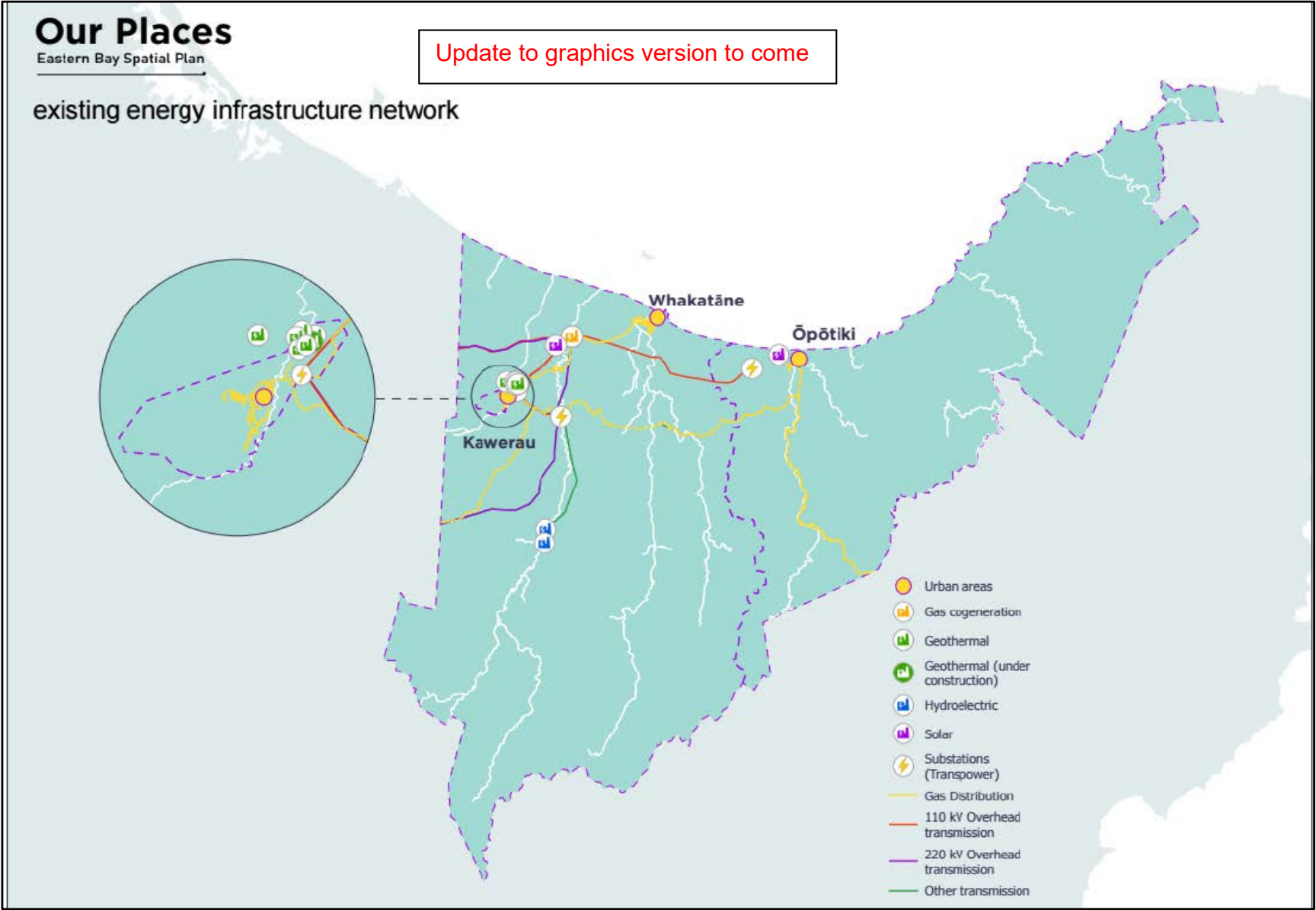


Figure 5: Existing energy infrastructure network

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Infrastructure considerations

Response to growth

The spatial plan looks ahead to 2055, envisioning an electricity network that is resilient, future-ready, and capable of supporting the eastern bay’s continued growth and transformation. Targeted investments in grid upgrades, additional substations, and enhanced conductor lines can strengthen the network’s ability to support priority growth areas and ongoing business-as-usual development. These improvements will also enhance reliability, minimising the risk of outages and disruptions as demand increases. Collaboration is at the heart of our approach, ensuring that our co-management partners and key stakeholders play an active role in shaping the region’s future. To create an electricity network that meets the needs of our sub-region, we will continue working closely with Transpower, Horizon Energy, Central Government, iwi, and local businesses.

Electricity infrastructure for priority growth areas

Awakeri	Currently has sufficient capacity for the existing population, however, capacity for growth is another required improvement. The current 11kV feeder to Awakeri can only support an additional 3.6 MVA. Development of the scale anticipated will require an upgrade to the 11kV feeder to ensure adequate electricity supply.
Whenua Māori Land (West of Coastlands)	There is electricity infrastructure along Golf Links Road to the Golf Course. The networks currently supply the Papakāinga development (near the golf course) and can support an additional 150 residential dwellings. The feeder has the capacity to supply up to 1.9 MVA, equivalent to 540 residential dwellings. Horizon Energy have confirmed that a further network upgrade would be required.
Matatā	The current electricity network is constrained during peak periods and Horizon Energy plans to develop a new substation at Manawahe to accommodate future growth in the area. The development of the new substation may need to be bought forward based on the demand needs should the Matatā development proceed faster than the timing of the new substation funding proposal.
Hukutaia	Hukutaia requires upgrades to its electricity network to support growth. Horizon Energy has plans to establish a new dual sub-transmission supply to Ōpōtiki by 2027. A new 11kV feeder system can be established following the completion of the Horizon Energy dual sub-transmission supply to Ōpōtiki by 2027. This will cater to the electricity needs of 2,000 residential dwellings and industrial developments.

Contents

Part 5: Implementation 3

Implementing the plan..... 3

Key moves and priorities for implementation..... 3

Key moves..... 5

Collaboratively shape the future 5

Nurture strong and effective iwi and hapū partnerships 5

Build climate resilient communities..... 6

A prosperous, high productivity sub-region..... 7

Enough housing and business land to meet demand 8

Great places for people to live for generations 9

Connect people with opportunities, and freight with markets 9

Improve biodiversity and ecosystem health 10

Clear and consistent sub-regional funding priorities 11

Implementation considerations 11

Governance to implement the plan..... 11

Implementation toolbox..... 11

Implementation Risk 14

Prioritising and choosing where and when to invest..... 16

Updates to this plan..... 17

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

Appendix 1: Implementation activities 18

Spatial Plan and eastern bay-wide actions 19

Central corridor actions 22

Eastern Corridor actions 25

Southern corridor actions 26

Natural hazards and climate resilience actions 27

Figures

Figure 1: Goals and key 4

Figure 2: Councils can have different roles during implementation 12

Figure 3: Implementation processes, alignment with Subregional Economic Development Strategy 13

Part 5: Implementation

Implementing the plan

This implementation plan provides the strategy for the Councils to work on delivering the spatial plan, as a set of Key Moves and Implementation Priorities. The implementation will be joined up with activities related to the Sub-Regional Economic Development Strategy. This version of the spatial plan is a starting point, expected to evolve and change in response to shifting influences, legislative requirements, and new information.

Key moves and priorities for implementation

The goals are what we want to achieve over the long term for the eastern bay, they have been developed by the Project Governance Group. The key moves explain what we will focus on to get there, and the implementation priorities tell us where to start. The implementation priorities will inform a more detailed implementation plan that looks at how each item will be delivered. It is expected this would be developed after the spatial plan is approved. The key moves will also inform existing and near-term planning and policy work, such as the Whakatāne Growth Strategy, the Ōpōtiki Hukutaia development area and industrial needs study, and changes to Kawerau's district plan, amongst other processes.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation



Figure 1: Goals and key moves

Figure 1: Goals and key moves

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

Key moves**Collaboratively shape the future**

We will work together, with stakeholders, and the community to deliver the spatial plan.

Implementation priorities:

- 1 Spatial Plan partners will adhere to a joint governance structure for implementing the spatial plan, setting priorities together, engaging communities, and adapting to changes in the operating environment.
- 2 Councils will engage with stakeholders and the eastern bay community at a local level. This will be achieved by implementing the plan, including the development of local area plans and growth strategies, new LTPs, and modifications to related plans and policies such as regional and district plans, as well as future updates to the spatial plan or economic development strategy.
- 3 After establishing the governance structure, the Governance Group should direct the preparation of a detailed implementation plan for the spatial plan and economic development strategy to focus on activities that benefit from sub-regional coordination, and a monitoring framework to assess progress towards goals.

Nurture strong and effective iwi and hapū partnerships

Involve iwi and hapū in decisions about their rohe and support achieving housing and wider aspirations.

Implementation priorities:

- 1 Iwi and Hapū will be engaged as key decision-makers in the development and implementation processes related to their rohe. It is essential to allocate resources to iwi and hapū to facilitate their participation in projects and processes to enable the realisation of their aspirations.
- 2 Prioritise actions that enable iwi and hapū to utilise their land in ways that advance their aspirations and unlock long-term opportunities, in full context of Treaty Settlements, including Council commitments to prepare strategies and establish governance forums. Further targeted engagement must occur to resolve outstanding matters and ensure implementation reflects iwi and hapū priorities.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

- 3 Ngāti Rangitihi has a responsibility under the Ngāti Rangitihi Claims Settlement Act 2022 to develop and implement the Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy Document under a co-governance framework. This is aimed at restoring the mauri of both the Tarawera River and Te Awa o te Atua. A key focus is exploring the potential for reconnection and returning flow between the Tawera Awa and Te Awa o Te Atua. The implementation of the spatial plan, particularly around Matata will support and consider this focus.

Build climate resilient communities

Ensure vulnerable communities and new growth areas are safe and resilient to natural hazard risk and the long-term effects of climate change.

Implementation priorities:

- 1 Local and regional councils will undertake joint stormwater and risk management planning through master planning to inform the design, form, and location of detailed structure planning for new key growth areas (e.g., Awakeri, Hukutaia and Matata) to protect agreed levels of service of the flood schemes, manage the effects of climate change over the next 100 years, and avoid increases in risk to people, property and infrastructure.
- 2 Prepare local climate change risk assessments and undertake community-led adaptation planning initiatives across the eastern bay sub-region. This includes completion of the Whakatāne District Climate Change Risk Assessment.
- 3 Progress collaborative natural hazard risk assessments prepared under the RPS for Whakatāne and Ōpōtiki townships to better understand risk and to inform future risk management planning.
- 4 Consider operational and governance arrangements for the integrated management of natural hazards, flood management and climate change adaptation across the functions of Territorial Authorities, the Regional Council, iwi and hapu and lifelines utilities and Civil Defence and Emergency Management for long-term risk reduction in priority locations.
- 5 Support hapū and iwi and to develop their own capacity, strategies and responses to climate adaptation in specific locations.
- 6 Support local emergency preparedness and evacuation planning to enhance the safety and preparedness of urban and rural communities.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

A prosperous, high productivity sub-region

Create a resilient and competitive economic environment through strategic economic development, infrastructure enhancement, and market engagement.

Implementation priorities:

- 1 Implement the spatial plan together with the Sub-Regional Economic Development Strategy for the Eastern Bay. These plans address interconnected opportunities that necessitate a coordinated approach, including a unified sub-regional governance structure to oversee the implementation of both.
- 2 Build from the strengths of the existing economic base of the sub-region, support workforce development, and enable key growth sectors (as set out in the Economic Development Strategy):
 - Aquaculture centre of national significance (Ōpōtiki), the largest and most productive aquaculture region in New Zealand, providing direct benefits to locals.
 - Green energy and industrial hub (Kawerau), forefront of green energy and a premier engineering and manufacturing hub, subregional freight gateway to the Golden Triangle.
 - Commercial and residential heart (Whakatāne), a dynamic business network and regional service centre with coastal living with transport links throughout the Bay and beyond.

To support this, as outlined in the Sub-Regional Economic Development Strategy:

- 3 The Project Governance Group should establish a business and capital advisory group. This group can help identify and enable public-private funding opportunities.
- 4 Each Council needs to ensure a supply of zoned and available housing to enable attraction/retention of talent in the eastern bay.
- 5 New Zealand Transport Agency will need to consider prioritising improvements for state highways 35, 2, and on key bridges (like Peketahi Bridge) to improve connectivity for economic purposes and to enable housing growth.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

- 6 Enable economic development led by iwi, hapū, and/or Land Trusts, particularly when this involves Māori-owned lands where there are aspirations for economic activities.
- 7 In the Central Corridor, Matata will become a gateway to the eastern bay and a place that entices the travelling public to visit. An iwi-led master planning approach that encompasses the public realm and economic development would support this taking place.

Enough housing and business land to meet demand

Ensure zoned, serviceable, and connected land to enable more housing and business land at the locations defined in this plan.

Implementation priorities:

- 1 In Whakatāne, land use and infrastructure planning will acknowledge and reinforce Whakatāne township's position as the principal sub-regional commercial and services hub, as well as the central residential and commercial core of the sub-region.
- 2 As part of structure planning for priority growth areas, identify and manage the potential for health effects associated with reverse sensitivity between industrial and agricultural operations and sensitive receiving activities such as residential areas or schools.
- 3 Continue to provide a diverse range of housing across the sub-region, in proximity to and suitable for workers in the primary industries and town-based businesses and industries. This includes:
 - Whakatāne district's Local Growth Strategy will work at a local place-based scale and lead to structure plans, district plan changes, and infrastructure investment strategies to unlock the priority growth areas of the Central Corridor. This will focus on Awakeri initially, followed by Matatā, and Whenua Māori West of Coastlands (*pending iwi and hapu confirmation). It will involve ongoing dialogue with the community.
 - In Ōpōtiki district, planning for and investment into the Hukutaia development area will continue to reinforce this area as a primary residential growth area, and an enabling planning framework will support iwi economic and housing aspirations throughout the eastern corridor.
 - In Kawerau, the success of the Putauaki Industrial Area will continue with ongoing expansion, as the pre-eminent industrial growth area for the sub-region. Kawerau District Council will also complete changes to the district plan to enable infill and pāpakainga housing supply opportunities.
- 1 Changes to infrastructure provision in smaller settlements will largely be considered through renewals programmes in the context of local aspirations, especially where these are well-known through local masterplans, such as those underway for Murupara and Minginui.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

Great places for people to live for generations

Develop and improve community places and facilities to enhance quality of life as communities change over time.

Implementation priorities:

- 1 The townships of Whakatāne, Ōpōtiki, and Kawerau are prioritised for place-making activities and investments due to their significant contributions to the overall experiences of individuals within the sub-region. Parks and open space investment plans need review as population change occurs due to new development areas.
- 2 Greenfield urban development will be planned to include provisions for parks, facilities, and reserves. In areas anticipated to undergo significant changes, the impact on existing facilities, such as local parks, will be evaluated to determine if adjustments in the level of service are required.
- 3 Subsequent more detailed planning activities, like WDC's Local Growth Strategy and ODC's Hukutaia Development Plan, will need to put in place locally-defined placemaking outcomes and methods.
- 4 Murupara and Te Kaha need ongoing development of community facilities, and support for retail and businesses as they continue to evolve as locally important rural service hubs that support rural residents, the travelling public and enable the local economy.

Connect people with opportunities, and freight with markets

A well-functioning transport system that enables future growth, provides access to social, recreational, housing and economic opportunities.

Implementation priorities:

- 1 Improved resilience of strategic freight connections (road and rail) to the Port of Tauranga and to Gisborne. This includes improved resilience on state highway connections (SH 35) in the Eastern Corridor, for economic purposes reliant on connections through to the Port of Tauranga.
- 2 Identify packages of transport projects and investment pathways to support delivery of the spatial plan by preparing a Transport System Programme. Develop a network demand modelling tool to assist with this programme. Engagement feedback outlined interest in active transport modes and improvements to public transport services.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

- 3 Continue to assess resiliency issues on the transport network and seek improvements. The National Land Transport Programme 2024-2027 includes a resilience investigation of SH 2 from Awakeri to Ōpōtiki. This study should include consideration of transport system requirements to support the settlement pattern changes in this plan – particularly related to Awakeri and Hukutaia. The study should also consider the local road by-pass as alternative to SH 2 along Waioatahe to provide resiliency to Ōpōtiki township.
- 4 Develop a list of projects to unlock priority growth areas and embed these into the Regional Land Transport Programme, seek co-funding from NZTA.
- 5 Ensure NZTA's State Highway Improvement Programme includes development assumptions that are aligned to the intended priority development areas.

Improve biodiversity and ecosystem health

Use integrated environmental management practices to enable a full range of ecosystems to be restored to a healthy functioning state.

Implementation priorities:

- 1 Planning for environmental and sustainable outcomes will include Mana Whenua values and priorities as shared, upholding iwi and hapū rights through Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- 2 The spatial plan supports the Tarawera River reconnection and rechannelling being progressed as part of a masterplan for Matata due to the cultural, economic, and environmental benefits this may generate.
- 3 Local planning for priority growth areas will identify environmental and sustainability objectives and methods as part of the initial planning processes to apply in development. These will address, amongst other matters:
 - Avoidance and mitigation of possible effects on sensitive natural or cultural areas, and restoration projects.
 - Environmentally sustainable and water sensitive design principles that will guide preparation of structure plans in relation to nature-based solutions and compliance with environmental regulations.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

Clear and consistent sub-regional funding priorities

Use available and new funding methods to facilitate the key moves and implementation priorities.

Implementation priorities:

- 1 Maintain a consistent sub-regional approach to regional deals, and engage with the Infrastructure Commission's Infrastructure Priorities Programme as a key way to access Central Government funding for major infrastructure projects.
- 2 Regional Land Transport Plans and Water Services Delivery Plans will need to include the necessary investments outlined in local planning initiatives, to enable priority development areas as they are determined.
- 3 Identify required infrastructure projects in LTPs to enable Development Contribution charging, which is likely to require a review of these charges.

Implementation considerations**Governance to implement the plan**

To develop the plan, a Project Governance Group was established to guide and shape the plan. This group has included representatives from local and central government, iwi authorities, and others. This group or a similar one needs to be maintained to address sub-regional matters through a co-governance partnership approach and implementation of the plan.

Serving as the strategic voice for the eastern bay, this group should have a clear delegation of authority from the Councils. Additionally, it should be involved in other matters related to spatial planning, including regional agreements, economic development, legislative reform, and the implementation of anticipated amendments to the RMA. This group could determine when the plan required review and updating, receiving regular updates on key indicators.

Implementation toolbox

Our Places identifies a strategy to achieve our goals. As a 30-year plan, it will take time and hard work to make change happen. There are many tools Councils can employ to deliver the strategy, and many roles they can play to make things happen.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

Some of the implementation priorities identified under Our Places are achievable through compliance with the policy guidance, rules and regulations in the relevant currently operative district plans. Some may not be achievable until changes to the relevant district plan can be made. Other activities may require investments into capital projects, or changes to asset management plans. Given the complexities of some of the proposed projects and their actions and the term of the spatial plan, it is expected that projects may need to be prioritised and phased to achieve efficiency in spending and resource use.

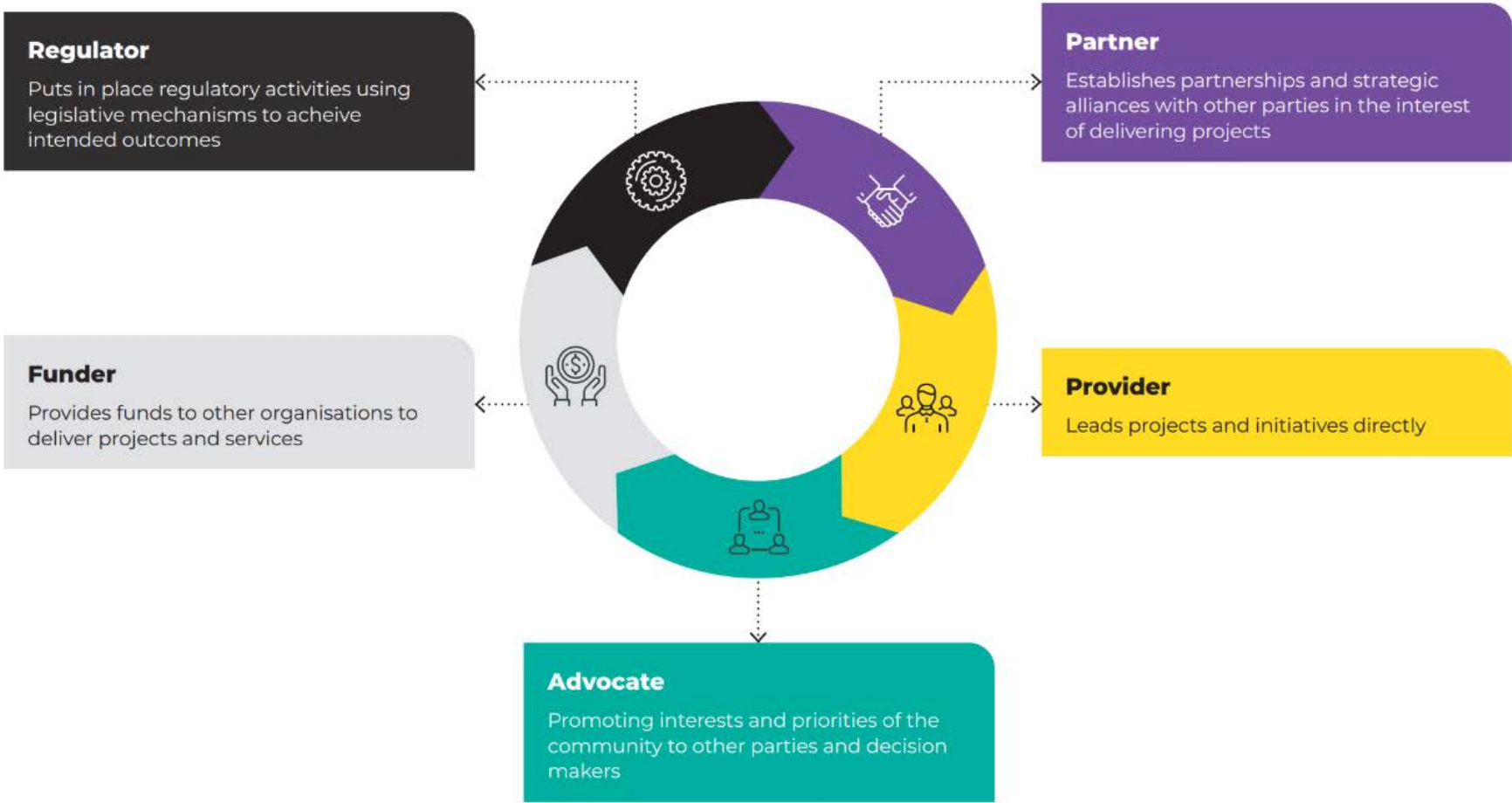


Figure 2: Councils can have different roles during implementation

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

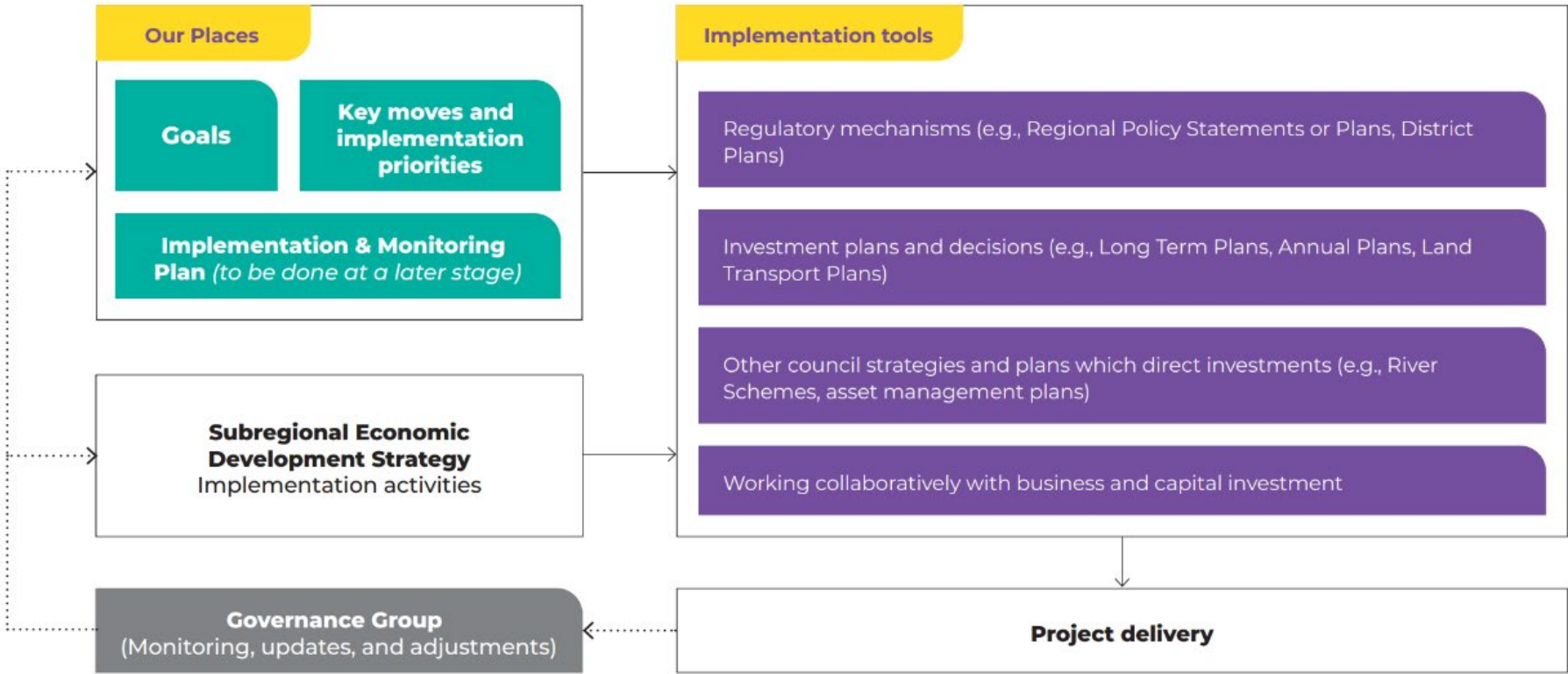


Figure 3: Implementation processes, alignment with Subregional Economic Development Strategy

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

Implementation Risk

Potential high risks	Mitigation	Performance Indicator
Partnerships There is a risk that partnerships needed to deliver sub-regional outcomes and the key moves do not happen because the plan is not implemented.	An agreed sub-regional governance group for the spatial plan, economic development strategy and other broad scale initiatives (e.g., regional deals, responding to Government policy changes) should be established with a Terms of Reference that delegates authority to work on behalf of Councils and other partners, and it needs to be resourced to operate effectively.	A Project Governance Group is confirmed with an approved Terms of Reference by July 2026. Councils provide operational funding in Annual Plans and LTPs to support the Governance Group's operation and to ensure that iwi partners can fully participate.
Commercial feasibility There is a risk that development areas are not commercially viable due to infrastructure costs, and housing or business land does not get developed, and housing and economic development outcomes are curtailed.	Councils can encourage viability by de-risking development priority areas by creating clear and enabling planning frameworks, providing structure plans that set out urban form and infrastructure requirements, ensuring natural hazard risk information is available and mitigations are well understood, and ensuring enabling infrastructure projects are outlined in LTPs and other funding planning to enable development to proceed in a timely manner.	A plan change and structure plan is undertaken for Awakeri, including an infrastructure funding plan. Infrastructure requirements for priority growth areas are identified in relevant LTPs, Regional Land Transport Plan. Integrated catchment management plan is developed for Awakeri and informs future structure planning.
Infrastructure funding and affordability There is a risk that infrastructure costs are unaffordable for councils, and priority development areas or related placemaking and economic development activities cannot be delivered.	Mitigation can include employing investment thresholds, exploring the use of private investments into public projects, and ensuring required infrastructure projects are in the LTPs and infrastructure strategies to enable appropriate development contributions. Prioritise investment into fewer development locations at a time, and avoid opening different development areas that would compete with each other and undermine the timely recovery of Council investments (e.g., through Development Contributions)	Development of the Whenua Māori Land West of Coastlands area or extension of Matatā beyond existing zoned capacity does not take place until the Awakeri development is established with a funded infrastructure programme.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

Potential high risks	Mitigation	Performance Indicator
Population growth There is a risk that the population may be lower or higher than the selected most likely population scenario, which could affect commercial viability for development and funding sources.	The medium population growth scenario suggests that the sub-region will grow by 16,500 over the next 30 years. However, this is dependent on external factors like immigration rates, and this affects how fast development capacity will be absorbed. Mitigation includes monitoring the population change and adapting investment timing.	Population change, residential units consented, and commercial floorspace consented is monitored and reported at least annually to the Project Governance Group.
Changes in Government policy Changes in national policy directions can influence the viability of delivering the spatial plan due to funding criteria shifts or policy requirements changing.	With each change in Government review, the strategy to determine if the priorities need to change to better align to the Government's priorities of the day, this may mean changing implementation priorities based on the opportunities at hand.	The Project Governance Group decides whether a review is needed within 12 months after a national election.
Climate change & natural hazards Natural hazard risks exist and will become worse through climate change. This affects existing communities.	Undertake comprehensive natural hazard risk assessments for at-risk locations to consider risk management options. For the priority growth areas (Awakeri, Hukuatia and Matata) undertake integrated stormwater planning at the master planning stage to inform structure planning and the objectives of the relevant river schemes.	In the short term, natural hazard risk assessments are completed for Whakatāne township and Ōpōtiki township to inform future risk management decisions and planning. Integrated stormwater management planning is completed for Awakeri, Matata and Hukutaia.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

Prioritising and choosing where and when to invest

It is important to acknowledge that population and employment growth rates will vary from year to year. Councils need to plan for this variability and adjust the pace of implementation accordingly. The Ten Year LTP provides a mechanism for funding decisions and ongoing changes to funding strategies. LTPs are one of the mechanisms that determines how fast we can deliver projects, considering available resources (funding and workforce).

While the pace of implementation will be directed by the availability of resources and funding balanced with demand from changing population and economic growth, the strategy identifies a short term need to invest in Awakeri and Hukutaia as the two priority development locations that are considered the easiest to progress quickly and affordably.

Priority	Location	Details
Short-Long term	Hukutaia	Priority development location, 2,000 residential units
Medium-Long term	Awakeri	Priority development location, potential for 2,000+ residential units
Medium-Long term	Matata infill	Priority development location, 600-700 residential units
Long term	Matata expansion	Potential extension of residential area eastwards of Pollen Street, following Awakeri development, with potential for 700-800 residential units
Further consideration, Medium to Long term	Whenua West of Coastlands	Requires defined potential for development of this area
Ongoing	Other development locations like Murupara or Te Kaha, and ongoing infill in safe places in existing townships	Enabled through ongoing asset renewals programmes

Note: Long term (10-30 years), Medium term (3-10 years), Short term (0-3 years)

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

Updates to this plan

The spatial plan will need to be reviewed and possibly updated at the time of key events, and regularly to keep it updated. The governance group that oversees the implementation of the plan should determine when this needs to happen. A regular review and update at a minimum every six years is recommended. It should include community engagement, and the timing should link with the following LTP updates to embed new actions in funding frameworks.

Other triggers that could instigate a review to confirm if an update is needed, may include events like those outlined below, or other similar matters:

- National and local elections
 - Changes to legislation including Resource Management Reform
 - Development of a detailed Implementation Plan for the spatial plan
 - Development of an Implementation Plan for the Subregional Economic Development Strategy
- Release of new population statistics by Statistics New Zealand (subnational population projections (on a 2023-base) will be released on 25 September 2025)
- Further certainty of planning for priority growth areas, or should they prove infeasible
 - Changes to funding availabilities and partner funding requirements (e.g., new GPS on Land Transport)

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

Appendix 1: Implementation activities

Implementation of the strategy requires commitment to resources, alignment of other strategies and investment plans, and commitment to making change happen. The activities proposed through the spatial plan are mostly unfunded and require further consideration in LTPs to confirm resource commitment.

The key moves and implementation priorities have informed a preliminary list of activities that should be considered to implement the plan. These have been developed with the input of prior engagement feedback from iwi partners, stakeholders, the public, and from technical assessments. Timing and funding are yet to be determined.

Once the spatial plan governance group has been established, a top priority item should be to approve a full implementation plan. This should include confirmation of the roles and inputs from partner organisations towards unlocking the benefits sought through the spatial plan. Subsequent investigations, successful implementation, and more detailed plans will change and update these actions.

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

Spatial Plan and eastern bay-wide actions

Table 1: Implementation actions, eastern bay-wide

ID	Activity group	Relevant key moves	Description	Lead agency	Collaborators
SP1	Spatial plan	1.1	Governance for implementation Establish a governance entity to oversee the implementation of the spatial plan, engagement, and future changes to the plan – in association with the economic development strategy.	WDC	BOPRC, KDC, ODC, NZTA, HUD, Kainga Ora, Health NZ, iwi partners, Kānoa, Regional Services Commission
SP2	Spatial plan	1.1	Funding for governance Ensure operational support and funding in long term plans, including enabling appropriate data acquisition for monitoring risk indicators.	WDC	BOPRC, KDC, ODC
SP3	Spatial plan	6.1, 6.2, 6.3	Placemaking for structure plans Use local growth strategy or district plan engagement processes to define placemaking principles that guide preparation of structure plans and community revitalisation projects in relation to provision of community infrastructure and recreational facilities and effects on existing assets.	WDC, ODC	KDC
SP4	Spatial plan	2.2, 5.4	Address district plan barriers to pāpakainga Gather more detail on the quantum and timing of pāpakainga and what regulatory barriers affects its realisation. Review district plans to alleviate regulatory barriers where appropriate.	WDC, ODC, KDC	Iwi, hapu and Māori Trusts

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

ID	Activity group	Relevant key moves	Description	Lead agency	Collaborators
SP5	Spatial plan	6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4	Facilities strategic plan Develop an eastern bay community facilities strategic plan to co-ordinate and target investment to make the best use of existing and planned facilities and available funding. This includes considering meeting diverse needs of the community, multi-use open spaces, co-location of community facilities, and providing good access to facilities across the eastern bay.	WDC, ODC, KDC	Sport BOP, Te Whatu Ora/Health NZ, iwi and hapu
SP6	Spatial plan	7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4	Transport system programme Develop a transport system programme (assisted by the development of a network demand modelling tool) and explore new investment pathways to support delivery of the growth components of the spatial plan. Explore investigations needed for an additional Whakatāne access to support growth components of the spatial plan and projects to improve network resilience. Consider staging triggers for growth areas within the development of the transport system programme. Work with NZTA to identify current and future levels of service requirements for the State Highway network that accommodates future growth, existing user experience and funding availability for improvements.	WDC	ODC, KDC, NZTA, BOPRC, KiwiRail, Regional Transport Committee, Regional Public Transport Committee
SP7	Spatial plan	6.1, 6.2	Cycling network plan for priority growth areas in Whakatane district Create a safe, accessible, and interconnected network of cycle paths that promotes sustainable transportation and enhances community connectivity through local planning processes, strategies and projects.	WDC	ODC, KDC, NZTA, BOPRC

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

ID	Activity group	Relevant key moves	Description	Lead agency	Collaborators
SP8	Spatial plan	8.3	Water sensitive design practices Define environmentally sustainable and water sensitive design principles and standards to guide preparation of structure plans in relation to nature-based solutions and compliance with environmental regulations. Embed these through district plan reviews when required.	WDC, ODC	BOPRC, iwi
SP9	Spatial plan	2.2, 2.3	Identify and respect sites and areas of significance Work in partnership with iwi and hapū in the protection of cultural heritage sites and areas of significance and recognise and respect tangata whenua values in local planning processes. Develop a detailed understanding around each priority development area as part of master planning.	WDC, ODC, KDC, BOPRC	Iwi and hapu
SP10	Spatial plan	4.1, 4.2	Implement the Sub-Regional Economic Development Strategy Support the key growth areas as identified in the Sub-regional Economic Growth Strategy, including prioritising infrastructure and planning. Prepare a local economic development plan for each district and consider capacity building for iwi authorities Develop a workforce strategy for the eastern bay.	WDC, ODC, KDC	BOPRC, iwi and hapu
SP11	Spatial plan	4.1	Capital advisory group The Project Governance Group should establish a business and capital advisory group. This group can help identify and enable public-private funding opportunities.	Governance Group	WDC, ODC, KDC, BOPRC

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

Central corridor actions

Table 2: Implementation actions, Central Corridor

ID	Activity group	Relevant key moves	Description	Lead agency	Collaborators
C1	Central Corridor	5.4, 6.3	Local Growth Strategy Prepare a local growth strategy through partner involvement and community engagement that includes specific activities to plan, fund and deliver infrastructure for priority growth areas in Whakatane District.	WDC	BOPRC, NZTA, Ministry of Education, iwi and hapu
C2	Central Corridor	9.2	Water and Wastewater Strategy Prepare a water and wastewater strategy that incorporates an integrated network approach to servicing existing communities and planned priority growth areas, to recognise efficiencies in combined treatment plant services and other alternatives like package treatment plants.	WDC	BOPRC
A1	Awakeri	7.2, 7.4, 7.5	State highway access and safety improvements to enable growth Lobby for access and safety improvements along SH 30 and SH 2 for consideration in the state highway improvement programme. Apply for funding to NZTA to install a roundabout at corner of SH 2 and SH 30	WDC	NZTA, BOPRC
A2	Awakeri	7.3	SH 2 Awakeri to Ōpōtiki resiliency Ensure growth assumptions in NZTA's SH 2 resiliency project reflect the intent of the spatial plan.	NZTA	WDC, ODC, KDC, BOPRC
A3	Awakeri	6.2	School capacity Involve Ministry of Education in the local growth strategy in relation to forward planning of network capacity for schools.	WDC, ODC	Ministry of Education

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

ID	Activity group	Relevant key moves	Description	Lead agency	Collaborators
A4	Awakeri	5.4	<p>Masterplan Awakeri</p> <p>Explore the best options for rezoning to urban land use. Consider options such as private plan change, public plan change, or a review of strategic long-term plans.</p> <p>Involve iwi, hapu and māori land trusts, stakeholders, and the local community in determining design principles and options.</p> <p>Continue to engage and support kiwinui trust and other trusts to establish a masterplan for the land. Explore options for rezoning trust land from rural to facilitate urban residential and other urban land uses.</p> <p>Prepare a structure plan to guide phased development. Establish risk profile and appropriate mitigation to be considered and/or designed into three waters systems.</p>	WDC	B
W1	Whenua West of Coastlands	5.4	<p>Vision and masterplan for Whenua West of Coastlands</p> <p>Continue to engage and support Kiwinui Trust and other trusts to establish a masterplan for the land. Establish the aspirations of the Māori freehold landowners. Ensure an appropriately suitable planning boundary that may include other lands adjacent. This should identify further required investigations and implementation activities related to planning, funding, and infrastructure.</p>	WDC	Land Trusts, Taiwhakaia, Ngāti Awa, NZTA, BOPRC
M1	Matata	2.3, 5.4	<p>Masterplanning for Matata</p> <p>Develop a masterplan involving the local community and with engagement with iwi to better understand their priorities for development aspirations for land, economic development, socio-economic risks, and infrastructure needs including parks and open spaces.</p> <p>This may be delivered through the Local Growth Strategy.</p> <p>This needs to encompass the Tarawera River Restoration Strategy Group's intent for the Tarawera River reconnection and rechannelling.</p>	WDC	Ngāti Rangitihi, Tūwharetoa ki Kawerau and Ngāti Awa, NZTA, BOPRC, others

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

ID	Activity group	Relevant key moves	Description	Lead agency	Collaborators
M2	Matata	9.2	Progress Matata wastewater treatment plant The current wastewater management system in Matatā is failing. Provide a safe and reliable wastewater system for Matatā that reduces public health and environmental risks. Enable growth outcomes identified in the spatial plan.	WDC	Co-design group, BOPRC
O1	Ōpōtiki	5.3	New zoned industrial land Undertake Industrial Plan Change to open up (yet to be) chosen locations around Ōpōtiki township to meet future demand for industrial development.	ODC	
O2	Ōpōtiki	7.1, 7.3	Advocate for SH 2 bypass resiliency improvement Advocate for improved transport resiliency of the bypass route (Hukutaia Road-Crooked Road-Verrall Road-Brown Road-Gabriels Gully Road-Waiotahi Valley Road) as alternative to SH 2 along Waiotahi, to ensure access to and from Ōpōtiki township.	ODC	NZTA, BOPRC
H1	Hukutaia	3.1, 5.3, 6.3	Implement Hukutaia development Undertake natural hazard risk assessment for Hukutaia Growth Area to direct planning decisions. Identify commercial and residential uses, infrastructure, and open spaces, through structure planning. Undertake Hukutaia Plan change to open up rural land for urban development. Work with landowners and other stakeholders to develop an infrastructure finding strategy. Seek improvements at the SH 2 and Woodlands Road intersection by NZTA.	ODC	BOPRC, NZTA, iwi, landowner, Ministry of Education
P1	Putauaki Industrial Area	5.3	Sustain the growth of Putauaki Industrial Area Maintain the area attractive to large footprint regionally significant industrial activities, by avoiding reverse sensitivity limitations posed by adjacent land use activities.	KDC	WDC, ODC, Whenua Maori

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

ID	Activity group	Relevant key moves	Description	Lead agency	Collaborators
P2	Putuaki Industrial Area	4.2	Support the primacy of the Putauaki Industrial Area Within priority growth areas, ensure commercial uses do not compete directly with the large-scale heavy industries sought at the Putauaki Industrial Area through appropriate land use regulations.	WDC, ODC	KDC

Eastern Corridor actions

Table 3: Implementation actions, Eastern Corridor

ID	Activity group	Relevant key moves	Description	Lead agency	Collaborators
EC1	Eastern Corridor	7.1	SH 35 Resiliency Improvements Advocate for improved transport resiliency of SH35 connecting the Eastern Corridor to Ōpōtiki township.	ODC	NZTA
EC2	Eastern Corridor	2.1, 2.2, 4.2	Support economic development by iwi When setting investment priorities or making regulatory changes, ensure iwi aspirations are a consideration: Iwi-led developments, including the iwi pipeline projects identified in the Eastern corridor to drive economic growth. ODC to provide support to enable iwi to meet Māori aspirations. Support the aquaculture as key growth area as identified in the Sub-regional Economic Growth Strategy, including prioritising infrastructure and planning.	ODC	Iwi, hapu and Māori Trusts

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

ID	Activity group	Relevant key moves	Description	Lead agency	Collaborators
EC3	Eastern Corridor	6.4	Te Kaha Placemaking Enable and support development of community facilities, retail, and businesses for Te Kaha to become a central service hub. Engage with the community to understand their need and priorities to work on over time.	ODC	Iwi
EC4	Eastern Corridor	3.6	Marae as emergency hubs Establish formal agreements between ODC and civil defense agencies to support marae as emergency service hubs in the event of natural disasters.	ODC	Iwi, hapu, BOPRC
EC5	Eastern Corridor	3.5	Investigate areas for managed retreat Partnership between BOPRC and iwi to identify, investigate, initiate and support coastal retreat in areas subject to coastal inundation and future sea level rise. As part of this, assess and identify infill opportunities in smaller villages along the coast east of Ōpōtiki where it is safe from natural hazards.	BOPRC	ODC, iwi and hapu
EC5	Eastern Corridor	2.1, 2.2	Structure planning for pāpakainga Partner with iwi to consider structure planning for development to enable comprehensive planning of papakāinga, including infrastructure provision. For larger scale proposals.	ODC, Iwi	

Southern corridor actions

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

Table 4: Implementation actions, Southern Corridor

ID	Activity group	Relevant key moves	Description	Lead agency	Collaborators
SC1	Murupara	6.4	Pāpakainga and commercial area Explore the planning processes for developing pāpakainga on Evan's Park and consider a business case for a new commercial area on Te Urewera Rainforest Route, with care to consider impact on the existing commercial uses.	WDC	Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Manawa
SC2	Murupara	6.4	Murupara masterplan Develop a Masterplan led by Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Manawa and the Murupara Community Board. Review the Whakatāne District Plan to support masterplan outcomes.	Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Manawa	Murupara Community Board, WDC
SC3	Murupara	2.1	Housing Develop a 30 home proposal at 5 Miro Drive, Murupara pending funding approval. The proposal is a combination of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom homes and resource consent has been granted.	Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whare	
SC4	Minginui and Te Whaiti	2.1, 2.2, 5.4	Minginui masterplan Develop a masterplan led by Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whare and the Minginui Village Incorporated Society and review the Whakatāne District Plan to support masterplan outcomes.	Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whare	Minginui Village Incorporated Society, WDC
SC5	Te Awa O Tauranga, Ruatoki, Ruatāhuna	2.1, 2.2	District plan review / pāpakainga Support the implementation of Ngāi Tūhoe's spatial planning and housing blueprint, ensuring the district plan review considers if the plan is sufficiently enabling and sufficient natural hazards information can be made available.	WDC	Ngāi Tūhoe

Natural hazards and climate resilience actions

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

Table 5: Implementation actions, Natural hazards and climate resilience actions

ID	Activity group	Relevant key moves	Description	Lead agency	Collaborators
NH 1	Natural hazards	3.3	Improved natural hazard information Co-ordinate and report back on any National Direction & RPS Natural Hazard implementation including natural hazard modelling, mapping and risk assessments undertaken by all.	BOPRC	ODC, WDC and KDC
NH 2	Natural hazards	3.3	River Scheme sustainability Progress and complete the River Scheme Sustainability Project.	BOPRC	ODC, WDC, Iwi and hapu, stakeholders and the community
NH 3	Natural hazards	3.1	Integrated stormwater and risk management planning For priority growth areas (Awakeri, Hukutaia and Matata) and Regional Councils to undertake integrated stormwater and risk management planning through master planning to inform the design, form, and location of detailed structure planning to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protect agreed levels of service of the flood schemes, • manage the effects of climate change over the next 100 years, and • avoid increases in risk to people, property and infrastructure; and • protect sensitive receiving environments including the Te Awa o te Atua. 	ODC, WDC and BOPRC	Iwi and hapu, stakeholders and the community
NH 4	Natural hazards	3.2	Climate change risk assessments Develop, prepare and implement localised climate change risk assessments to inform community-led adaptation planning initiatives across the eastern bay sub-region including the Whakatāne District Climate Change Risk Assessment.	ODC, WDC and BOPRC	Iwi and hapu, the community

7.1.2 Appendix B - Our Places – The Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan(Cont.)

Implementation

ID	Activity group	Relevant key moves	Description	Lead agency	Collaborators
NH 5	Natural hazards	3.3	<p>RPS natural hazard risk assessments</p> <p>Progress natural hazard risk assessments prepared under the Regional Policy Statement (RPS) to inform future risk management planning and decision making:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a priority, Whakatāne and Ōpōtiki townships; and • In other locations including Taneatua, Te Teko and Edgecumbe. <p>Share the outcomes of the RPS natural hazard risk assessments and other relevant information to inform the community and consider risk reduction measures for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The River Scheme Sustainability Project for the relevant flood scheme. ▪ Civil Defence and Emergency Management Planning. ▪ Climate change adaptation planning. ▪ Asset management planning by territorial authorities. ▪ Land-use planning including district plan changes. ▪ Asset management planning for life-line utilities providers. 	ODC, WDC and BOPRC	Iwi and hapu, the community

7.1.3 Appendix C - Our Places - Short Story

7.1.3 Appendix C - Our Places - Short Story



Our Places

Eastern Bay Spatial Plan

Maori translation

The short(er) story

May 2025



BAY OF PLENTY
REGIONAL COUNCIL
TOI MOANA



WHAKATĀNE
District Council
Kia Whakatāne au i ahau



KAWERAU
DISTRICT COUNCIL
Te Kaunihera ā rohe o Kawerau



Ōpōtiki District Council
STRONG COMMUNITY STRONG FUTURE





Thornton Beach, Whakatāne
Cover: Church Street playground, Ōpōtiki

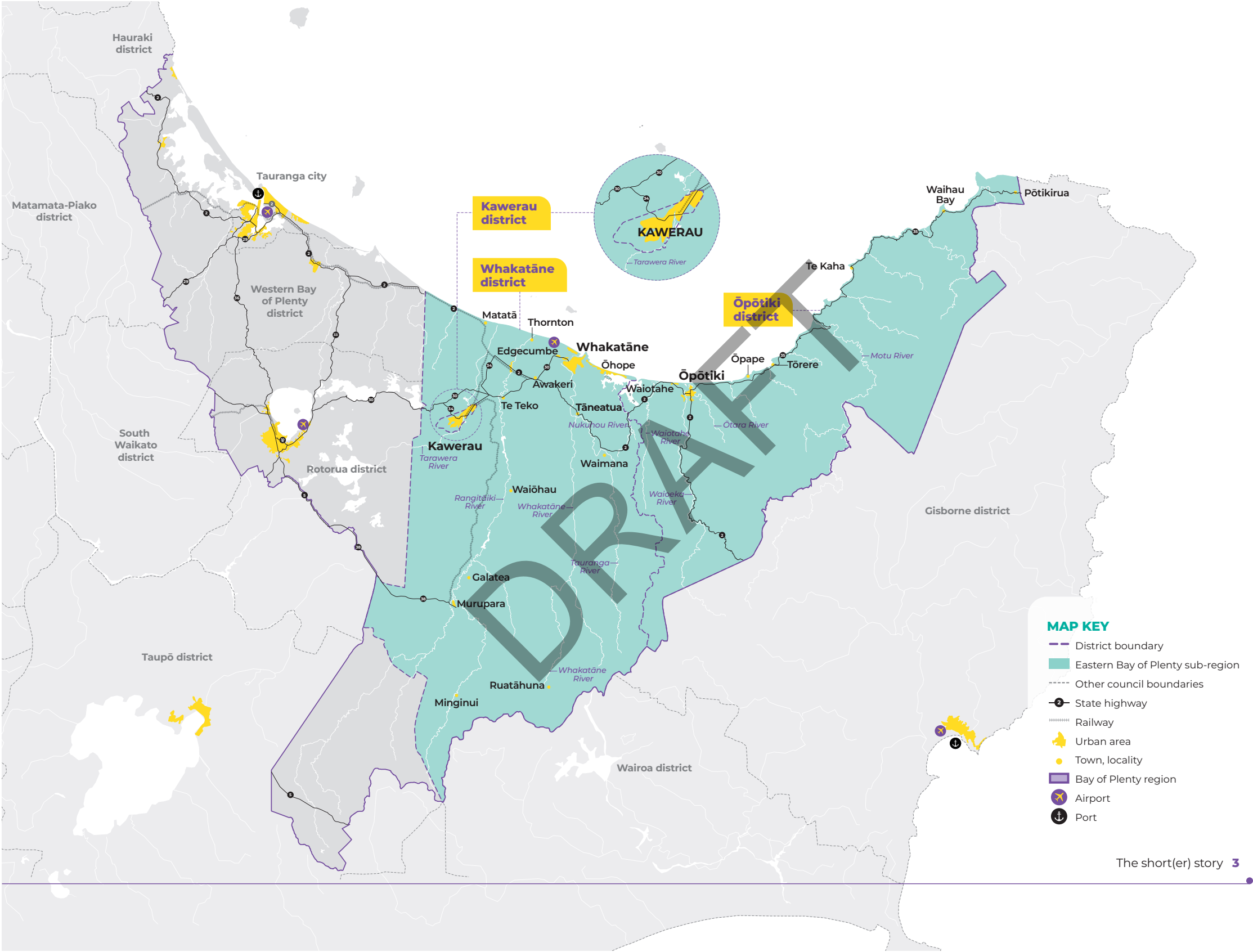
Our Places – Eastern Bay Spatial Plan sets out where the Eastern Bay of Plenty wants to head and provides a roadmap for how to get there. It’s about providing safe places for people to live, supporting the local economy, adapting to climate change and protecting our environment – ultimately, ensuring people and places can thrive.

Welcome to Our Places, Eastern Bay Spatial Plan. We have created a plan that helps us set a vision for the future of the Whakatāne, Kawerau and Ōpōtiki Districts within the rohe of the iwi and hapū of Eastern Bay of Plenty in the wider Bay of Plenty Region.

The Eastern Bay’s population could increase from 56,500 in 2022 to 68,000 by 2055. We are planning for 5,500 more houses and additional business land across the Eastern Bay in the next 30-years.

The Eastern Bay is renowned for its outstanding natural and cultural taonga, attracting people to our region over the centuries. We are all part of a continuum – there were those before us and there will be those after us.

This means we share a responsibility to care for the taonga we have inherited while meeting the needs of current and future generations. These needs include ensuring that our people can continue to safely live, work, visit and play in the Eastern Bay, now and in the future.



Maori translation

So, what’s the plan for 5,500 new homes and more business land?

We expect to see most new growth taking place in Priority Growth Areas

Most urban development is expected to take place in the Central Urban Corridor, beginning with Awakeri and Hukutaia.

- 1 Awakeri to grow into an urban township of 2,000+ homes, with development in the short-medium term.
- 2 A masterplan for the Whenua Māori West of Coastlands.
- 3 Economic and residential growth of Matatā in the medium-long term initially within existing zone-enabled areas, with potential to expand eastwards long term.
- 4 Putauaki (Industrial Growth Area) continues to expand as the pre-eminent industrial hub for the sub-region.
- 5 Hukutaia develops into a community of 2,000 homes with a local commercial centre.

The townships cannot expand outwards, and infill will be an important but small part of meeting housing needs.

- 6 In Whakatāne township, infill continues to meet market demand in elevated locations like Kopeopeo.

- 7 Infill in Kawerau continues to provide for additional housing supply.
- 8 Infill in Ōpōtiki continues at a controlled pace in the short term. Over the longer term, adaptive planning may be considered to mitigate natural hazard risks.

The Rural Southern Corridor focuses on iwi-led housing and economic opportunities, particularly in tourism, forestry, horticulture, and potential new ventures like sustainable water bottling.

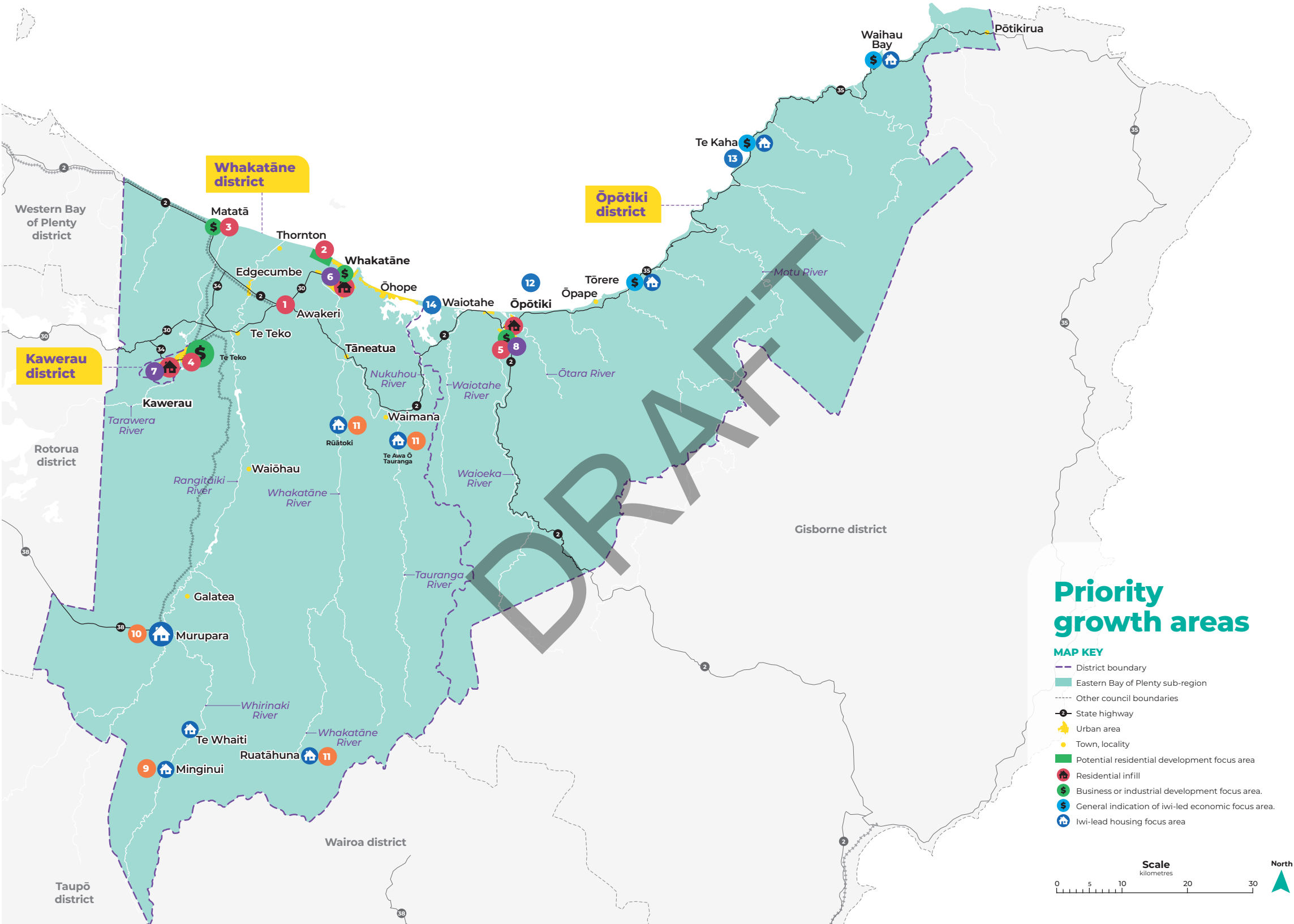
- 9 Mīnginui and Te Whaiti, see an increase in Māori housing and papakāinga.
- 10 Murupara sees consideration of the conversion of Evan’s Park into a residential zone and enabling a commercial area on the Te Urewera Rainforest Route.
- 11 Te Awa O Tauranga, Ruatoki, Ruatāhuna: Ngāi Tūhoe advance their aspirations to establish pāpakainga outlined in Tūhoe blueprint: Housing 40-Year Vision.

Iwi in the Eastern Corridor have big plans for housing and businesses that would contribute to economic growth in the sub-region. Iwi aim to establish papakāinga and Māori housing near marae and near Te Kaha to support expanding local industries like aquaculture and horticulture.

- 12 Continue expansion of aquacultural developments.
- 13 Development of planned spat hatchery and related facilities.
- 14 Expansion of the Mahi Haurahi Horticulture Centre.

What about other areas?

While the Priority Growth Areas are where we want changes to enable more development, other areas will see continued development. This includes ongoing infill and intensification of townships, rural residential development, pāpakainga and infill of smaller communities as already enabled through District Plan provisions.





Waioatahe Beach, Ōpōtiki

6 Our Places - Eastern Bay Spatial Plan

He mea whakapū ngā tūmanako a ngā iwi me ngā hapū **Iwi and hapū aspirations are fundamental** Māori-led housing and economic activities are an integral part of the Eastern Bay. Each iwi and hapū holds whakapapa connections to their places of interest and must have an ongoing role in decision-making.

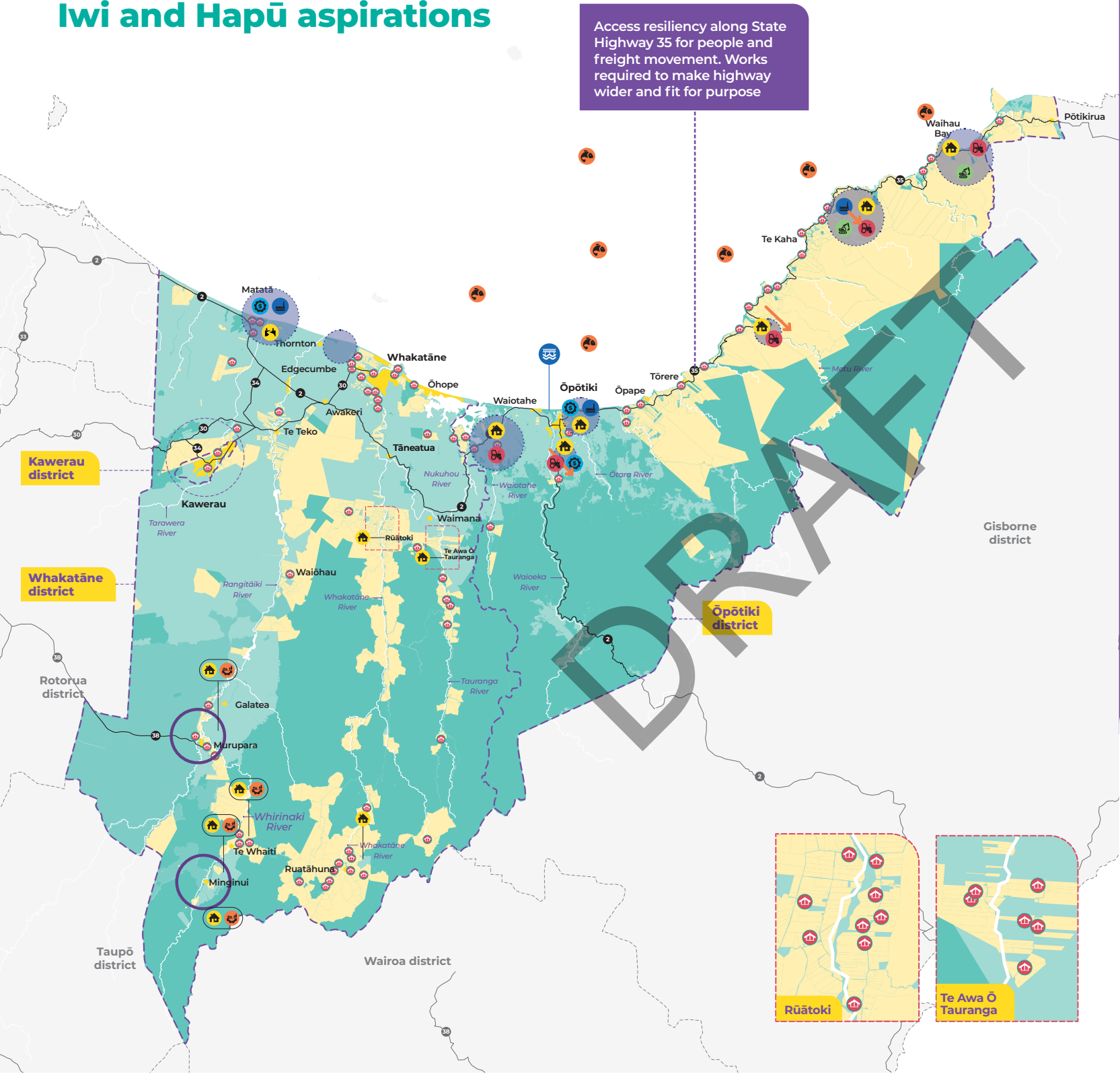
Iwi of the Eastern Bay have an enduring presence, grounded in whakapapa, whenua, and generations of connection to place.

Today, Māori Freehold Land makes up 22% of the Eastern Bay and iwi and Māori land trusts are key parties in the development of the Eastern Bay.

Iwi, recognised as rights holders under Te Tiriti o Waitangi, have significant interests in natural resources, including freshwater, and continue to play a vital role in local decision-making. The strong connection iwi and hapū have to whenua and place continue to inform and drive iwi-led aspirations for social, cultural, economic and environmental wellbeing.

This strength, shaped by whakapapa and a fixed presence in the region, continues to inform and drive iwi-led aspirations for social, cultural, economic, and environmental wellbeing.

Iwi and Hapū aspirations



- IWI LED HOUSING INITIATIVES:** Iwi led housing initiatives across the Eastern Bay include new housing, papakāinga developments and improvements and upgrades to existing houses.
- COMMERCIAL AND REVITALISATION ACTIVITIES:** Support health and wellbeing in Murupara through economic development, which may include the establishment of a water bottling plant, commercial activities on the Te Urewera Rainforest Route and improving community infrastructure as part of the Murupara revitalisation programme.

Ngāti Whare have plans for revitalisation for Minginui and Te Whaiti including renewable energy projects, eco-tourism and strengthening educational facilities.
- SELF-SUFFICIENT INFRASTRUCTURE:** Ngāti Whare has goals for Minginui and Te Whaiti to support self-sufficiency including renewable energy and sustainable waste and water management.
- ROADING:** Ngāti Whare have plans to develop, upkeep and maintain a forestry road for resiliency in case of access disruption to the main road to and from Minginui.
- PRIMARY INDUSTRIES:** growth planned around Te Kaha and Raukokore.
- AQUACULTURE:** planned for up to 20,000 ha of farms.
- COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES:** a range of office based activities planned, e.g., tourism, education, environmental research.
- INDUSTRIAL:** uses linked to the aquaculture industry, mussel processing plant south of Ōpōtiki, mussel spat hatchery at Te Kaha.
- INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS:** Improved irrigation and reservoirs for agricultural industry; Hydro electricity generation near Te Kaha; SH35 resiliency for access to markets and services.
- TARAWERA RIVER:** Iwi are leading efforts to restore the mauri of the Tarawera Awa to Te Awa o Te Atua.

- MAP KEY**
- District boundary
 - Eastern Bay of Plenty sub-region
 - Other council boundaries
 - State highway
 - Urban area
 - Town, locality
 - Natural environment
 - CNI Iwi Holdings Land
 - Māori land parcels
 - Marae
 - Ōpōtiki harbour
 - Growth focus area
 - Natural hazards and climate change resiliency
 - Town Centre revitalisation

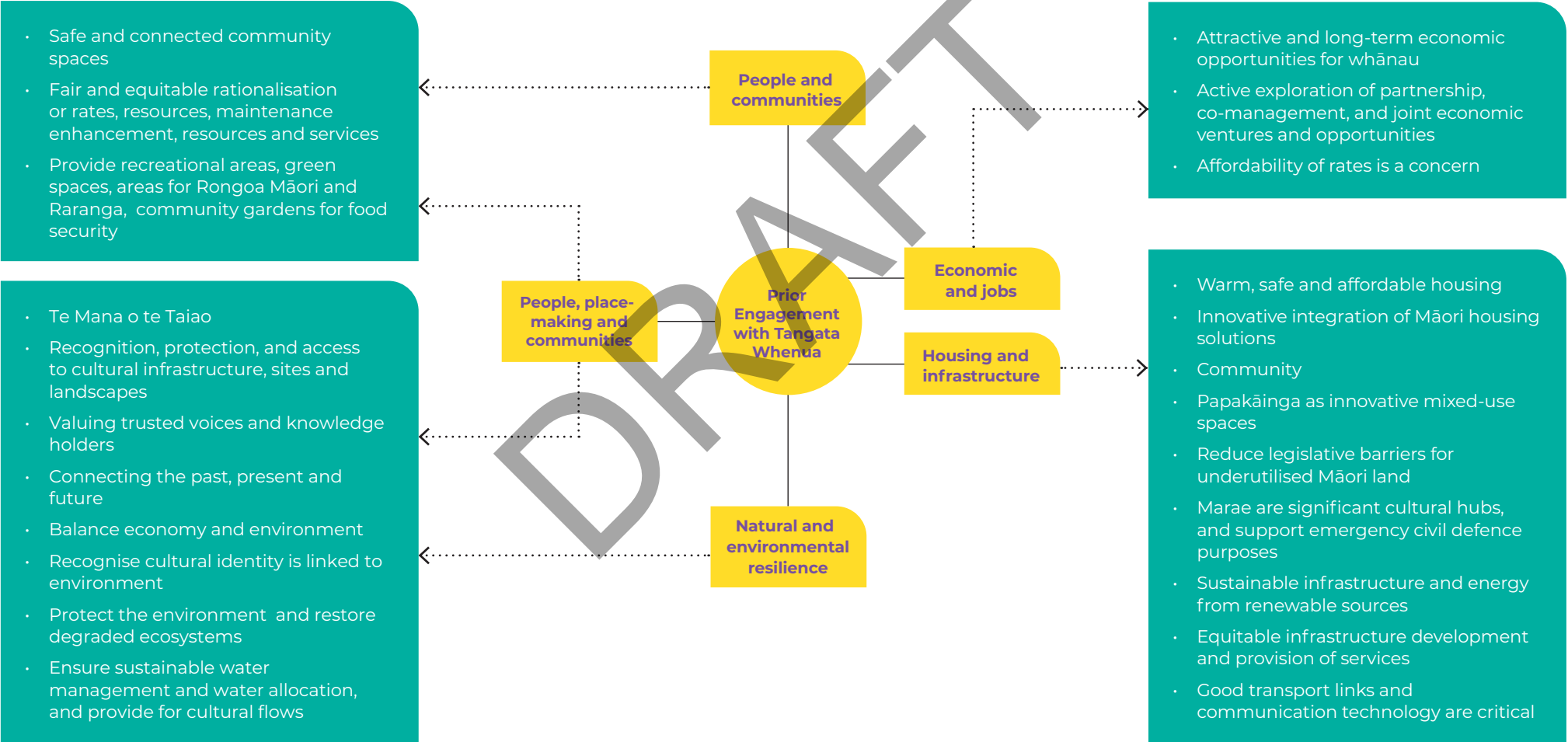
Ongoing conversations with iwi are crucial to identify how Councils and others can support these aspirations and to understand as they change and new ones are identified. Ngāi Tūhoe have their aspirations in Tūhoe - Te Uru Taumatua and tribal authorities' publications. Tūhoe's long-term housing goals are outlined in the Tūhoe Blueprint: Housing 40 Year Vision. For more information please refer to Part 3 of the Spatial Plan

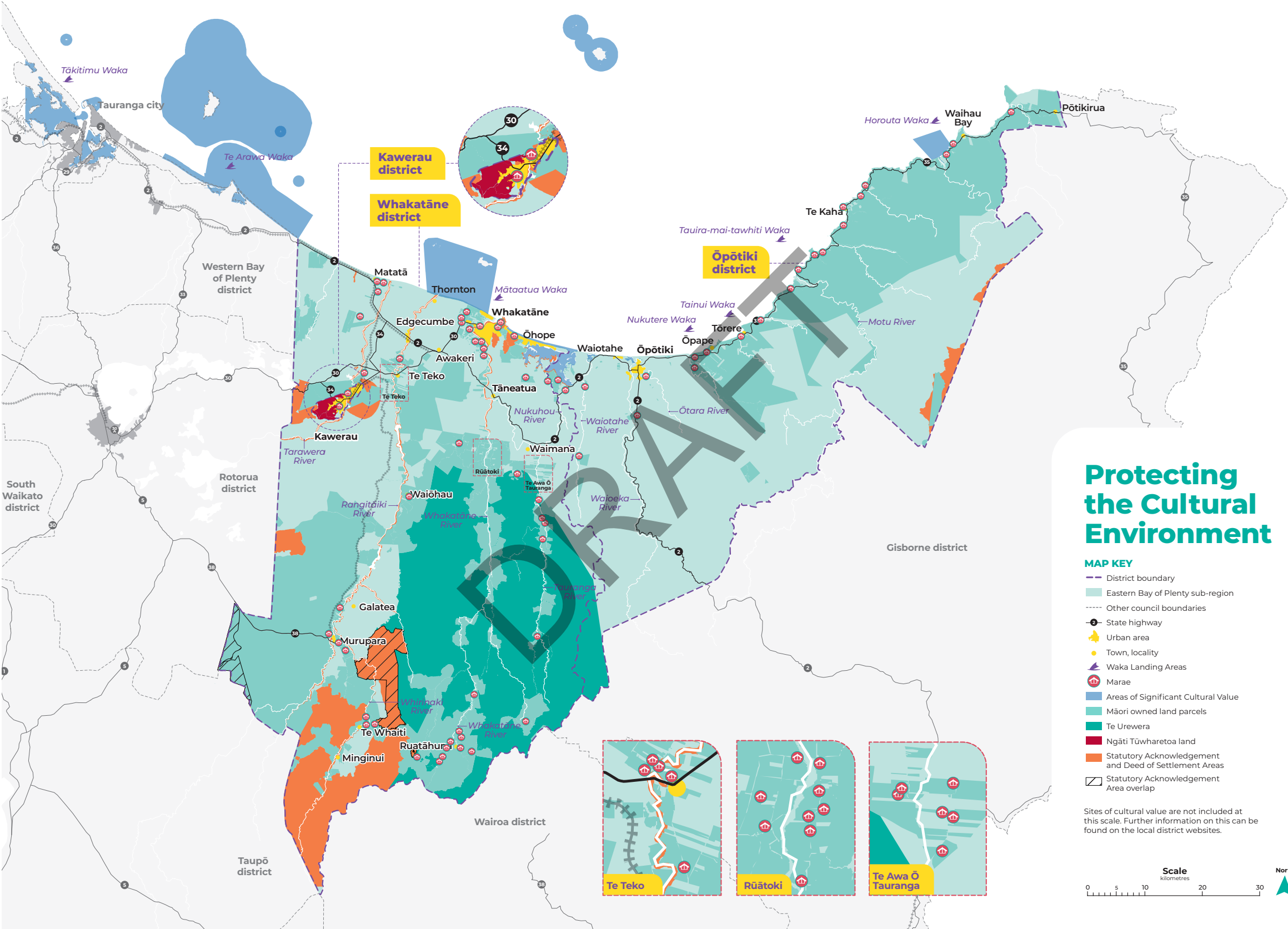


Maori translation

Iwi and hapū conversations

These matters came to the top as consistently important for iwi and hapū and have guided the content of Our Places – Eastern Bay Spatial Plan.





Maori translation

The community's values and aspirations

These matters came to the top as consistently important for the community and have guided the content of Our Places.

Our Places responds to the interests and ambitions set out by the community through engagement, with emphasis on quality of life and the environment.

Engagement with stakeholders and the community in late 2024 resulted in over 550 points of feedback and saw more than 300 people attending drop-in events and workshops.



Porritt Glade Lifestyle Village and inaugural resident Mrs Kathleen Cook, Kawerau



Three waters and transport **infrastructure** that is **efficient**, safe, sustainable, and that **protects** public health and the environment.




Housing development to meet demand, that is affordable, caters for a diverse (and ageing) population, and provides choices like rural residential development. The construction of housing should be sustainable, incorporating renewable materials and energy sources.



Development of **Māori land**, including for pāpakainga, is enabled and supported.



Infrastructure and housing must be **resilient** to protect the community and ensure safety during natural disasters.



Community lifestyle needs to be preserved. The small town and rural character of our places support this. Each community is unique and if changes occur, careful consideration and involvement with the community must occur.



Create **new employment opportunities** by attracting new businesses and supporting existing ones to expand. This means ensuring plenty of land for businesses, while carefully balancing environmental quality with economic growth.

Maori translation

Decision-making principles guided the recommended Priority Growth Areas

Based on the goals and public engagement feedback, a set of decision-making principles was adopted by the Project Governance Group to determine where development could be located and to guide how it should happen.

Principles that direct where we want development to happen

- 1. First, consider development locations where there are existing settlements and infrastructure before contemplating new growth areas and infrastructure.
- 2. Avoid locations where man-made and natural hazard risk (including residual risk) and effects of a changing climate cannot be practicably and equitably managed.
- 3. Urban development locations should have good connections or access to employment, services and schools, and have affordable community infrastructure to support community wellbeing.

Principles that are ‘givens’ that apply in all locations

- 4. Avoid and mitigate impacts on natural areas to protect and conserve.
- 5. Protect culturally significant areas from development.
- 6. Minimise urban development on Highly Productive Land and ensure no rural residential development on Highly Productive Land (excluding papakāinga).

Principles about what we want to achieve

- 7. Enable and support iwi and hapū to use their land for their aspirations and unlock opportunities and ensure engagement reflects this intention.
- 8. Cost of infrastructure is feasible and affordable.
- 9. Enable a certainty of zoned and serviced land supply for residential and business purposes for a thirty-year period.
- 10. Locations that enable residential development and economic development opportunities are preferred, including iwi and hapū development.
- 11. Consider the changing needs of housing types due to shifts in demographics.
- 12. A settlement pattern that supports achievement of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- 13. Community wellbeing outcomes can be supported by great placemaking.

What do we want to achieve?

Goals inform us of what to work towards over the next 30+ years. Developed by the Project Governance Group, these are aligned with the Long Term Plans’ vision and community outcomes across the sub-region. They reflect previous engagement and consultation and take into account iwi values and aspirations.

Goals

Whai hauora me te whakarauora
Healthy and healing

Ngā ohaoha toitū, kanorau hoki, e tuku ana i ngā mahi me ngā kaupapa mō te iwi whānui
Sustainable, diversified economy providing jobs and purpose for our people

Ngā tāngata, ngā haporī me ngā tauwāhi e hono ana, e tōnuī ana, e manawaroa ana hei whakaata i te hītori me ngā tūmanako o tātou katoa
Connected, thriving, resilient people, communities & places that reflect our history and aspirations

Who has been involved?

Our Places was developed in partnership with local, regional and central government along with iwi partners from across the sub-region. In late 2024 engagement with the community took place. The Eastern Bay community is closely connected and we need a plan to implement this together as a sub-region.

Iwi*

Ngāi Tai Iwi Authority
Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa
Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Manawa
Te Mana o Ngāti Rangitīhi
Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whare Iwi Trust
Te Rūnanga o Te Whānau (a Apanui)
Te Tāwharau o Te Whakatōhea
Tūwharetoa ki Kawerau

Councils

Whakatāne District Council
Kawerau District Council
Ōpōtiki District Council
Bay of Plenty Regional Council

Central Government Agencies

NZ Transport Agency - Waka Kotahi
Kāinga Ora
Ministry of Housing and Urban Development
Ministry of Education
Health New Zealand - Te Whatu Ora

Public stakeholders

Friends of Our Places
People living in the Eastern Bay

** Iwi authorities involved in the project at the time of this report; not all have chosen to actively participate in the project, but are being kept informed*

How does change happen?

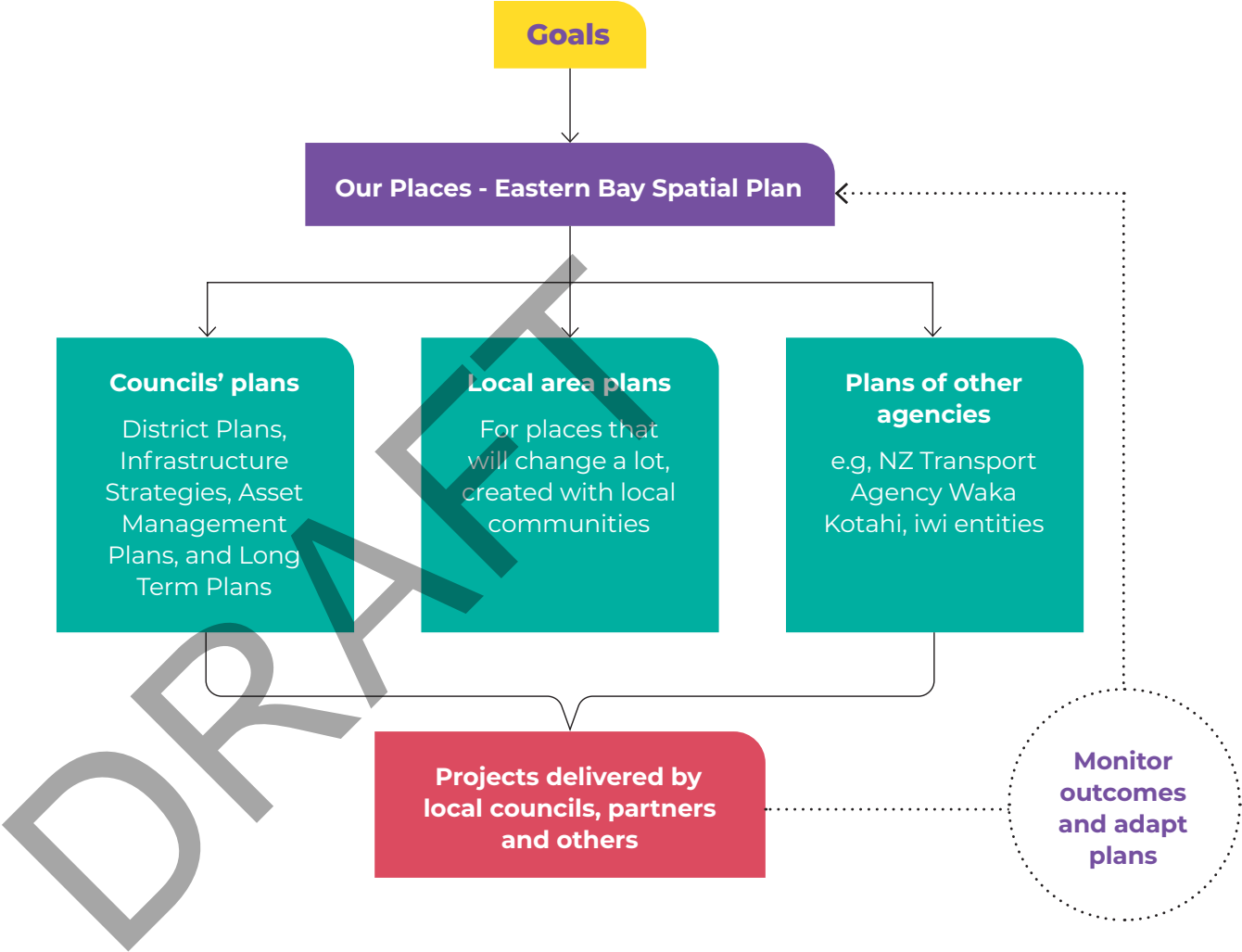
Our Places supports strong partnerships to guide decisions and priorities about shaping growth and development.

It also helps align regulation and investment, ensuring that we can maximise the benefits of integrated opportunities that contribute to achieving our goals.

The plan guides District Plans or zoning changes, funding decisions, and other policies. Each council will work with its local community to plan and undertake individual actions leading to the goals.



Whakatāne Bridge at night





Goal 1

Whai hauora me te whakarauora

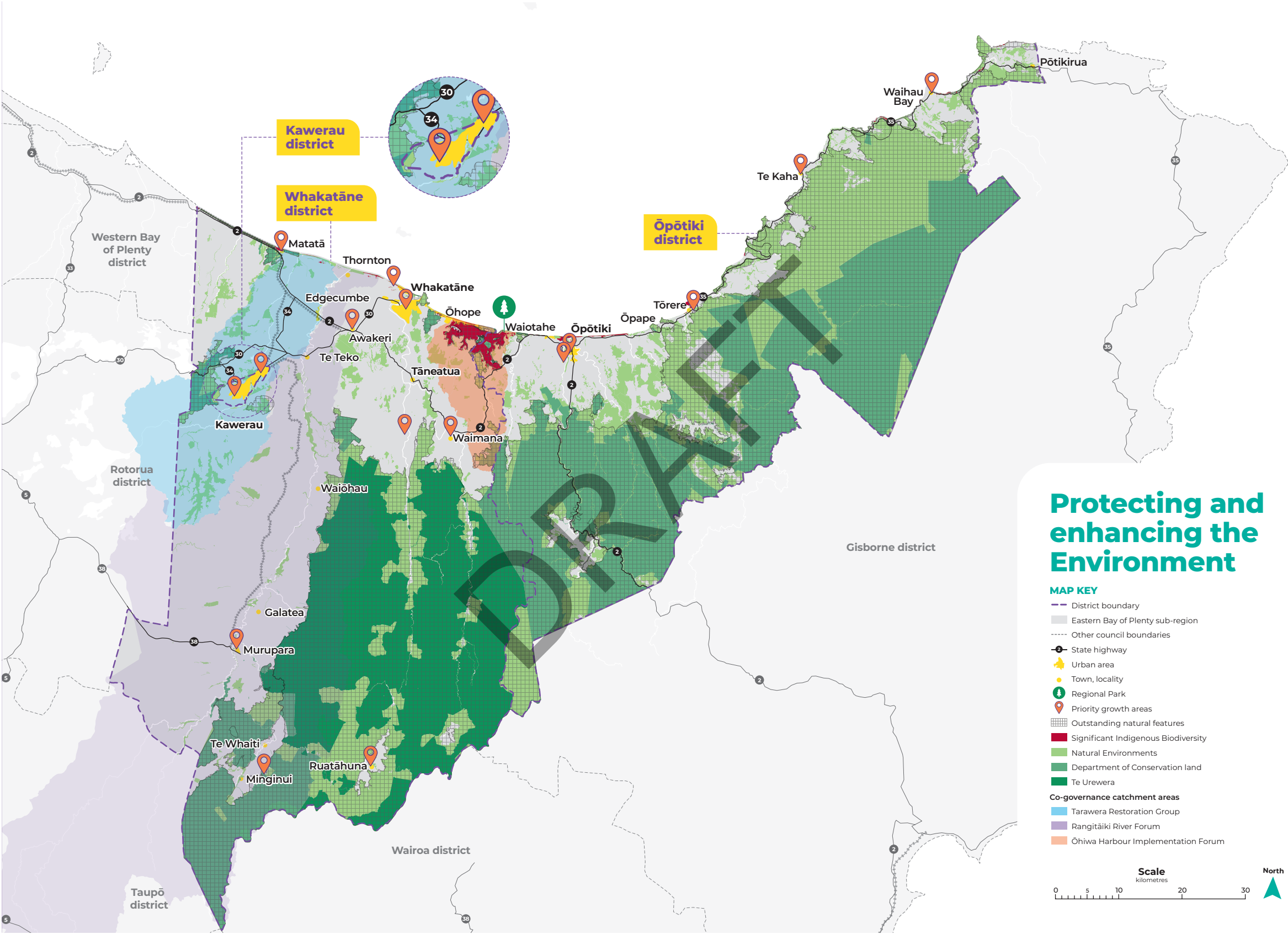
Healthy and healing

The Eastern Bay has outstanding natural and cultural taonga, attracting people to the area over the centuries.

The intrinsic values of nature and biodiversity are linked to our health and well-being.

The effects of activities, including agriculture, horticulture, urbanisation, and climate change hazards, place pressure on our land, freshwater, and marine ecosystems.

The Eastern Bay’s natural and cultural taonga are under pressure, and ongoing growth will continue this trend. We need to prioritise the natural and cultural environment more highly within decision-making processes, especially as we plan new areas for development.



Goal 2

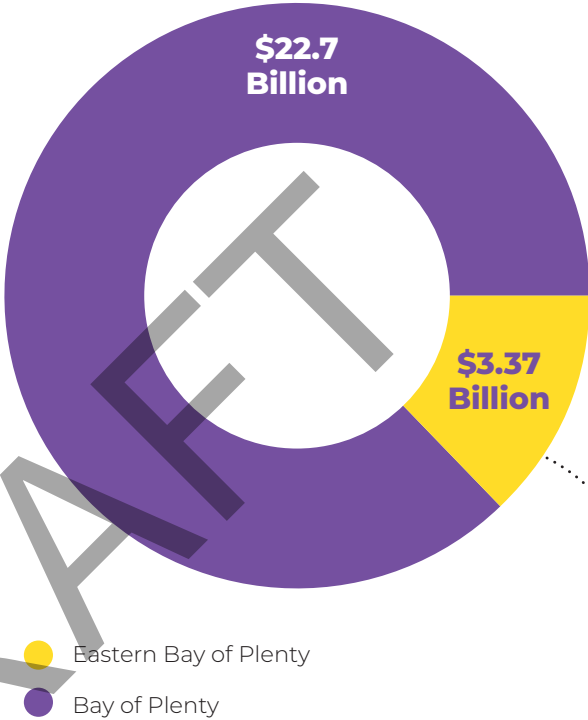
Ngā ohaoha toitū,
kanorau hoki, e tuku
ana i ngā mahi me ngā
kaupapa mō te iwi whānui
Sustainable, diversified
economy providing jobs
and purpose for our
people

The Eastern Bay faces economic challenges, including lower GDP growth, median incomes, and higher unemployment compared to the national average. The sub-region already contributes to GDP, including from primary industry and aquaculture. However, it has significant potential for growth.

Iwi are major investment partners across aquaculture, horticulture, agriculture, tourism, forestry, and water resources.

The Eastern Bay has opportunities to strengthen its economic performance. By leveraging investments and infrastructure projects, we can boost the local economy and create new job opportunities.

Contribution of Eastern Bay of Plenty to Bay of Plenty's GDP

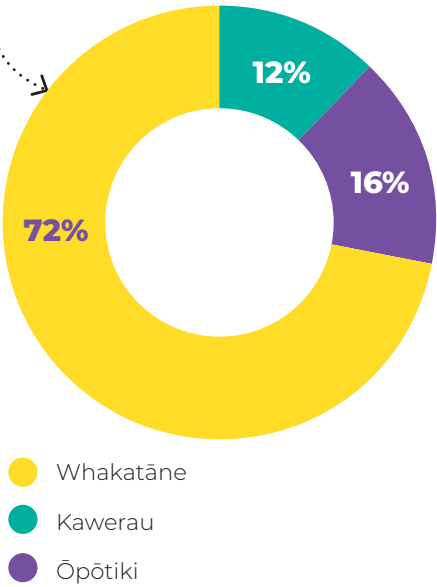


● Eastern Bay of Plenty
● Bay of Plenty

The 2024 GDP of the Eastern Bay of Plenty totaled \$3.371 billion, which is 14.8% of the \$22.7 billion for the Bay of Plenty and 0.8% of the \$418.8 billion for New Zealand.

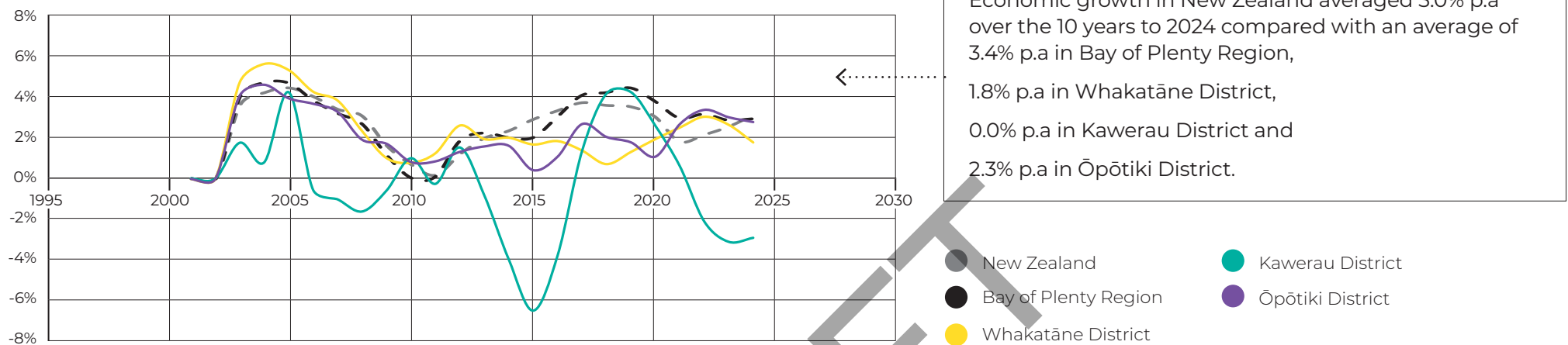
Source: Infometrics Regional Economic Profile

% Contribution of Territorial Authorities to Eastern Bay of Plenty GDP



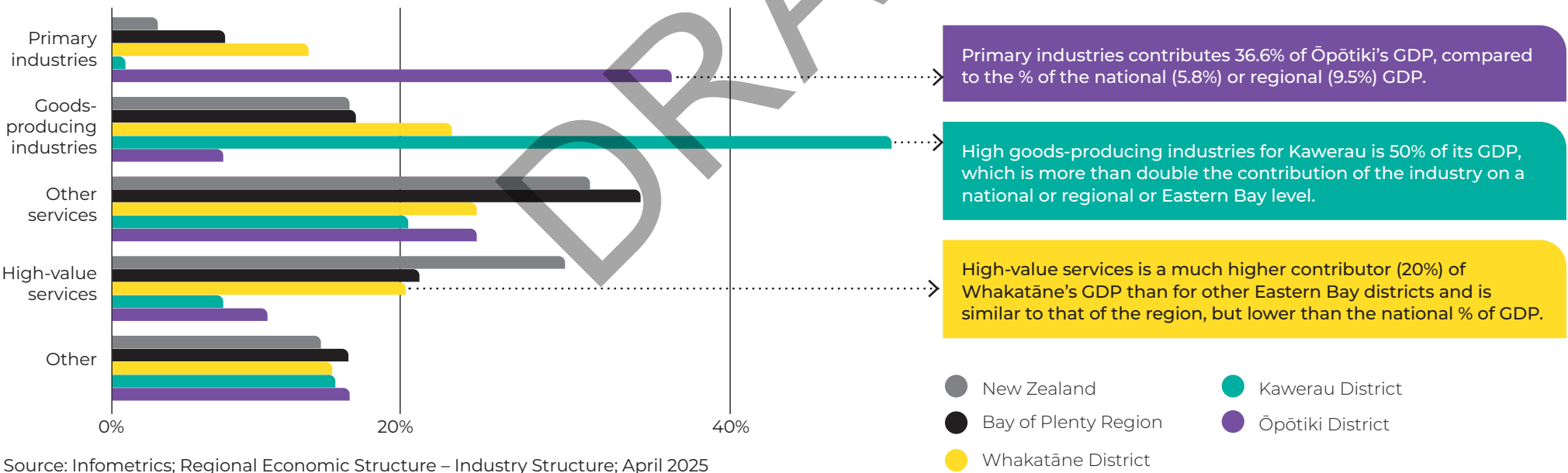
● Whakatāne
● Kawerau
● Ōpōtiki

Annual GDP % growth, 3-year trailing average



Source: Infometrics; Regional Economy – Economic Growth; April 2025

Economic structure by broad sector (% of total, year to March 2024)



Source: Infometrics; Regional Economic Structure – Industry Structure; April 2025



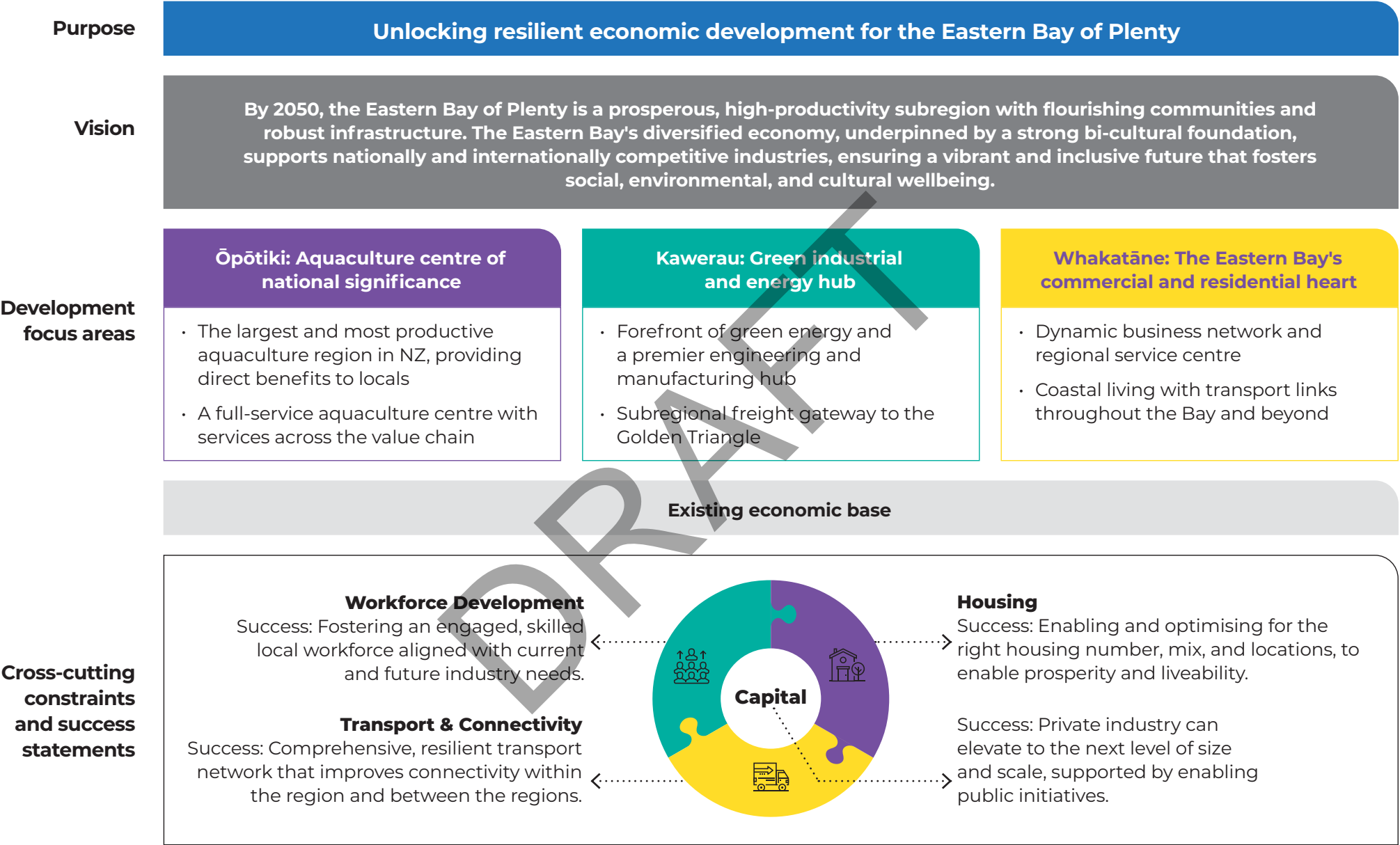
Goal 2

Our Places – Eastern Bay Spatial Plan will be implemented alongside the Economic Development Strategy

Our Places supports the vision of the Economic Development Strategy by focusing on three key areas to create jobs and accelerate economic growth. It does this by leveraging existing industry specialisations and the unique strengths of each district.

- Aquaculture in Ōpōtiki
- Green Industry in Kawerau
- Commercial and residential development in Whakatāne

Housing supply, infrastructure, and transport connections are three items Our Places addresses to support the Economic Development Strategy.



Source: Sub-Regional Economic Development Strategy

Goal 3

Ngā tāngata, ngā hāpori me ngā tauwāhi e hono ana, e tōnui ana, e manawaroa ana hei whakaata i te hītori me ngā tūmanako o tātou katoa

Connected, thriving, resilient people, communities and places that reflect our history and aspirations

The Eastern Bay’s population could increase from 56,500 in 2022 to 68,000 by 2055. This potential growth necessitates more housing and business spaces, presenting an opportunity to plan for diverse housing types and business developments.

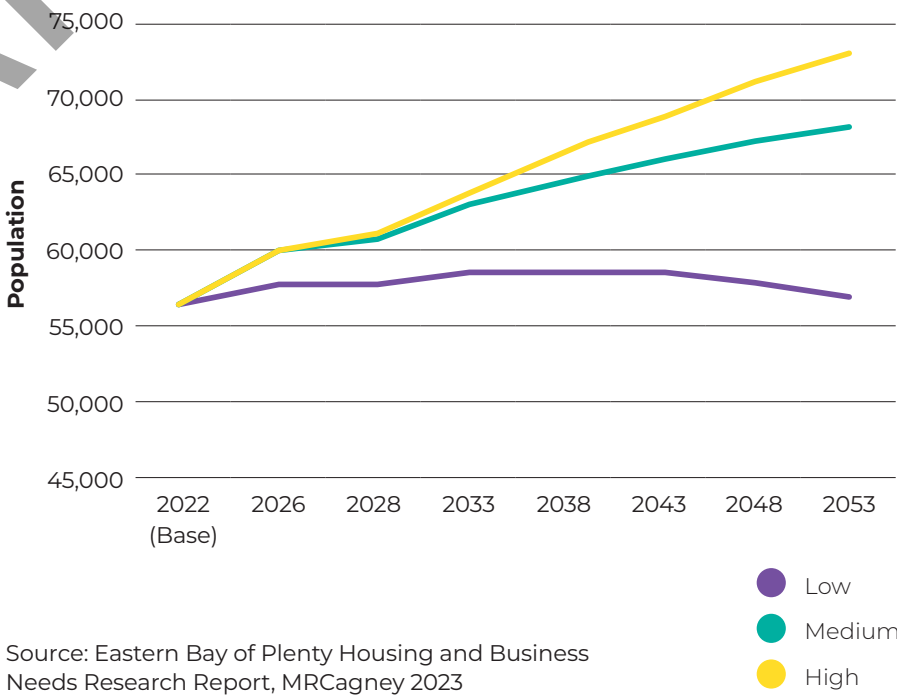
Most commercial land can be accommodated in existing townships (with some new land area needed close to Whakatāne township). The Putauaki Trust Industrial Area in Kawerau is the focus for large- scale industrial activities, with additional land needed around Ōpōtiki District and eastwards up the coast.

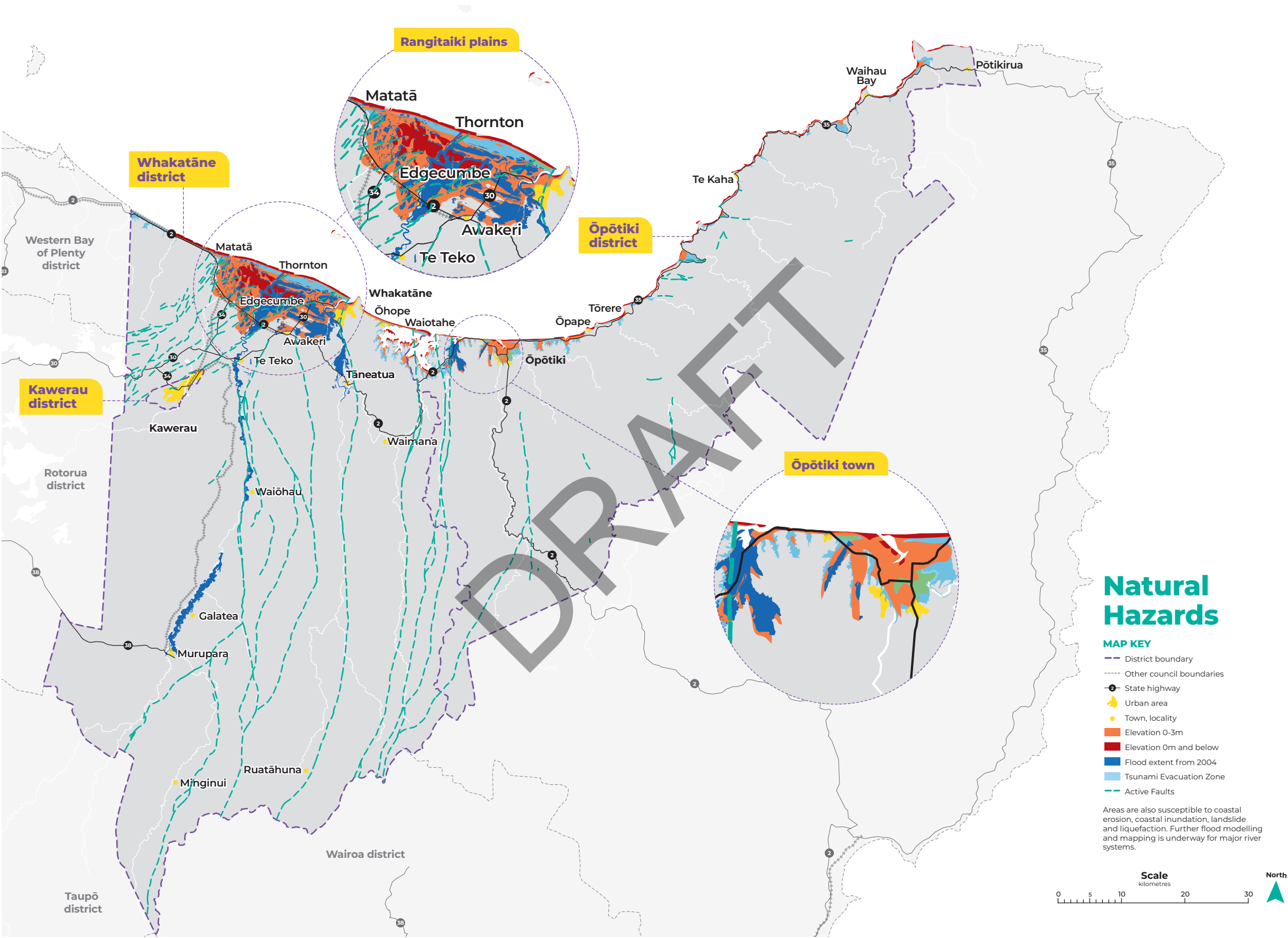
Growth in the Eastern Bay is significantly constrained by natural hazards and a changing climate. Future growth will need to occur in safe locations and manage natural hazard risk on people, property and infrastructure, including flood schemes.

We also need to assess natural hazard risk to existing communities and consider options to manage that risk in the future.

Table 1: Projected demand for housing and business land 2023-2055.

Activity type	Approximate demand 2023-2055
Residential	5,500 dwelling units
Commercial and business services	26 ha or more
Industrial and manufacturing	60 ha or more







Goal 3

Connected to the big picture. The Eastern Bay’s strong connections to the broader region enable regional-scale opportunities.

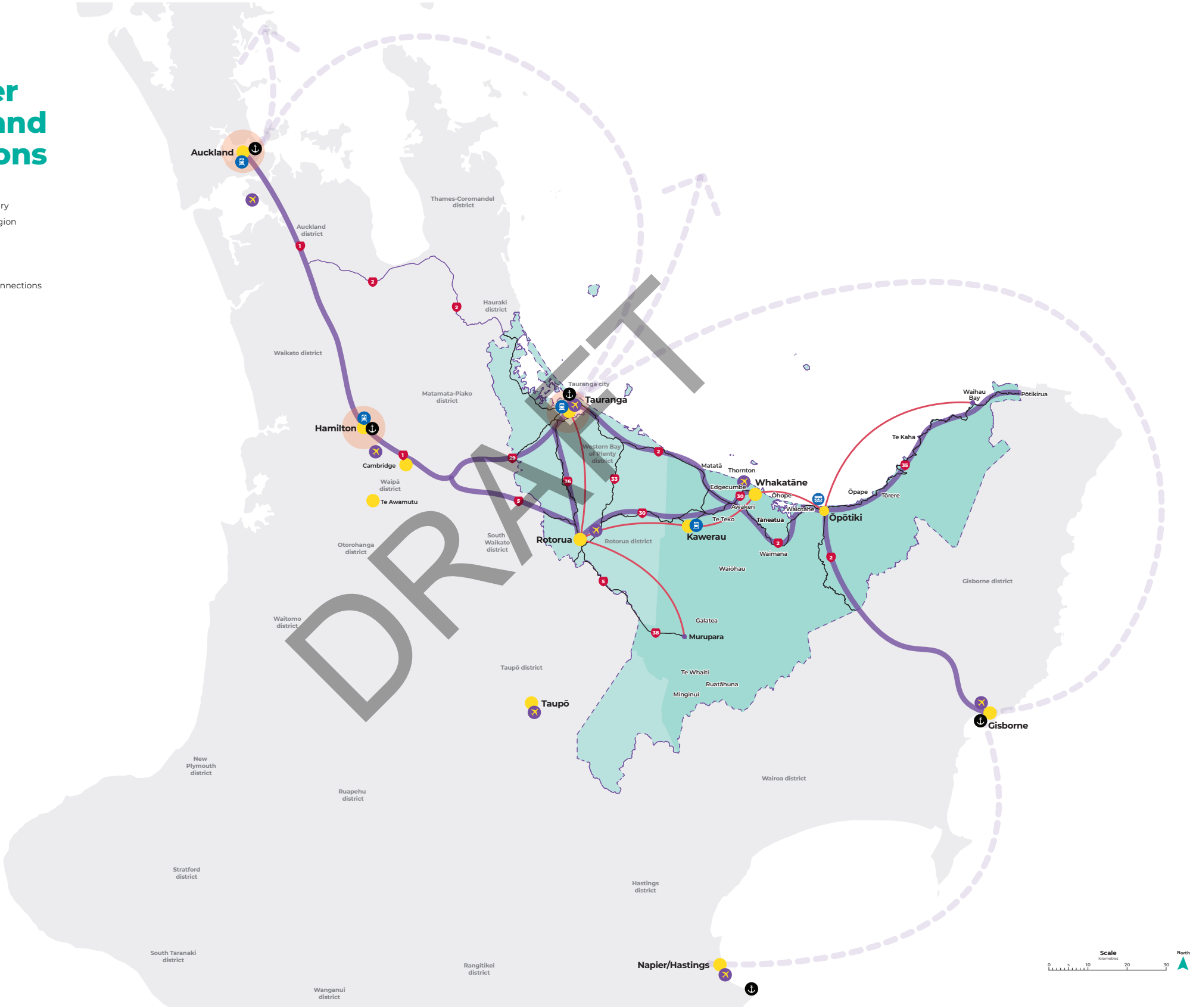
There are growing employment hubs nearby to the Eastern Bay. Places like the Rangiuru Business Park, located near Te Puke, are developing quickly within commuting distance for Eastern Bay residents. This is expected to support ongoing demand for residential uses in the western part of the Eastern Bay.

Goods and freight from all parts of the Eastern Bay must reliably reach the Ports of Tauranga and Gisborne to access export markets and support a strong local economy. Reliable transport connections are equally important for people to access healthcare and other essential services in larger urban centres.

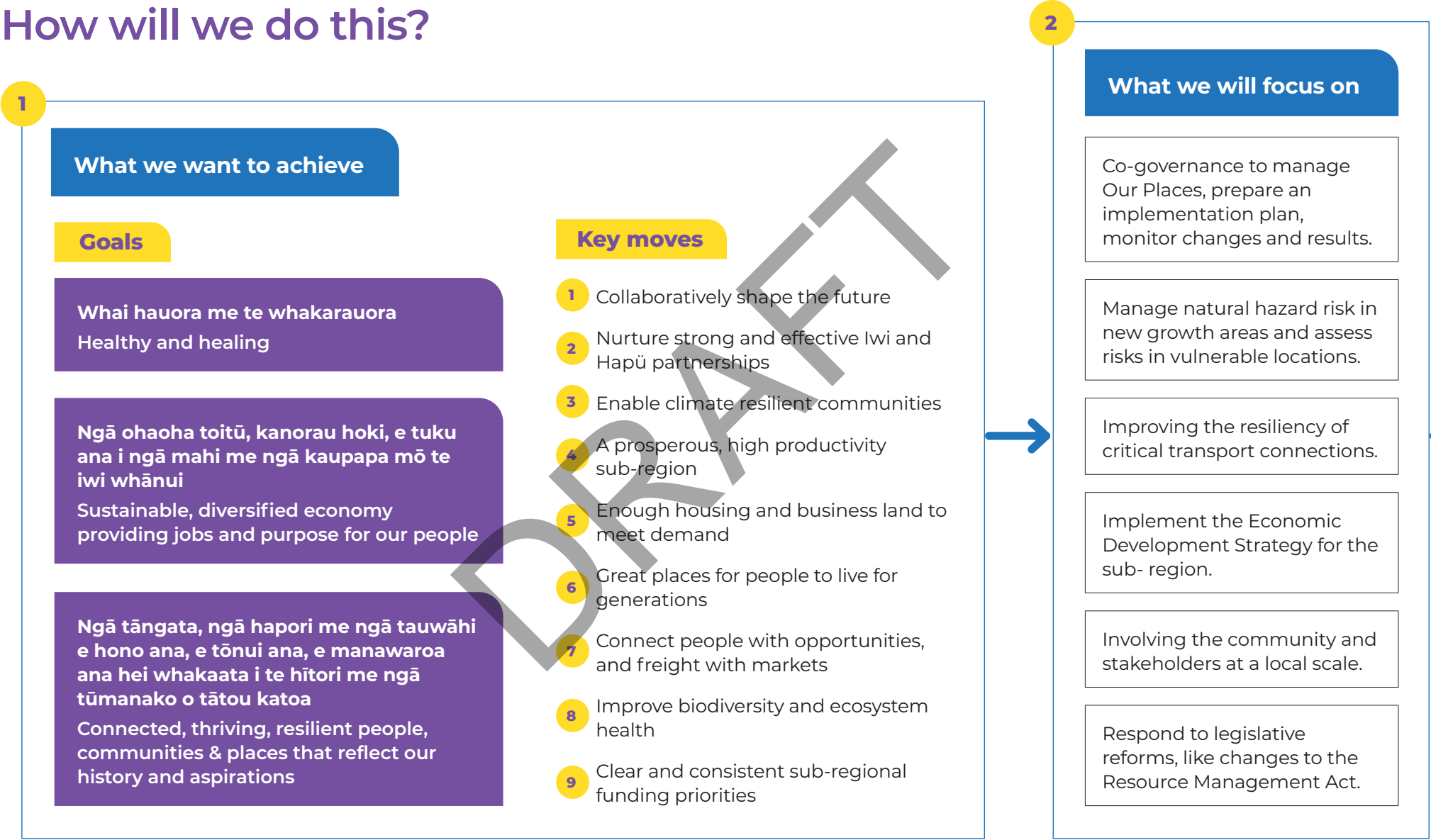
Regional
and Upper
North Island
connections

MAP KEY

- Bay of Plenty district boundary
- Eastern Bay of Plenty sub-region
- Bay of Plenty
- Coastal shipping
- Key freight corridor
- Employment and Tertiary Connections
- State highway
- Golden Triangle
- Town, locality
- Airport
- Port
- Freight hub
- Opötiki wharf



Maori translation
How will we do this?



3

What we each need to do next	
Toi Moana Bay of Plenty Regional Council	Continue to support local authorities to achieve growth objectives and proactively work together to manage stormwater, natural hazard risk, protect sensitive receiving environments and protect the levels of service of flood schemes.
Kawerau District Council	The success of the Putauaki Trust Industrial Area will continue with ongoing expansion as the pre-eminent industrial growth area for the sub-region. District Plan changes will also be completed to enable more infill and papakāinga housing opportunities
Ōpōtiki District Council	Planning for and investment in the Hukutaia Development Area will continue. An enabling planning framework will support iwi economic and housing aspirations throughout the Eastern Corridor. Further assessment of natural hazards risks to the existing township will inform future risk management planning and decision-making. Completion of an industrial needs assessment will lead to a District Plan change.
Whakatāne District Council	Whakatāne District's Growth Strategy will work at a local place-based scale and lead to structure plans, District Plan changes and infrastructure investment strategies to unlock the Priority Growth Areas of the Central Corridor. The focus will be on Awakeri, Matatā, and whenua Māori west of Coastlands, with ongoing dialogue involving iwi, hapū and the community.
NZTA Waka Kotahi	The State Highway network is the main arterial route of the Eastern Bay, providing an important connection for people and freight. NZTA has a role to play in order to improve the resiliency of the State Highway (especially SH35) and support network investments that enable Priority Growth Areas like access changes around Awakeri.

Maori translation

How do we know when we are doing well?

Population and employment growth rates will vary from year to year. Councils need to plan for this variability and adjust the pace of implementation accordingly.

The pace of implementation will be directed by available resources and funding balanced with demand from changing populations and economic growth. The strategy identifies a short-term need to invest in Awakeri and Hukutaia as the two priority development locations, which are considered the easiest to progress quickly and affordably.

Performance indicators will help us understand how well we are progressing.

This initial list focuses on getting us started.

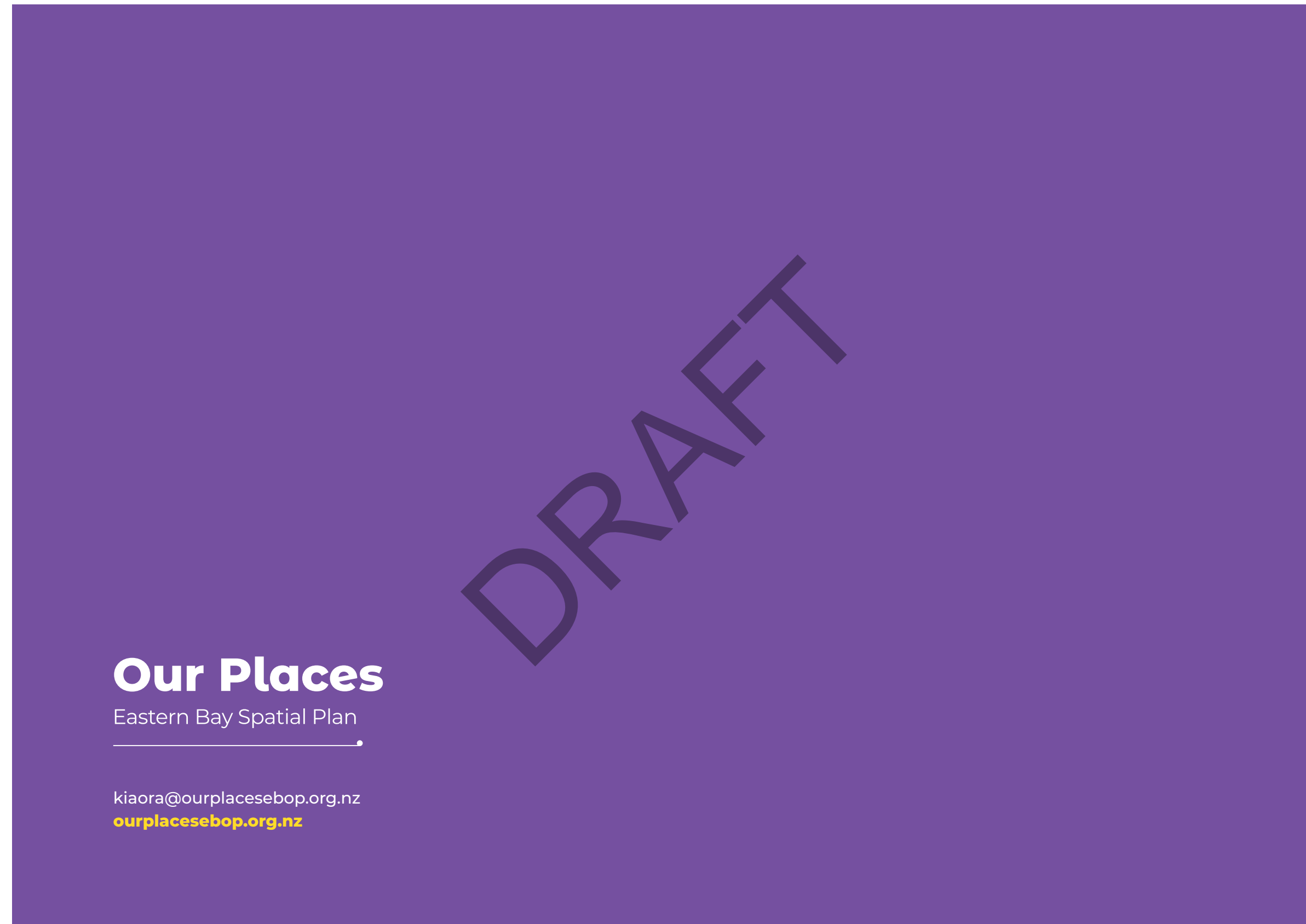
Performance indicators (initial list)	
✓	A Project Governance Group is confirmed with an approved terms of reference by July 2026. Councils provide operational funding in Annual Plans and Long Term Plans to support the Governance Group's operations and ensure that iwi partners can fully participate.
✓	A plan change and structure plan is undertaken for Awakeri and Hukutaia.
✓	Infrastructure requirements for Priority Growth Areas are identified in relevant Long Term Plans and Regional Land Transport Plans.
✓	Development of the whenua Māori west of Coastlands, or extension of Matatā beyond existing zoned capacity, does not proceed until the Awakeri development is established with a funded infrastructure programme.
✓	Population change, residential units consented, and commercial floorspace consented is monitored and reported at least annually to the Project Governance Group.
✓	The Project Governance Group decides whether a review is needed within 12 months after a national election.
✓	In the short term natural hazard risk assessments are completed for Whakatāne township and Ōpōtiki township to inform future risk management decisions and planning.
✓	Integrated stormwater management planning is completed for Awakeri, Matatā and Hukutaia.

7.1.3 Appendix C - Our Places - Short Story(Cont.)

Putauaki Trust Industrial Zone, Kawerau



7.1.3 Appendix C - Our Places - Short Story(Cont.)



8 Resolution to Exclude the Public**8 Resolution to Exclude the Public****RECOMMENDATION**

THAT the Environment, Energy and Resilience Committee agree to **exclude** the public from the following part(s) of the proceedings of this meeting, namely:

1. Public Excluded Minutes of the EER Committee meeting held on 13 February 2025

Item No.	General subject of the matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under section 48 for excluding the public
1.	Public Excluded Minutes of the EER Committee meeting held on 13 February 2025	s7(2)(h) To enable the council to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities	s48(1)(a) The public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under section 6 or section 7

This resolution is made in accordance with section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by section 6 or section 7 of that Act (or sections 6, 7 or 9 of the Official Information Act 1982, as the case may be).

1 Public Excluded Business

1 Public Excluded Business

1.1 Public Excluded Minutes EER Committee meeting 13 February 2025