



Ordinary Council

Hui a te Kaunihera

Thursday, 4 December 2025
Tāite, Hakihea 2025

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



Chief Executive: Steven Perdia | Publication Date: 28 November 2025

whakatane.govt.nz



Live Streaming the Meeting - *Ka whakapāho mataora te hui***Live Streaming the Meeting - *Ka whakapāho mataora te hui*****PLEASE NOTE**

The **public section** of this meeting will be Live Streamed via YouTube in real time.
The live stream link will be available via Council's website.

All care will be taken to maintain your privacy however, as a visitor in the public gallery, your presence may be recorded. By remaining in the public gallery, it is understood your consent is given if your image is inadvertently broadcast.

The opinions or statements expressed during a meeting by individuals are their own, and they do not necessarily reflect the views of the Whakatāne District Council. Council thus disclaims any liability with regard to said opinions or statements.

A Membership - *Mematanga*

A Membership - *Mematanga*

Mayor Nandor Tánczos

Deputy Mayor Julie Jukes

Councillor Toni Boynton

Councillor Gavin Dennis

Councillor Carolyn Hamill

Councillor Andrew Iles

Councillor Lesley Immink

Councillor Wilson James

Councillor Jesse Morgan-Ranui

Councillor Tu O'Brien

Councillor Malcolm Whitaker

B Powers of the Council - *Te mana o te Kaunihera***B Powers of the Council - *Te mana o te Kaunihera***

The Council meet to make decisions on all matters that cannot be delegated, that it has not delegated or that it has had referred to it by staff or a committee. Extraordinary Council meetings may be called when required.

The powers that cannot be delegated by the Council are:

- a. the power to make a rate
- b. the power to make a bylaw
- c. the power to borrow money, or purchase or dispose of assets, other than in accordance with the long-term plan
- d. the power to adopt a Long-term plan, Annual plan or Annual report
- e. the power to appoint a Chief executive
- f. the power to adopt policies required to be adopted and consulted on under the Local Government Act 2002 in association with the long-term plan or developed for the purpose of the Local Governance Statement
- g. the power to adopt a remuneration and employment policy

The powers that can be delegated but which the Council retains:

- a. Approve the Council's recommendation to the Remuneration Authority for the remuneration of additional positions of responsibility for elected members and elected members expenses rules
- b. Approve the Local Governance Statement (called "A Guide to the Whakatāne District Council") produced following the triennial election of members
- c. Resolve those decisions required to be made by a local authority under the Local Electoral Act 2001 including the appointment of electoral officer.
- d. Determine whether or how to fill any extraordinary Council vacancies within 12 months of an election
- e. Review and make decisions on Council membership and the basis for elections through representation reviews
- f. Set the direction for the Long-Term Plan
- g. Hearing of submissions on the Long-Term Plan and, if required, the Annual Plan
- h. Appoint and discharge trustees, directors or office holders to Council's Council-Controlled organisations and to other external bodies
- i. Agree the final Statement of Intent for Council's Council-Controlled organisations
- j. Adopt the Half Yearly and Full Year Annual Report of the Whakatāne Airport
- k. Approve the purchase, sale and disposal of Council property
- l. Approve a proposed plan or a change to a District Plan under Clause 17 of the First Schedule of Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA); A1827586 April 2021 Page 14 of 37.
- m. Approve changes to the status or revoke the status of a reserve as defined in the Reserves Act 1977
- n. Authority to name or rename a reserve in accordance with the Reserves Management Plan;

B Powers of the Council - *Te mana o te Kaunihera* (Cont.)

- o. Authorise any unbudgeted expenditure that exceeds the delegation levels provided to officers, committees or other subordinate decision-making bodies of Council
- p. Approve recommendations from relevant Committees for new fees and charges for services provided, outside of the Annual Plan or Long Term Plan process.

Procedural matters exercised by Council:

- a. Receive minutes and recommendations, and make decisions on any recommendations from Council Committees.
- b. Consider any matters referred to it from any of the Committees, the Mayor, or Chief Executive.

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1 Prayer - *Karakia*

1 Prayer - *Karakia*

2 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.

Welcome to members of the public who have joined online and to those within the public gallery.

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

3 Apologies - *Te hunga kāore i tae*

No apologies were recorded at the time of compiling the agenda.

4 Acknowledgements / Tributes - *Ngā mihi mihi*

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

5 Conflicts of Interest - *Ngākau kōnatunatu***5 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.

6 Public Participation - *Wānanga Tūmatanui***6 Public Participation - *Wānanga Tūmatanui*****6.1 Public Forum - *Wānanga Tūmatanui***

The Council has set aside time 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.

1. Mr Askey (*Putiki Residents Group*) - 10 minutes

Residents from Putiki Road will speak to Council about the proposed Genesis Energy transmission line route along Putiki Road. Genesis have selected the West side of the road which in the residents view is the option that has maximum adverse impact upon them. The residents intend to outline the reasons for their concern and demonstrate that an entirely practical option exists on the east side of the road which has considerably less impact.

2. Mr Robson - 10 minutes

Local volunteers will present a proposal to repair and reopen the West End track. They aim to explain their approach to carrying out the work and why they believe this method will benefit the community, reduce costs and have the track opened earlier. They wish to address the previously raised issues of health and safety as it applies to volunteer groups working with central and local government agencies, as this has implications for both the track repair and other future projects.

3. Mr Barry Cutfield and Ms Christine Bowering (*Whakatane Yacht Club*) - 10 minutes

Whakatane Harbour Navigation Channel Dredging

6.2 Deputations - *Ngā Whakapuaki Whaitake*

A deputation enables a person, group or organisation to make a presentation to Community Board 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.

1. E.P.I.C. - Lani Thompson & Warren Short - 30 minutes

Six monthly reporting presentation

6.2 Deputations - *Ngā Whakapuaki Whaitake*



ACTIVATION PLAN 2024–2025

This Activation Plan summarises the activities and events planned and executed by EPIC Whakatāne Town Centre Incorporated for the financial year 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025. It highlights the events and promotions that were actually delivered during this period.



RELATIONSHIPS & COMMUNICATIONS
Ongoing engagement with key stakeholders, including WDC, Chamber of Commerce, and local businesses, continued throughout the year. Regular newsletters, networking events, and one-on-one meetings were maintained. A CRM review was initiated to improve database usability and information accuracy.



- 
Late Night Christmas Shopping: December 2024
 Delivered – EPIC coordinated with retailers for extended hours, Santa visits, and festive atmosphere creation across the town centre.
- 
Valentine's Giveaway: February 2025
 Delivered – Partnered with five local businesses for a social media campaign with over 600 entries and strong online engagement.
- 
EPIC AGM: April 2025
 Delivered – Annual General Meeting providing networking and review of year performance, reinforcing member engagement.
- 
Mother's Day Giveaway: May 2025
 Delivered – Collaborated with Jakob Carter to deliver a prize promotion celebrating local shoppers and promoting CBD spending.

Not Executed In This Financial Year

Winter Carnival

Not executed during this financial year.
Re-visit 2025/26 financial year.

Fashion Show / Spring Carnival

Not Delivered Not executed this year.
Re-scheduled for 2025/26

Easter Promotion


Not executed this year. EPIC members ran their own promotions.

Father's Day Promotion

Not Delivered Not executed this year. Members ran their own promotions.



- 
Wing It This Winter: July–August 2024
 Delivered – In partnership with Air Chathams, EPIC ran the 'Wing It This Winter' campaign, encouraging shopping in Whakatāne with monthly and grand prize draws including Air Chathams flights and Prezzy Cards.
- 
Trust Horizon Light Up Whakatāne: August 2024
 Delivered – EPIC partnered in the Light Up Whakatāne festival, promoting shopfront lighting and family-friendly night-time visitation. Meadow Club won the First Credit Union \$500 Power Shout.
- 
Relish Whakatāne: August 2024
 Delivered – Celebrated Whakatāne's hospitality scene through food events and local promotions. Despite limited participation, it drew positive engagement from attendees.
- 
NZSFC AGM & Fashion Showcase: September 2024
 Delivered – Partner activities for the NZSFA AGM delegates partners featuring a fashion show, local retailers, networking opportunities, and a Mystery Bus Tour. The event had 40 attendees and strong local participation.
- 
\$5000 Giveaway with Whakatāne Mill Ltd: October–December 2024
 Delivered – Major retail promotion in partnership with Whakatāne Mill Ltd, supported by SunFM, and Travel Your Way. Shoppers entered to win \$5000 in travel prizes, generating strong visibility and thousands of entries.
- 
Allo Allo Le Dinner Show: December 2024
 Delivered – A sold-out themed dinner theatre event held at the Whakatāne Sports Fishing Club. Over 100 guests attended, with excellent feedback. This was popular with local businesses as their end-of-year celebrations for their teams.



BUSINESS ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS

EPIC continued working with WDC on beautification, signage, and promotion projects. Monthly awards for customer service were planned but not executed this year.

TOWN BEAUTIFICATION

Maintained communication with WDC and retailers regarding town centre standards. Shopfront lighting under the Trust Horizon Light Up Whakatāne campaign enhanced visibility and aesthetics.

**ESTABLISH BRAND FOR EPIC**

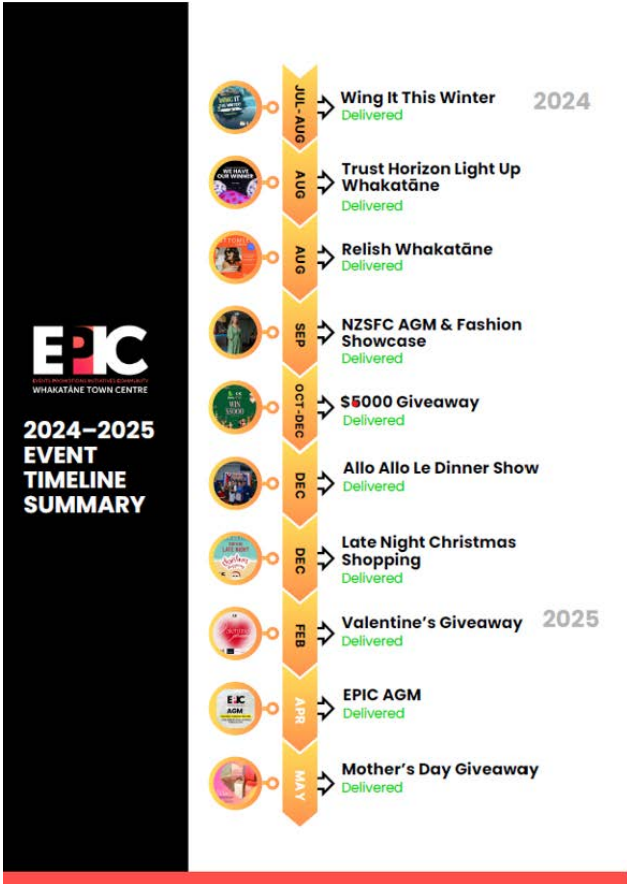
EPIC continued to strengthen its identity through digital campaigns such as 'Word of the Week', member business profiles, and consistent social media presence. Ongoing collaborations with local media improved reach and recognition.

DATABASE CREATION & MANAGEMENT

The CRM system remains functional but was identified for replacement due to usability issues. Business and building owner information have been updated throughout the year.



6.2 Deputations - *Ngā Whakapuaki Whaitake*



6.2 Deputations - Ngā Whakapuaki Whaitake


**ACTIVATION PLAN 2024–2025
CONTINUED TO JANUARY 2026–JUNE 2026...**

This Activation Plan summarises the activities and events planned and executed by EPIC Whakatāne Town Centre Incorporated for 30 June 2025–December 2025 also shows a projection from January 2026–June 2026. This report highlights the events and promotions that were delivered and currently active for this period.



RELATIONSHIPS & COMMUNICATIONS

Ongoing engagement with key stakeholders has remained a priority throughout the year. This includes regular contact with the WDC, the Chamber of Commerce, and a wide range of local businesses. We have maintained consistent communication through newsletters, networking events, and one on one meetings to ensure strong relationships and clear information flow. In addition, a full review of our CRM system has begun to improve the usability of the database and ensure the accuracy of the information we hold. This work is now underway and will support better engagement and reporting going forward.



BUSINESS ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS

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ESTABLISH BRAND FOR EPIC

EPIC continued to strengthen its identity through digital campaigns such as 'Word of the Week', member profiles, and consistent social media presence. Ongoing collaborations with local media improved reach and recognition.

DATABASE CREATION & MANAGEMENT

The CRM system remains functional but was identified for replacement due to usability issues. Business and building owner information have been updated throughout the year.


**Trust Horizon Light Up Whakatāne: June/July 2025**

EPIC partnered in the Light Up Whakatāne festival, promoting shopfront lighting and family-friendly night-time visitation. Too Pretty won a \$500 advertising package with SunFM.

**Win with Epic Promo: June– December 2025 (still active)**

EPIC runs a monthly social media giveaway, featuring vouchers to spend at our Member stores. We buy these vouchers directly from four selected businesses each month to keep spending local and support our town centre. This promotion will continue monthly through 2025 and 2026, providing ongoing visibility and support for our Member stores.

**Mafia Casino Dinner Show: November 2025**

This partnership gave us access to Member-priced drinks and affordable food, helping keep event costs manageable. It allowed us to secure the show, provide a safe taxi service, and deliver an event that would otherwise have been outside our budget. Feedback was very positive, with many appreciating the opportunity to enjoy a high-quality event locally.

**Late Night Shopping Big Epic Giveaway: December 2025**

In the lead-up to Christmas, shoppers who purchase from EPIC Member businesses can enter the draw to win over \$3000 worth of EPIC vouchers by scanning the QR code and submitting their details. Each purchase equals one entry. Across four weeks, 10 finalists will be drawn and announced live on Radio IXX (40 in total). All finalists will be invited to the grand draw on 11 December during Late-Night Christmas Shopping, where one winner will take home the full prize package of \$3,000+ in EPIC vouchers and donated prizes.



Late Night Christmas Shopping
TTH OF December 2025 - \$3000 +++ Give Away with Epic
Special Members' Draw with IXX
This is an additional prize which one of our lucky members' will win at the late - night Christmas shopping..
Valued over \$2,000
January 2026 - June 2026
Monthly Social Media Giveaway
A one hundred dollar voucher is given away each month, supporting our Members by purchasing vouchers directly from their stores.
February 2026
EPIC AGM
February 2026 - Valentine's Giveaway
Run a promotion with our Members on Social Media and Window Display promote our members' promotions...

Trust Horizon Light Up Whakatāne
Date to be confirmed
We have secured a sponsorship package valued over \$2,000 for next years window display with IXX:
April 2026 - Flavours of Plenty
EPIC will be taking part in Flavours of Plenty, showcasing our town's cuisine and highlighting the talent within our local hospitality sector. We see this as a strong fit for our organisation and a valuable opportunity to support Members who wish to be involved.
By using Member venues and promoting locally created dishes and experiences, we will spotlight what our township has to offer. This partnership allows us to celebrate local flavour, drive visitation, and strengthen Whakatāne's profile as a destination for quality food and hospitality.

WingIT Promotion with Air Chatham's - May 2026
Details to be confirmed as changes where expected with Air Chatham's we hope to continue this promotion with the local airline for 2026

Relish is back! - June 2026
Showcasing our members' cuisine and events...

6.2 Deputations - *Ngā Whakapuaki Whaitake*



SOCIAL MEDIA
SUPPORTING OUR TOWN IN 2025 AND
CONTINUING IN 2026

Our social media presence has remained strong, with a clear focus on promoting both our Members and the wider activity happening in the town centre. Content has highlighted local events, in-store promotions, and initiatives that encourage people to visit and shop locally. Regular features such as Word of the Week, event spotlights, and business profiles have helped keep our platforms active, engaging, and relevant. This approach supports visibility for our Members, reinforces community connection, and ensures consistent promotion of what is happening across our township.



The graphic features a header image of a palm tree and a building. Below the title, there is a paragraph of text. At the bottom, there is a photograph of a woman in a white shirt smiling and interacting with a customer at a counter in a shop.

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

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

Confirmation of Council Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the Extraordinary Council meeting held on Wednesday, 19 November 2025 can be viewed via the Council website. Click on the link below in order to view the 'unconfirmed minutes'.

- [Unconfirmed Extraordinary Council Meeting - 19 November 2025](#)

8 Reports - Ngā Pūrongo**8 Reports - Ngā Pūrongo****8.1 Draft Council Meeting Calendar 2026**To: **Whakatāne District Council**Date: **Thursday, 4 December 2025**Author: **C Viljoen / Manager Governance Services**Authoriser: **E Hatch / General Manager People and Partnerships**Reference: **A3015791****1. Reason for the report - *Te Take mō tēnei rīpoata***

Under Clause 19 (6) of Schedule 7 of Local Government Act 2002 (LGA), Council “*can adopt a schedule of meetings that may cover any future period the Council considers appropriate.*”

This report provides a draft of the Council Meeting Calendar 2026 for approval in principle, pending further input from external parties.

2. Recommendations - *Tohutohu akiaki*

1. THAT the Council **receives** the Draft Council Meeting Calendar 2026 report; and
2. THAT the Council **approves** in principle the Draft Council Meeting Calendar 2026 (provided as Appendix 1 to this report):
3. THAT the Council **notes**:
 - i. Toi Moana Bay of Plenty Regional Council to confirm joint committees meeting dates.
 - ii. Pending confirmation from community boards to the dates and days of meetings for each of the boards.
 - iii. The final 2026 Council Meeting Calendar does not need to be formally reported back to Council for adoption.

3. Background - *He tirohanga whakamuri*

The proposed January to December 2026 Council Meeting Calendar (provided as Appendix 1 to this report) gives effect to Whakatāne District Council’s governance structure, recently adopted at its meeting on Wednesday, 19 November 2025.

This report seeks Council’s approval in principle of the 2026 Council Meeting Calendar, subject to the inclusion of dates from the community boards and pending input from external partners.

Community Boards meeting dates are tentative placeholders at this stage. Boards will confirm their first formal meeting dates after the combined community board meeting dated Monday, 1 December 2025.

8.1 Draft Council Meeting Calendar 2026(Cont.)

Placeholder entries provide a framework for planning and transparency, allowing members and the public to anticipate meeting cycles while final dates remain subject to confirmation of member availability and board decisions.

4. Discussion – Kōrerorero

Council and Standing Committee meetings are generally scheduled on Thursdays, while Briefings and Special Committee meetings are held on Wednesdays where possible. Pre-agenda meetings will typically occur about two weeks prior to each formal meeting. The aim is to keep Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays free from governance-related meetings whenever feasible.

Governance Services staff have collaborated with internal teams to ensure the draft calendar supports Council's work programme and statutory obligations. Key considerations include:

- Citizenship ceremony events.
- Te Maruata and LGNZ events (Annual Conference, Rural and Provincial, Zone 2 meetings) will be included when dates are released.
- Meetings to avoid holiday periods where possible, with a two-week recess planned for Councillors in July 2026 to align with school holidays.

The Whakatāne District Council Tōtara Room (Chambers) will be the primary venue for meetings and briefings administered by Whakatāne District Council. We will continue to find opportunities to hold meetings at various venues throughout the Whakatāne District.

Occasionally, meeting dates may be subject to change, additional meetings may need to be scheduled, or conflicts may arise. In such instances, staff will promptly notify members and carry out the necessary updates to the meeting schedule. This ensures that all members are kept informed, and the calendar remains accurate.

The table below provides a detailed overview of the Council's formal meetings as defined within its established governance committee structure.

Meeting Type	Frequency
Council Meeting	8 weekly
Strategy & Policy Committee	8 weekly
Projects & Services Committee	8 weekly
Finance, Performance & Risk Committee	Quarterly
Community Grants & Funding Committee	Quarterly
Chief Executive Performance & Support Committee	Quarterly
EBOP Joint Committee	Bi-Annual
Iwi Chairs Forum	Quarterly
Council Briefing	Monthly
Combined Community Board	Bi-Annual
Murupara Community Board	8 weekly
Rangitāiki Community Board	8 weekly
Tāneatua Community Board	8 weekly
Whakatāne-Ōhope Community Board	8 weekly

8.1 Draft Council Meeting Calendar 2026(Cont.)**5. Significance and Engagement Assessment - Aromatawai Pāhekoheko****5.1. Assessment of Significance**

The decisions and matters of this report are assessed to be of low significance, in accordance with the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.

5.2. Engagement and Community Views

Engagement on this matter is not being undertaken in accordance with Section 6.0 of the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.

6. Considerations - *Whai Whakaaro***6.1. Strategic Alignment**

The calendar is designed to support Council's strategic objectives and operational priorities, ensuring effective planning and governance for the year ahead.

6.2. Legal

Failure to provide public notice of meetings may constitute non-compliance with the Council's Standing Orders and could expose the Council to legal challenges regarding transparency and procedural fairness.

6.3. Financial/Budget Considerations

There is no budget considerations associated with the recommendations of this report.

6.4. Climate Change Assessment

There are no significant or notable impacts associated with the matters of this report.

6.5. Risks

There are no significant or notable risks associated with the matters of this report.

7. Next Steps – E whai ake nei

Provisional 2026 meeting calendar requests will be sent out to Elected Members, external appointees and relevant staff as soon as possible after this meeting.

The draft and, once all joint meeting dates have been confirmed, final 2026 Council Meeting Calendar will be made available on the council's website.

Attached to this Report:

- Appendix 1: Draft Council Meeting Calendar 2026

8.1.1 Appendix 1 - Draft Council Meeting Calendar 2026

8.1.1 Appendix 1 - Draft Council Meeting Calendar 2026

8.1.1 Appendix 1 - Draft Council Meeting Calendar 2026(Cont.)

	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	
SAT								1					SAT
SUN		1	1					2			1		SUN
MON		2	2			1	1	3			2		MON
TUE		3	3			2		4	1		3	1	TUE
WED		4	4		1	3	1	5	2		4	2	WED
THU	1	5	5	2	2	4	2	6	3	1	5	3	THU
FRI	2	6	6	3	3	5	3	7	4	2	6	4	FRI
SAT	3	7	7	4	4	6	4	8	5	3	7	5	SAT
SUN	4	8	8	5	5	7	5	9	6	4	8	6	SUN
MON	5	9	9	6	6	8	6	10	7	5	9	7	MON
TUE	6	10	10	7	7	9	7	11	8	6	10	8	TUE
WED	7	11	11	8	8	10	8	12	9	7	11	9	WED
THU	8	12	12	9	9	11	9	13	10	8	12	10	THU
FRI	9	13	13	10	10	12	10	14	11	9	13	11	FRI
SAT	10	14	14	11	11	13	11	15	12	10	14	12	SAT
SUN	11	15	15	12	12	14	12	16	13	11	15	13	SUN
MON	12	16	16	13	13	15	13	17	14	12	16	14	MON
TUE	13	17	17	14	14	16	14	18	15	13	17	15	TUE
WED	14	18	18	15	15	17	15	19	16	14	18	16	WED
THU	15	19	19	16	16	18	16	20	17	15	19	17	THU
FRI	16	20	20	17	17	19	17	21	18	16	20	18	FRI
SAT	17	21	21	18	18	20	18	22	19	17	21	19	SAT
SUN	18	22	22	19	19	21	19	23	20	18	22	20	SUN
MON	19	23	23	20	20	22	20	24	21	19	23	21	MON
TUE	20	24	24	21	21	23	21	25	22	20	24	22	TUE
WED	21	25	25	22	22	24	22	26	23	21	25	23	WED
THU	22	26	26	23	23	25	23	27	24	22	26	24	THU
FRI	23	27	27	24	24	26	24	28	25	23	27	25	FRI
SAT	24	28	28	25	25	27	25	29	26	24	28	26	SAT
SUN	25			26	26	28	26	30	27	25	29	27	SUN
MON	26			27	27	29	27		28	26	30	28	MON
TUE	27			28	28	30	28		29	27		29	TUE
WED	28			29	29		29		30	28		30	WED
THU	29			30			30			29		31	THU
FRI	30									30			FRI
SAT	31			31						31			SAT
SUN													SUN
	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	

8.2 Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub – Project background & progress update report(Cont.)

8.2 Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub – Project background & progress update report



To: **Whakatāne District Council**
Date: **Thursday 4 December 2025**
Author: **Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub Project Team**
Authoriser: **A Pickles / GM Community Experience**

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

The purpose of this report is to provide Elected Members with an update on the Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub project and an overview of the key next steps.

2. Recommendations - *Tohutohu akiaki*

THAT the Council **receive** the Rex Morpeth Project Background and Progress Update report.

3. Background - *He tirohanga whakamuri*

3.1. Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub

The Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub (RMRH) is a 17-hectare multi-purpose sport and recreation precinct located in central Whakatāne. Historically known as the Whakatāne Domain, the area has evolved over decades to include a range of community facilities such as:

- Rugby Park
- The Aquatic Centre
- The Whakatāne War Memorial Hall
- Rex Morpeth Park
- The Art House facility

Collectively, these spaces function as the primary sport and recreation precinct for Whakatāne and the wider Eastern Bay of Plenty, serving schools, sports clubs, user groups, community events, performing arts, and general recreation.

3.2. Key issues

The RMRH precinct is currently challenged by two interconnected issues:

8.2 Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub – Project background & progress update report(Cont.)

3.2.1. *Historical under-investment and a significant renewals backlog*

The lack of sustained investment now means that some facilities are no longer fit for purpose. This is particularly evident in the Whakatāne War Memorial Hall (WWMH), where renewals have been deferred for approximately 20 years. The scale of investment now required to address asset deterioration, functional limitations, health and safety issues, accessibility issues, and general condition issues, is substantial.

3.2.2. *Insufficient capacity and flexibility to meet growing demand*

A number of existing facilities within the RMRH lack the space, versatility, and design necessary to adequately support current community use — let alone cater for future growth in sport, recreation, events, arts, and cultural activity. The precinct's ability to accommodate changing participation trends, multi-use formats, and peak-time demand is increasingly constrained, limiting community access and reducing the overall effectiveness of the asset.

This is particularly evident in the stadium and the provision of indoor court space, and current car-parking volume and configuration.

3.3. Previous attempts to invest

Over the past two decades, multiple efforts have been made to progress significant investment in the WWMH Hall, in the wider RMRH, or to address the long-recognised need for modern, fit-for-purpose sport and recreation facilities in Whakatāne through the provision of alternative facilities.

A review of previous work, identifies eight separate allocations through past Long Term Plans or Community Plans since 2006, along with seven distinct feasibility studies and investigations. Despite this extensive activity, these efforts have resulted in only approximately \$540,000 of pre-planned physical works being delivered on site – being for roof sealing and seismic strengthening.

A key consequence of these repeated cycles has been the deferral of essential renewals expenditure. Each new planning phase was undertaken with the expectation that a “major investment” package was imminent. As a result, renewals budgets were postponed or deprioritised in anticipation of broader redevelopment. This pattern has contributed to the compounded maintenance and asset condition challenges now faced across the RMRH facilities.

When considering the cumulative cost of prior studies, business cases, concept options, and investigations, it is likely that the total spend on analysis exceeds the value of capital works delivered during the same period. While not unique to Whakatāne, this represents a significant inefficiency and highlights the importance of establishing a clear, deliverable path forward.

3.4. Regulatory drivers for investment

Councils across New Zealand continue to face significant challenges in renewing, upgrading, and developing sport and recreation facilities, due largely to competing priorities and finite financial resources. Nevertheless, recreational facilities remain recognised as core services under the most recent Local Government Amendment Bill. When combined with the obligations under the Local Government Act 2002 for councils to plan proactively for the future of their communities, this provides a strong mandate for continued investment in facilities such as the RMRH. In addition, the Building Act 2004 places a statutory requirement on councils, as building owners, to ensure that facilities are maintained in a safe and sanitary condition, further reinforcing the need for timely and appropriate

8.2 Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub – Project background & progress update report(Cont.)

reinvestment. Some facilities such as the WWMH, all though technically compliant against the standards of the time the building was built, fall well short of modern safety, sanitary and accessibility standards.

3.5. RMRH Concept Plan development 2022-2024

A commitment was made to upgrade the RMRH in the 2021/31 Long Term Plan (LTP). In September 2022, the Council tendered the RMRH Concept Plan alongside the Whakatāne Open Spaces Strategy and throughout 2023, a range of redevelopment options were developed and refined through extensive community and stakeholder engagement.

Three Concept Plan options and an “enhanced status quo” option, each with unique aspects to drive conversation about priorities, were released for public consultation in October 2023. Feedback from workshops and consultations informed a preferred Concept Plan option, ‘Optimising for Now and the Future’ (Appendix 1) presented to the Living Together Committee in December 2023.

Recognising public interest in this project, as well as the significant cost (\$100m) associated with the recommended plan, Councillors chose to seek further input through the 2024–2034 Long Term Plan consultation process before finalising any decision.

Community consultation in April 2024 revealed mixed views. While there was broad support for the need to upgrade and redevelop RMRH, this was accompanied by concern about affordability and the impact on ratepayers. Many submitters emphasised the importance of securing external funding to help offset the financial burden, with some calling for the project to be scaled back, deferred, or funded differently in light of other pressing infrastructure priorities.

3.6. Council decision – Long Term Plan 2024-34

As a result of the LTP process, including public engagement and submissions, Councillors ultimately agreed the following parameters for the future investment into the RMRH:

- Integrate a decision-making point into the 2027/28 LTP regarding the RMRH’s redevelopment budget.
- Retain budget allocation for co-funding the RMRH project.
- Prioritise health and safety, making the building watertight, and functionality-focused improvement works during the next four years, up to \$7.8 million.
- Finalise the master plan for the RMRH and explore the feasibility of a separate indoor court facility.
- Develop an external funding plan before the next LTP.
- Advance discussions with potential partners for the RMRH redevelopment.

3.7. Long Term Plan 2024-34 final budget allocations**2024-2028:**

\$7.72m for Health and Safety, making the building watertight, and functionality-focused improvement works.

2027-2037:

TBC – subject to Council decision on a revised RMRH redevelopment proposal.

8.2 Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub – Project background & progress update report(Cont.)

However, the budget allocation retained as placeholder in the LTP 2024-34 for a future wider redevelopment proposal was \$100m, with the following assumed funding ratios:

- 50% externally funded
- 27.36% loan funded
- 13.24% development contributions
- 9.4% renewals funded

These allocations recognised while there was support for redevelopment, affordability remained a key concern, and efforts should be focussed on attracting as much external funding as possible to alleviate the rating impact of any upgrades. A decision on the wider redevelopment of the RMRH and associated final budget allocation was scheduled as part of the LTP 2027-2037 development process.

3.8. Project reset 2024

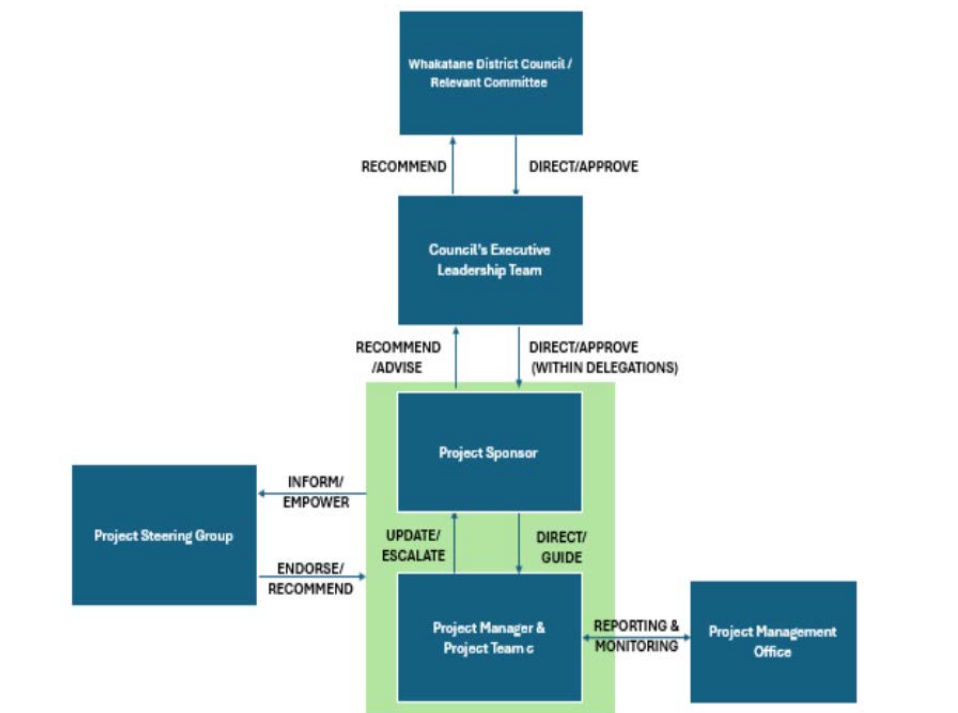
In response to Council direction, staff have now structured the project into two phases, recognising the need to complete immediate functional upgrades, while planning for a wider redevelopment that remains subject to external funding and Council approval to proceed. The two phases of work are as follows:

- i. Phase 1: Pre-major redevelopment
 - Health and safety and functional improvement works ('Functional Upgrades')
 - Finalise the Master Plan ('Concept Plan') for the RMRH
 - Develop Funding plan to support Stop/Go decision point for commencing Phase 2.
- ii. Phase 2: Major redevelopment 2029
 - Phase 2 will not commence until the funding has been secured, estimated circa 2029.

3.9. Project structure

The following project and governance structure has been established:

8.2 Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub – Project background & progress update report(Cont.)



This structure reflects the significance and scale of the decisions associated with this project. Staff hold delegations within the approved \$7.72 million Phase 1 budget, except for the following key decisions, which are reserved for Council or Committee approval:

- Selection of the preferred RMRH Concept Plan for public engagement
- Final approval of the RMRH Concept Plan
- Final approval of the Funding Plan
- Decision on future investment strategy and approach to Phase 2 ('Wider redevelopment')
- Approval of any budget escalations

A Project Steering Group has been established to provide ongoing advice and recommendations to the Project Sponsor and Project Team. This ensures that a range of perspectives and expertise inform the recommendations to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and Council and supports well-considered project deliverables and decisions.

4. Discussion – Kōrerorero

4.1. Functional Upgrades progress

Significant assessment and scoping work has been undertaken to understand the condition, safety, accessibility and functional performance of the RMRH. This has confirmed areas of extensive asset deterioration and outdated facility design across the site, with the WWMH emerging as the most critical priority due to its concentration of health and safety issues, functionality and accessibility barriers, and operational constraints - while also being the most widely used, in-scope facility.¹

{1} The Aquatic Centre is the most widely used facility but is out of scope for redevelopment

8.2 Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub – Project background & progress update report(Cont.)

Wider issues across the RMRH have also been assessed and considered for upgrades under the current budget available, however, investing in the wider hub now risks misalignment with the emerging RMRH Concept Plan, potentially resulting in investment that is unwound in the future.

In parallel with this scoping work, some Functional Upgrades have been executed, largely out of need to ensure facilities are safe for use, and to prevent further asset degradation. A summary is included below:

- **Delivered** – WWMH foyer roof replaced, asbestos removed in the stadium bathrooms and new lighting installed in the stadium. The latter of which was externally funded.
- **In progress** – Little Theatre theatrical systems and infrastructure safety works, Rugby Park grandstand structural works and Rugby Park sports lighting. The latter of which was externally funded.

4.1.1. Financial context

The level of need across the RMRH significantly exceeds the funding available for Phase 1 Functional Upgrades. Current estimates indicate:

- Functional Upgrade funding available: \$6.85M ²
Note the spend to date of early Functional Upgrades works referenced in section 4.1 of \$152,590
- Estimated total need for the WWMH refurbishment: approx. \$17M ³
- Funding shortfall for a full WWMH refurbishment: approx. \$10.3M

This financial context reinforces the requirement for a focused, impact-driven prioritisation approach, ensuring that the limited Phase 1 budget is used where it can address the most critical issues and deliver the greatest value.

4.1.2. Prioritisation approach

The project team has applied a structured, needs and principles-based prioritisation approach to scope upgrades that focuses on:

1. **Safety and compliance first:**
Addressing issues that pose risk to users or compromise building integrity.
2. **Accessibility improvements:**
Improving access and provision of sufficient amenities.
3. **Asset preservation:**
Addressing critical weather-tightness issues to extend asset life.
4. **Functionality improvements for daily use:**
Prioritising spaces with the high utilisation and greatest operational constraints.
5. **User experience improvements:**
Lift asset condition to create an inviting space that promotes improved user experience and increased facilities usage.

[2] Note that the \$7.72M budget approved in the LTP must also fund the development of a revised RMRH Concept Plan and a Funding plan to support Phase 2 decision making, as well as a project team over four years. The budget available for physical works is therefore ~\$6.7M

[3] This figure is based on pre-concept estimates for the WWMH refurb, therefore costs are only indicative at this stage. Estimates are subject to change.

8.2 Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub – Project background & progress update report(Cont.)

6. **Cost-efficiency through “whole-space refurbishment”:**

Many areas require multiple interdependent interventions (e.g. door widening + flooring + ceiling + accessibility upgrades + HVAC + Fire Protection).

Addressing them together avoids:

- Double contractor mobilisation
- Repeat closures
- Design mismatches
- Damage to new installations during later works

7. **Alignment with the evolving RMRH Concept Plan:** The plan avoids investments that may later be undone or significantly altered, ensuring the best use of available funds.

4.1.3. **Functional Upgrades approvals**

The assessment work (Section 4.1), coupled with initial design and costings, and prioritisation approach (Section 4.3), has informed the development of a Functional Upgrades Scope, for delivery across the remainder of 2025-26 and 2026-27.

As outlined in the project governance structure (Section 3.9), Council’s ELT holds the delegation for approving the Functional Upgrades budget confirmed through the LTP 2024–34. At the time of writing, the Functional Upgrades scope is scheduled for ELT consideration on 2 December 2025, following prior input from the Project Steering Group at its meeting on 25 November. Formal approval has therefore not yet been confirmed, and a verbal update on the ELT decision and any key governance feedback will be provided at the Council meeting.

4.2. **RMRH Concept Plan progress**

RSL Consultancy has been appointed as the lead consultant for the revised Concept Plan following a robust procurement process. Engagement has commenced positively, with RSL completing a peer review of previous design work and developing initial design thinking, draft investment objectives, design principles, and a comprehensive draft design brief.

As the design brief has not yet been constrained by cost, reflecting that the Council has not determined its preferred investment level, early effort has focused on clearly understanding core issues, priorities, and user needs. This ensures the design can be scaled or phased to suit the Council’s eventual affordability parameters and supports an agile, pragmatic approach as budget envelopes become clearer.

4.3. **Upcoming workshop and programme sequencing**

A Concept Plan workshop with the Project Steering Group meeting on 11 December will test key assumptions, capture collective insight, and build shared confidence in the design direction – ultimately confirming the design brief. This design brief will enable the Concept Planning team to finalise options, which will then be tested with the Project Steering Group, Council’s ELT and Key Users – eventually resulting in a Concept Plan recommendation to elected members. Parallel work with elected members in early 2026 will explore overall affordability and investment appetite, recognising existing LTP allocations and broader economic pressures. This understanding will guide the project team to finalise an investment ask under the LTP 2027-37 processes that is both in line with elected member expectations and the Council’s realistic affordability profile.

8.2 Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub – Project background & progress update report(Cont.)

4.3.1. Approach and forward outlook

RMRH Concept Plan work is being guided by the following principles:

- Affordability and value-for-money
- Benefits-driven, scalable design
- Clarity on needs versus opportunities
- Good asset stewardship
- Transparency on trade-offs

Although early in development, staff are confident that a pragmatic and more affordable design proposal can be presented next year, in the realm of 40-50% of the \$100M price tag associated with the 'Optimising Now and for the Future' redevelopment proposition presented during the LTP 2024–34 process. Cost reductions can be achieved through:

- Retaining the WWMH building form, including the roof profile and façade
- Keeping the refurbishment of the WWMH within the existing building footprint
- Building a separate indoor court facility
- A realignment to needs, not wants, e.g.:
 - i. refurbishment of the Rugby Park grandstand
 - ii. retainment of the existing athletics track

4.4. Funding Plan progress

The LTP 2024–34 includes a provisional \$100 million allocation for the wider RMRH redevelopment, based on an assumed 50% external funding contribution. A key current workstream is developing a Funding Plan that identifies realistic external funding sources, eligibility requirements, indicative funding ranges and alignment of each funding opportunity to components of the Concept Plan.

This work is progressing in parallel with design development and will map opportunities across central government, community trusts, philanthropic organisations, sport and recreation sector funds and other potential partners. The goal is to provide elected members with a clear and credible funding picture before investment decisions are made through LTP 2027–37, by securing in-principle funding indications.

4.4.1. Shifts in the external funding landscape

Early desktop analysis and engagement with sport and recreation planning specialists, indicates the external funding environment is now more constrained than may have been assumed during the LTP 2024–34 process. Large central government funds such as the Provincial Growth Fund are closed, and more recent iterations, such as the Regional Infrastructure Fund and Regional Deals programme, have more restrictive criteria that limit their viability for this project. The Lotteries Significant Projects Fund also remains closed, reducing large-scale funding avenues.

Current realistic opportunities lie primarily with smaller funders, including Lottery Environment and Heritage, Lottery Community Facilities (typically \$350k–\$500k), and sector or interest-specific funds such as Arts Access Aotearoa and Creative New Zealand. While preliminary, this analysis indicates fewer large-scale funding opportunities than previously anticipated. Notwithstanding this, the project

8.2 Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub – Project background & progress update report(Cont.)

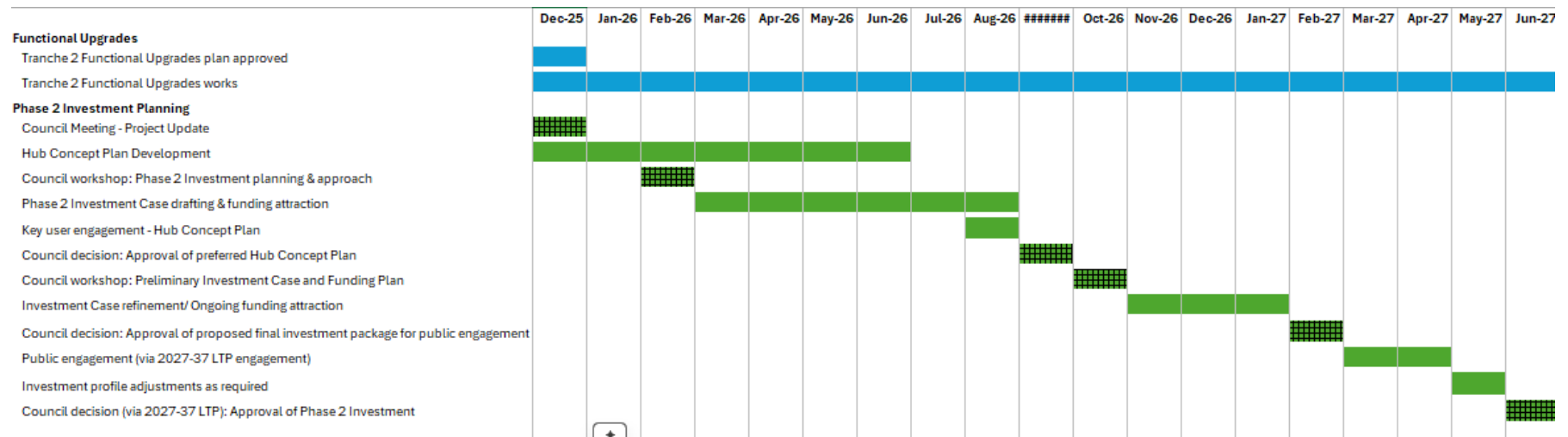
team will continue proactive socialisation and funding-attraction efforts and remain prepared to respond to any shifts in the national funding environment, particularly potential changes following the 2026 general election.

5. Options analysis - *Ngā kōwhiringa*

There are no options as this is an information report.

6. Next steps – E whai ake nei

The project's high level forward work programme is outlined below. Please note that milestones from June 2026 onwards will adjust to align with the Long Term Plan processes and timeframes as they are developed.



Attached to this report:

- There are no appendices attached to this report.

8.3 Draft Annual Plan 2026/27– Options for budget development**8.3 Draft Annual Plan 2026/27– Options for budget development**To: **Whakatāne District Council**Date: **Thursday, 4 December 2025**Author: **E Fenton / Senior Strategic Policy Analyst**Authoriser: **L Woolsey / General Manager Strategy and Growth
P Davidson / Chief Financial Officer**Reference: **A3017498****1. Reason for the report - *Te Take mō tēnei rīpoata***

This report presents the summary of a first draft budget for the Annual Plan 2026/27. It also seeks Council's guidance on three options for further developing the 2026/27 budget.

2. Recommendations - *Tohutohu akiaki*

1. THAT the 'Draft Annual Plan 2026/27 – Options for budget development' report be **received**; and
2. THAT the Council **considers** the proposed options for budget development for the draft 2026/27 Annual Plan and either;
 - i. **Approves** an increase to the current budget forecast for Year Three of the Long Term Plan to align with an average rates increase of 10.4% to contribute to funding increased costs of infrastructure renewals in the future; **OR**
 - ii. **Approves** maintaining the current budget to align with the rates increase projected for Year Three of the Long Term Plan (9.4%); **OR**
 - iii. **Requests** staff to identify further cost reductions of approximately \$790K for the Annual Plan 2026/27; and
3. THAT the Council **notes** that any additional cost reductions identified will be reported back to Council in early 2026 with options for reducing rate increases and/or reducing the operating deficit; and
4. THAT the Council **notes** formal community consultation on the Annual Plan for 2026/27 is not legislatively required, unless variations are significant compared to the Long Term Plan; and
5. THAT the Council **notes** that the final Annual Plan 2026/27 will be provided to Council for adoption before 30 June 2026.

3. Background - *He tirohanga whakamuri*

The Local Government Act 2002 (LGA) requires the adoption of an Annual Plan prior to the start of each financial year. The Council is therefore required to adopt an Annual Plan for 2026/27 on or before 30 June 2026.

8.3 Draft Annual Plan 2026/27– Options for budget development(Cont.)

The purpose of an Annual Plan is to allow for any variations to an LTP, outline the proposed annual budget and funding impact statement for the year, provide integrated decision making and co-ordination of the resources of the Council, and contribute to the accountability of the Council to the community.

If proposed variations for 2026/27 are not of a significant or material magnitude compared to the LTP, consultation on the Annual Plan is not automatically required (LGA s95(2A)).

3.1. Approach for the 2026/27 Annual Plan

On 19 November 2025, Council received a public excluded briefing on the Annual Plan (the reasons for excluding the public were that the briefing material contained both personal and commercial information). During this briefing, staff highlighted that there is approximately \$2 million in unanticipated costs in the draft Annual Plan budget for 2026/27 compared to the budget forecast for Year Three of the LTP 24-34 (see below for detail).

4. Discussion – *Kōrerorero***4.1. Budget considerations**

Whakatāne District Council, like many local authorities, continue to face rising cost pressures, in which both current and ongoing costs are impacting on the draft 2026/27 Annual Plan Budget.

4.1.1. Opex costs

Substantial operational cost increases have been identified in the draft Annual Plan 2026/27. Increases are driven by several factors, including increased interest and depreciation costs from the capital program, higher electricity charges, increased audit fees, rising prices for chemicals used in water treatment, and costs associated with water sampling. Additional costs have also been incurred for developing in-house projects aimed at improving project management and creating a planning and reporting tool that integrates with the new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. Furthermore, expenses related to the transition to the Local Waters Done Well initiative—funded through loans—have contributed to the overall increase.

Cost increases equate to an approximate projected average rates increase of 2.5%. In the preparation of the first draft of the Annual Plan, this has largely been offset by an overall cost reduction compared to what was forecast in the LTP – maintaining the average rates increase of 9.4%.

Cost reductions have been identified in several areas, including Toi EDA funding, insurance (subject to further review of coverage), fleet expenses such as ongoing maintenance and fuel, waste management, and lower electricity costs achieved through the installation of solar panels on Council buildings. In addition, further savings are proposed by removing 10 new Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) positions that were planned for Year 3 of the Long-Term Plan (see section 4.2).

4.1.2. Capex costs

The cost of the capital programme has reduced by \$12m for 2026/27 (\$47m compared to \$59m for Year Three of the LTP). Figure 1 shows the comparison of capital programmes for key groups of activities for Year Three of the LTP compared with the draft 2026/27 Annual Plan. Significant changes in the capital programme include:

- Rephasing of the Matatā wastewater project (\$7.5m); and

8.3 Draft Annual Plan 2026/27– Options for budget development(Cont.)

- Reduction of water supply projects (\$1.2m), including Keepa Road watermain and Blueberry Corner relocation projects that are not proceeding in the foreseeable future; and
- An overall adjustment of \$815K for transportation network projects to align with the reduction in NZTA funding.

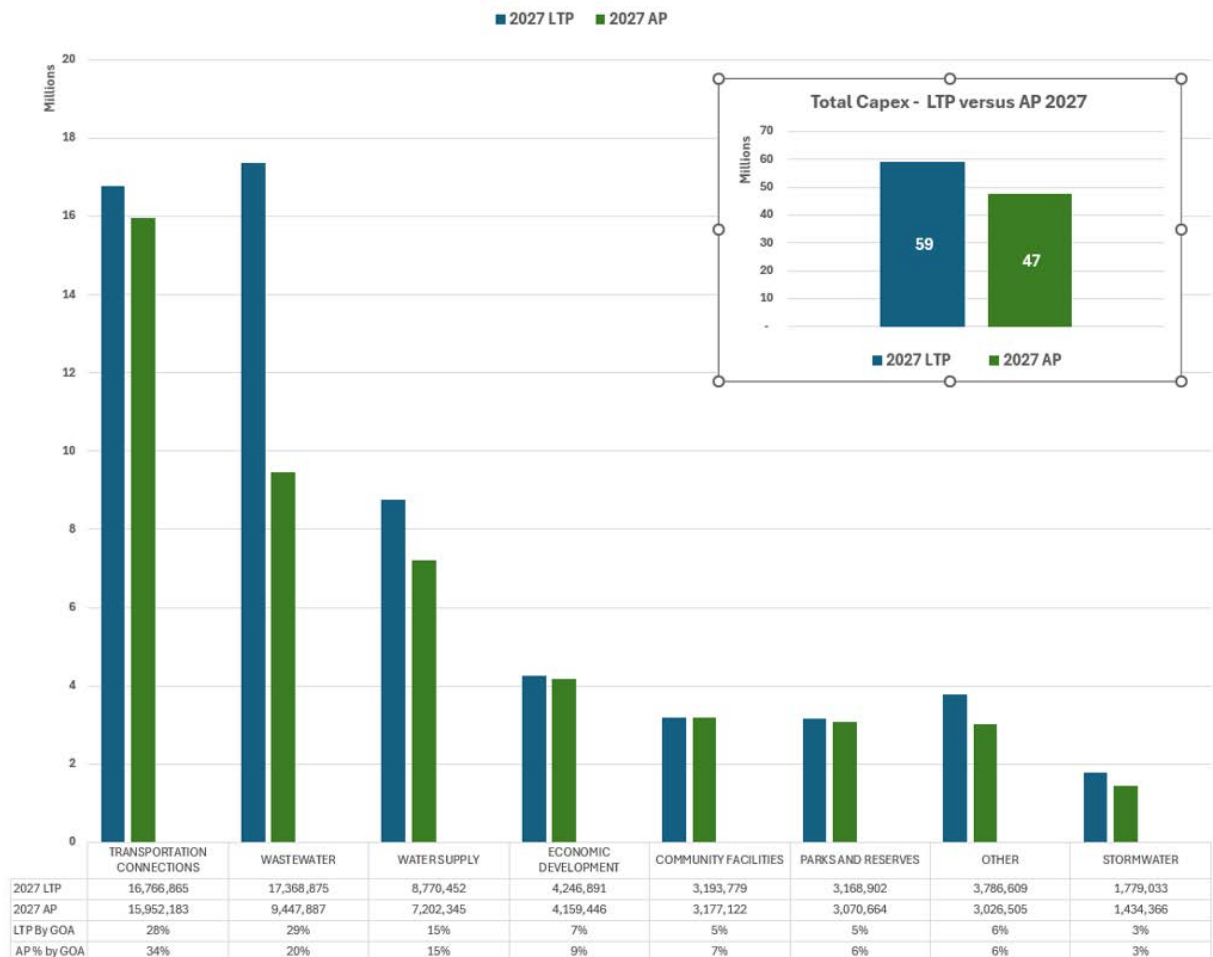


Figure 1 Capex by Group of Activity: 2027 LTP (Year 3 vs 2027 AP)

4.1.3. Council debt

The current budget for the draft 2026/27 Annual Plan has Council debt at \$232.3m down from \$239.3m forecast in the LTP.

4.1.4. Operating deficit

Council is still operating at a deficit for 2026/27 as forecast in the LTP. The loan for the operating deficit continues to be reduced in line with the Long Term Plan.

No additional roading depreciation has been funded for the draft 2026/27 Annual Plan (roading re-evaluation took place in 2025 with an increased depreciation of ~\$9m). Whilst an option has been included to contribute to the funding of this additional depreciation, further consideration will be needed in the next Long Term Plan including the amount of funding that will be contributed by NZTA

8.3 Draft Annual Plan 2026/27– Options for budget development(Cont.)

to the roading renewal program. For clarity, the impact of the roading revaluation has worsened Council's balanced budget situation, noting however that this does not have an immediate impact on borrowings but has the potential to increase future borrowings as assets are replaced.

4.2. Proposed FTE changes

As part of the LTP process, increases to new FTE positions were approved with 16.25 new FTE set for year 2 (2025/26) and 5 new FTE in year 3 (2026/27). During the 2025/26 Annual Plan process Council agreed to remove approximately half of these proposed new roles and defer the appointment of 8 new FTE into year 3 of the LTP, projecting an increase of 13 new total FTE for the 2026/27 Annual Plan.

Staff indicated at the recent council briefing that with some re-phasing of work programmes, the planned 13 new FTE increase for 2026/27 Annual Plan could now be reduced to a total of 3 new budgeted FTE. Staff will also undertake further analysis on where (if any) reduction in FTE can be made without significantly impacting existing levels of service, with the aim to include this in the report to Council in March 2026.

New FTE budgeted			
LTP 24-34 projection for year 3 (2026/27)	2025/26 Annual Plan projection for 2026/27	Current Annual Plan projection for 2026/27	Variance
5	13	3	-10

5. Options Analysis - Ngā Kōwhiringa

The LTP sets the ten-year rates forecast which enables the community and businesses to integrate future planned rates into their own budgets. The Council's planned average rates as indicated in the LTP 24/34 for Year 3 (2026/27) is an increase of 9.4% from the previous year.

Staff have outlined three options below for Council's consideration.

5.1. Option 1: Funding future infrastructure renewals

Increase the current budget forecast for Year Three of the Long Term Plan to align with an average rates increase of 10.4% to fund increased costs of infrastructure renewals in the future.

Council has the option to increase the projected average rates increase for 2026/27 to 10.4% (compared with the projected 9.4%) to help fund the increased costs of infrastructure renewals in the future.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responds to the impact of roading and other future revaluations, and the increased costs of the renewal of future assets. No reduction or impact on levels of service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likely negative public perception during tough economic conditions. Some communities within the Whakatāne district may experience affordability issues.

8.3 Draft Annual Plan 2026/27– Options for budget development(Cont.)

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced future debt on asset renewal and greater recognition of intergenerational equity. Assists with the balanced budget deficit. 	

5.2. Option 2: Status Quo

Maintain the current forecast budget to align with the rates increase projected for Year Three of the LTP (9.4%)

This option is consistent with year three of the LTP 2024/34.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent with previous direction received from Council during the LTP process No notable reduction or impact on levels of service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities within the Whakatāne district continue to live with economic pressures. Does not address any further aim to reduce the operating deficit to achieve a balance budget sooner than currently projected.

5.3. Option 3: Further cost reductions

Staff to identify a further \$790K (equivalent to 1% rates) in cost reductions for 2026/27

This option requires staff to reduce expenditure by approximately \$790,000 in 2026/27 (the equivalent of 1% in average rates). Cost reductions would then be applied to achieve a decrease in the forecasted 9.4% average rates increase or to reduce Council's operating deficit, or a combination of the two. The decision on how cost reductions may be applied would be considered by Council in early 2026.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved public perception that Council is responding positively to tough economic conditions. Potential to provide limited financial relief to households and businesses and/or Council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential to have an impact on levels of service if additional cost reductions are to be made. Potential long-term impact with the uncertainty of Central Government's rates capping proposal.

8.3 Draft Annual Plan 2026/27– Options for budget development(Cont.)

6. Significance and Engagement Assessment - *Aromatawai Pāhekoheko*

6.1. Assessment of Significance and materiality

Consultation on the Annual Plan is not legislatively required unless proposed budget changes are significant, or material compared to the content of the LTP. (LGA s95(2A)).

6.1.1. Assessment of Significance

A significance assessment of the draft Annual Plan budget for 2026/27 recommended in this report has been undertaken against the criteria in the Significance and Engagement Policy (SEP) to determine the level of significance of changes compared to the LTP.

The overall significant assessment is determined to below to moderate.

Significance Criteria	Comments	Impact Assessment
Level of community interest: Expected level of community interest, opposition or controversy involved.	No substantial changes to what was proposed through year 3 of LTP. Proposals are in keeping with the strategic direction and priorities of the LTP, the outcomes in the LTP are relevant to a ten-year period and year to year implementation can vary.	Moderate
Level of impact on current and future wellbeing: Expected level of adverse impact on the current and future wellbeing of our communities or District.	Budget is proposing to Maintain the Current Level of Service – No significant change from Year 3 of the LTP. Any reduction to the the operating deficit will be beneficial to ratepayers in the longer term. (Any desire to find further cost reductions to decrease rates and/or the operating deficit may impact levels of service, but this has not been considered currently).	Low
Rating impact: Expected costs to the community, or sectors of the community, in terms of rates.	No significant change to what was included for Year 3 of LTP. Further cost reductions identified would be applied to reducing the forecast rates and/or the operating deficit (beneficial for ratepayers).	Low
Financial impact: Expected financial impact on the Council, including on budgets, reserves, debt levels, overall rates, and limits in the Financial Strategy.	Cost reductions identified applied to reduce the forecast rates and/or the annual operating deficit. If costs reduction are not applied to the operating deficit this will not increase the costs associated with the deficit.	low

8.3 Draft Annual Plan 2026/27– Options for budget development(Cont.)

Significance Criteria	Comments	Impact Assessment
Consistency: Extent to which a proposal or decision is consistent with the Council's strategic direction, policies and significant decisions already made.	Changes to budget align with Council's Financial Strategy and Revenue and Financing Policy.	Low
Reversibility: Expected level of difficulty to reverse the proposal or decision, once committed to.	The adjustments in the Annual Plan can be reversed. Additionally as the changes have not considered any impact on Levels of Service, the likely requirement to reverse decisions is rated as low.	Low
Impact on Māori: Expected level of impact on Māori, considering the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral land, water, sites, wāhi tapu, valued flora and fauna, and other taonga.	No significant change proposed within the budget (which includes the Opex budget in response to Māori relationship strategy).	Low
Impact on levels of service: Expected degree to which the Council's levels of service will be impacted.	Maintaining the current level of service. No significant changes to what was included in year three of the LTP.	Low
Impact on strategic assets: Expected impact on the performance or intended performance of the Council's Strategic Assets, for the purpose for which they are held.	Annual plan does not seek sale of strategic assets and has no or low impact on the performance of strategic assets.	Low

6.2. Engagement and Community Views

Consultation on the Annual Plan is not legislatively required unless proposed budget changes are significant, or material compared to the content of the LTP (section 95 of Local Government Act). Consultation for the Draft Annual Plan for 2026/27 is not likely to be required, unless significant changes to levels of service or rates are identified. A public information campaign will be planned to deliver key messages to the community.

Engagement on this matter is not being undertaken in accordance with Section 6.0 of the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy. This states that the Council will not consult when the matter is not of a nature or significance that requires public engagement.

7. Considerations - *Whai Whakaaro*

7.1. Strategic Alignment

Proposals are in keeping with the strategic direction and priorities of the Long Term Plan.

8.3 Draft Annual Plan 2026/27– Options for budget development(Cont.)

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

7.2. Legal

This report is part of the Annual Plan development process. Under the Local Government Act 2002, the Council is required to adopt an Annual Plan for 2026/27 by 30 June 2025.

7.3. Financial/Budget Considerations

The Annual Plan sets out the budget for the year 2026/27. Budget considerations including impact on operating deficit and rating impact are mentioned throughout this report.

7.4. Climate Change Assessment

Please note that some individual budget items within the Annual Plan will have a climate change impact. Though these projects will individually conduct climate change impact assessment as part of their delivery. There are no significant or notable impacts associated with the matters of this report.

7.5. Risks

The budget does not include the originally proposed and adjusted new FTE roles for year three of the LTP. Staff will be monitoring the potential impact(s) on work programmes and levels of service.

7.5.1. Legislative changes

The impact of upcoming legislative change is likely to have significant impacts on future Annual and Long Term Plans. There is a range of legislative changes that Central Government has identified that may impact the way Council functions. These include:

- Resource Management Act replacement
- Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill
- Local Government (Water Services) Act 2025
- Future for Local Government Review Recommendations
- National Policy Statements & Environmental Standards
- Rates Cap Modelling

A further consideration is the implications of Government's intention to introduce rates capping for local government. This could significantly strain council finances by limiting revenue growth while costs—especially for infrastructure—continue to rise. Credit rating agencies warn that rate caps create policy uncertainty, potentially leading to downgrades and higher borrowing costs, which make projects more expensive therefore pushing rates up long term.

8.3 Draft Annual Plan 2026/27– Options for budget development(Cont.)

8. Next Steps – E whai ake nei

The next steps for developing the 2026/27 Annual Plan are:

- Develop a final draft budget for 2026/27 that responds to Council’s decision on the preferred option;
- Report to Council in early 2026 with the final draft budget for 2026/27 Annual Plan;
- Develop an information campaign and/or a consultation campaign for early 2026 with key messages to the community;
- Develop an Annual Plan 2026/27 for Council adoption before the 30 June 2026 to meet legislative requirements.

8.4 Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy**8.4 Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy**To: **Whakatāne District Council**Date: **Thursday, 4 December 2026**Author: **B Patchett / Project Manager, Local Growth Strategy**Authoriser: **L Woolsey / General Manager Strategy and Growth**Reference: **A3017113****1. Reason for the report - *Te Take mō tēnei rīpoata***

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval of the Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy for public consultation in early 2026.

2. Recommendations - *Tohutohu akiaki*

1. THAT the Whakatāne District Council **receive** the Draft Whakatāne Local Growth Strategy report; and
2. THAT the Whakatāne District Council **approve** the Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy for public consultation in early 2026; and
3. THAT the Whakatāne District Council **note** that:
 - a. The Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy sets out a direction for growth and change in the Whakatāne District over the next 30-years, so that growth can be harnessed to help deliver wider social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits the community cares about; and
 - b. The Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy is aligned with the goals and outcomes of the recently adopted Eastern Bay Spatial Plan and Sub-Regional Economic Development Strategy; and
 - c. Ongoing partnership with iwi and hapū, and collaborative planning and implementation with other partners, stakeholders and the community will be required to achieve the outcomes of the Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy; and
 - d. The Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy aligns with iwi aspirations outlined in the Eastern Bay Spatial Plan and as communicated to the project to date;
 - e. Engagement with Ngāti Awa hapū is still being completed, and minor changes to the Draft Whakatāne Local Growth Strategy may be required to align with their feedback; and
 - f. The Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy reflects feedback received during early engagement with a wide range of key stakeholders.
4. THAT the Whakatāne District Council **agree** to delegate to the General Manager Strategy and Growth the ability to make minor changes to the Draft Whakatāne Local Growth Strategy that are required to align with feedback received from Ngāti Awa hapū.

8.4 Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)**3. Background - *He tirohanga whakamuri***

In April 2025 Council was briefed about shifting focus from sub-regional spatial planning to more local growth planning and engagement, and to preparing a Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy (LGS).

The LGS builds on Our Places - Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan (Spatial Plan) and the refreshed Sub-Regional Economic Development Strategy (SREDS) - both adopted in mid-2025. These documents consider growth and change over the next 30 years, focusing on regionally significant key moves and actions. The Spatial Plan also identifies areas in the Eastern Bay most suitable for growth – i.e., the “where”.

The LGS takes the Spatial Plan several steps forward by further detailing the “why” of growth, and considering the “how,” “when” and “with whom” of Whakatāne District’s future growth and change. Its strategic direction will influence the Council’s future planning and policy initiatives, investment intentions and partnering activities.

By having a clear local framework, more certainty about how the district will plan and invest for growth can be provided to the community, iwi and hapū, developers & investors, and central government partners. This in turn can help grow local employment, increase housing supply, enhance the wellbeing of the district’s people and environment and ensure developers have more confidence to invest in residential and commercial development.

3.1. Preparing the strategy

A draft LGS has now been completed and, subject to Council approval, is ready for public consultation in early 2026.

It has been developed by drawing on a wide range of existing work and through conversations with partners and key stakeholders, including:

- Analysing existing strategies, plans and policies from the Council and its partners, including Council’s Long Term Plan 2024-2034, the District Plan, Spatial Plan, SREDS, and annual reports and resource management plans prepared by local iwi.
- Drawing on data, mapping and existing technical work prepared for other Council plans and strategies.
- Reflecting on feedback received from other engagement processes, such as the Long Term Plan 2024-2034, Climate Change Strategy and Spatial Plan.
- Learning from the strategies prepared by other councils, including analysing their growth strategies and housing strategies.
- Engaging with iwi and hapū as growth strategy partners.
- Having local conversations with a range of other partners and key stakeholders, council staff and Councillors.

Figure 1 outlines the process that has been used to prepare the draft LGS.

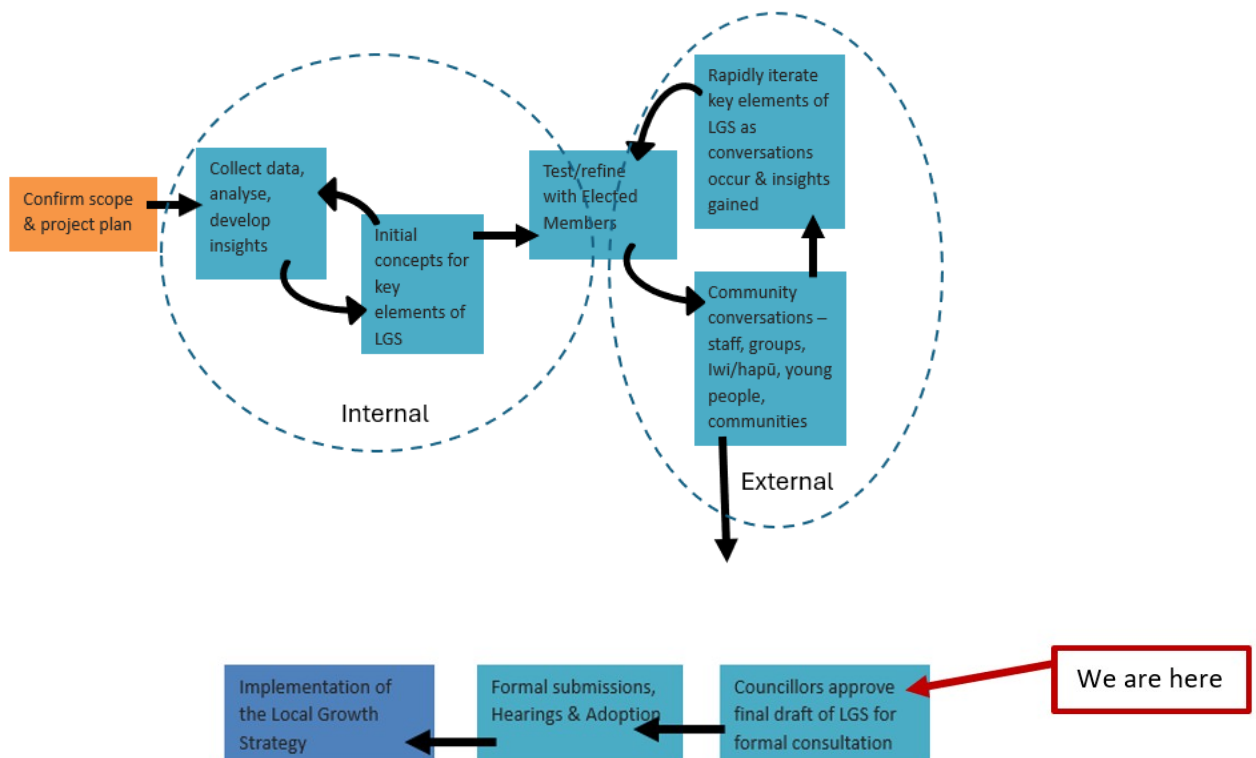
8.4 Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

Figure 1: Process for developing the Local Growth Strategy

3.2. Partnership with Tangata Whenua

From the beginning of the LGS project, working in partnership with tangata whenua has been identified as critical, at all stages of local growth planning and implementation. This reflects council's ongoing commitments to partner with tangata whenua and recognises that Māori are half of the district's population, are amongst the most significant landowners across the district, are emerging as major investment partners, and have important perspectives relating to a long-term vision for the way the Whakatāne District grows and changes.

All Iwi Chairs were briefed on the LGS in May 2025, and the CEs of Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Rangitihi and Ngāti Manawa attended briefings on the LGS earlier in the year. NASH, NAGL, Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiarangi and a group of Ngāti Awa kaumatua have been engaged. Toi Kotuia and the Whakatāne Iwi Policy Hub have been proactively supporting engagement with iwi and detailed written responses have been received from Ngāti Manawa, Ngāti Whare and Ngāti Rangitihi. The LGS is aligned with all iwi and hapū aspirations outlined in the Spatial Plan, and with feedback received by the LGS project.

Engagement with Ngāti Awa hapū is ongoing. Changes to the draft LGS will be made to align with their feedback as required. The LGS aligns fully with Ngāti Awa and hapū aspirations already expressed through the Spatial Plan process.

8.4 Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)**3.3. Conversations with key stakeholders**

Local conversations have been completed with more than 400 people from a wide range of other partners and key stakeholders. These have included focus groups, briefings, community drop-ins and targeted conversations with social, arts/culture, environmental, urban development, central government and economic stakeholders. In these conversations we have explored:

- What opportunities and challenges growth could bring.
- How to balance growth with other important priorities, such as environmental restoration supporting rural lifestyle opportunities and protecting our cultural heritage.
- How to make sure all people in our community benefit from growth.
- How to provide sufficient and affordable housing.
- How to best grow amid the risks of natural hazards and the impacts of climate change.
- How to best build infrastructure to support current and future development.
- How to provide business and employment opportunities so all residents thrive.
- How the Council can better support positive-growth outcomes.

4. Discussion – Kōrerorero

Approving the draft LGS for public consultation is an important milestone for the council's growth programme. The key elements of the draft LGS are:

- A summary of the growth challenges & opportunities facing the Whakatāne District across four themes – (1) Changing demographics; (2) Housing supply, affordability and quality; (3) Unlocking development; (4) Growing businesses and jobs;
- Priority growth areas and iwi-led growth areas (aligning with the areas identified in the Spatial Plan) - Awakeri, Matatā, Whenua Māori west of Coastlands, Kopeopeo, Murupara, Minginui - and the next steps for unlocking each area;
- Five strategic moves, with a set of growth actions designed to achieve each strategic move;
- Five principles for guiding all of council's growth-related activities;
- Critical assumptions and mitigations to keep visibility of when implementing the actions in the LGS; and a
- High-level, sequenced implementation plan (with the growth actions sequenced over 30 years across three horizons).

4.1. The Strategic Moves and Guiding Principles

At the heart of the LGS are five strategic moves (with associated growth actions) and five guiding principles. These are intended to enable Whakatāne District to grow sustainably over the next 30 years.

The five strategic moves recognise that although change is inevitable and uncertain, it can be harnessed and focused, to deliver benefits that the community cares about, such as stronger business and employment opportunities, more housing choice and affordability, greater resilience in our built environment, healthier people and ecosystems and a more connected social fabric.

8.4 Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

The five strategic moves in the LGS are:

1. Unlock greenfield opportunities in resilient and market-feasible locations.
2. Enable iwi, hapū and whānau development aspirations.
3. Build a vibrant, more resilient and well-connected Town Centre and Kopeopeo mixed-use corridor.
4. Harness Whakatāne District's strengths and the Bay of Plenty's economic tailwinds to attract investment, grow businesses and provide jobs.
5. Prioritise policies, partnerships and investments that deliver for young people and seniors.

The five guiding principles are included to ensure that growth-related activities occur in an inclusive, balanced and sustainable way. These principles encourage partnership as well as alignment with local, regional, national and iwi and hapū-led efforts focused on connectivity, environmental stewardship, natural hazard resilience and social equity.

The five guiding principles in the LGS are:

1. Strengthen relationships with iwi, hapū and whānau
2. Foster communities that are resilient to natural hazards and climate change
3. Act as strong stewards of our natural environment
4. Enhance transport connectivity, accessibility and safety
5. Align Council toward a shared growth, development and social equity agenda

The LGS describes in more detail what each of the guiding principles means for shaping and delivering growth-related activities.

4.2. Growth Actions

Each strategic move has growth actions, which are specific implementation activities designed to achieve the broader strategic move. The Council's role in delivering them, timing and indicative costs for each action and levels of feasibility given our current context and capability, have been considered for each Growth Action. Additionally, "vehicles" have been identified to show how these actions will be incorporated into existing workstreams and/or new initiatives.

Council's roles

Council has a powerful but limited range of approaches it can use to implement the strategic moves, making it essential to collaborate closely with iwi and hapū, local organisations, regional and central government, businesses and investors, and other partners. Collaborations can amplify the impact of the Council's actions.

The Council's roles in growth and development can include being a regulator, investor, service provider, facilitator, advocate and partner.

Timeframe and cost

The draft LGS indicates the timing and potential level of investment for the Council for each action (at a rough order-of-magnitude) to assist with sequencing and prioritising. These costs would be spread across 30 years.

8.4 Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

Many of these costs are already budgeted in the Council's Long Term Plan 2024-2034, but may require adjustments to their scope, priority or sequencing. For other actions, budget priorities and sequencing may need to be adjusted in future LTPs and Council will need to actively seek partnerships and cost-sharing arrangements, and explore innovative funding and financing tools. All decisions about what the Council invests in are made through the 3-yearly LTP process. The LGS is intended to inform that process.

Level of feasibility

Within the Council's current context and capabilities, some things are more doable immediately or in the short to medium-term than others. The LGS indicates how feasible each action is given these constraints.

Actions that are more aspirational – or currently less feasible – are also included, as conditions will change over time and earlier activities may catalyse positive future changes.

4.3. Implementation and review

Enabling growth is complex, takes time and involves many different activities, partners, agencies, investors, developers and communities. Implementing the LGS will include making changes to the District Plan, revising the Infrastructure Strategy, making investment decisions through future LTP processes, collaborating with a range of existing and new partners and advocating to regional and central government.

Regular monitoring, evaluation and review of progress will be needed to assess the effectiveness of growth actions and their contribution to desired growth outcomes. To ensure the LGS remains fit for purpose, a full review will occur every six years. Growth actions will be reviewed and updated more frequently, as they inform annual staff work programmes and guide day-to-day planning, investment, partnership and decision-making activities.

5. Options Analysis - *Ngā Kōwhiringa***5.1. Option 1 Approve the Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy for public consultation****Recommended option**

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enables the district to move forward with local growth implementation including master planning, structure planning, District Plan changes, Long-term Plan, and other growth initiatives Supports future collaboration with partners on growth and change planning, investment and partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No disadvantages have been identified

8.4 Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports advocacy for development and infrastructure investment to Government agencies and Ministers • Supports attraction of new private sector investment in businesses, housing and urban development 	

5.2. Option 2 – Do not Approve the Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy for public consultation

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No advantages have been identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would hamper local growth implementation including master planning, structure planning, District Plan changes, Long-term Plan, and other growth initiatives • Impedes future collaboration with partners on growth and change planning, investment and partnerships • Impacts advocacy for development and infrastructure investment to Government agencies and Ministers • Hampers attraction of new private sector investment in businesses, housing and urban development

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 moderate significance in accordance with the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.

Significance Criteria	Comments	Impact Assessment
Level of community interest: Expected level of community interest, opposition or controversy involved.		Moderate
Level of impact on current and future wellbeing: Expected level of adverse impact on the current and future wellbeing of our communities or District.		High
Rating impact:		Low

8.4 Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

Significance Criteria	Comments	Impact Assessment
Expected costs to the community, or sectors of the community, in terms of rates.		
Financial impact: Expected financial impact on the Council, including on budgets, reserves, debt levels, overall rates, and limits in the Financial Strategy.		Low
Consistency: Extent to which a proposal or decision is consistent with the Council's strategic direction, policies and significant decisions already made.		High
Reversibility: Expected level of difficulty to reverse the proposal or decision, once committed to.		Low
Impact on Māori: Expected level of impact on Māori, considering the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral land, water, sites, wāhi tapu, valued flora and fauna, and other taonga.		High
Impact on levels of service: Expected degree to which the Council's levels of service will be impacted.		Low
Impact on strategic assets: Expected impact on the performance or intended performance of the Council's Strategic Assets, for the purpose for which they are held.		Low

6.2. Engagement and Community Views

Significant targeted stakeholder engagement has been undertaken in the preparation of the Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy, including with iwi and hapū partners. Engagement with Ngāti Awa hapū is still progressing and feedback received will be incorporated to ensure alignment.

If the Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy is approved by Council, a formal public consultation process will be undertaken in early 2026, including further engagement with iwi and hapū and the outcomes reported back to Council.

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

The Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy is a strategic document to help set the Council's strategic direction for growth and change over the next 30 years, and it has been drafted with consideration of Council's existing policies and plans. No inconsistencies with any of the Council's policies or plans have been identified in relation to this report.

8.4 Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)**7.2. Legal**

There are no legal implications.

7.3. Financial/Budget Considerations

The costs associated with the recommendations in this report, relate to undertaking a formal public consultation process in early 2026. These costs are already budgeted for the 2025/26 financial year.

7.4. Climate Change Assessment

Consideration of climate change and its impacts have been a critical input to the development of the Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy and are reflected in the recommended future growth scenario/settlement pattern, priority growth areas (aligned with Eastern Bay Spatial Plan), Strategic Moves, Growth Actions and Guiding Principles.

7.5. Risks

There are a number of implementation risks associated with the Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy, if it is adopted by Council in 2026, following formal public consultation.

Risk	Description and/or Mitigation
Partnerships - There is a risk that the partnerships needed to achieve the outcomes and deliver the growth actions do not happen because the strategy is not implemented.	Establish clear leadership and accountability for Local Growth Strategy implementation, aligning and delivering the actions across council; work with other partners; and provide appropriate capability and resourcing.
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 and/or master 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 Council, 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.

8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy

Risk	Description and/or Mitigation
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 Local Growth Strategy due to funding criteria shifts or policy requirements changing.	With each change in government, review the Local Growth Strategy to determine if priorities need to change to better align to the Government's 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, undertake integrated stormwater planning at the master planning stage to inform structure planning and the objectives of the relevant river schemes.

8. Next Steps – E whai ake nei

If the recommendation is followed and the Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy is approved for release, formal public consultation will be completed in early 2026 with the results of the consultation and a final Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy reported to the Council for adoption in April 2026.

Attached to this Report:

- Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy

8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy

8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy [Cover]

[Strategy document for public consultation to be designed in a style similar to
"Our Places – Eastern Bay Spatial Plan"]

8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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Overview Tirohanga whānui

Whakatāne District extends over 4,465km², from Ōtamarākau in the West to Port Ōhope in the East, from the coastal Rangitāiki Plains to the mountains of Te Urewera. It is a place of outstanding beauty, plentiful natural resources, and strong communities and businesses deeply connected to their whenua. The rohe of eight iwi intersect in the district and iwi are central to our cultural identity and economic strength. Our district is the commercial heart of the Eastern Bay of Plenty and a place where families thrive and people of all ages can enjoy a great quality of life. It's no wonder we've grown steadily over recent years, even as there remains significant potential for future growth and development. How we meet the opportunity presented by further population and economic growth in the coming years will shape the wellbeing of our communities and the environment for many generations to come.

Purpose

Whakatāne District's Local Growth Strategy (LGS) charts a course for our district's growth and change over the next 30 years. While it can be tempting to resist change, more people and more economic activity ultimately means more opportunities for the people of Whakatāne District – especially if this growth is accommodated equitably and sustainably. Directed wisely, growth will result in more resources flowing here and people choosing to stay and thrive here. It will also mean more attention and funding for those aspects of our district we wish to preserve and enhance, such as our environment and culture.

This strategy sets out what's most important to enable the district to build momentum and grow in a managed and measured way. This strategy looks at how housing and economic growth, infrastructure investment, environmental restoration, natural hazard adaptation and community resilience can work together to bring about greater wellbeing and a prosperous future for all residents.

Context

Growth planning helps to integrate across the Council's and our partners' plans and strategies, regional frameworks and national direction. Currently, there's no legislative requirement for councils to produce a growth strategy. However, many councils choose to prepare one to provide a longer-term perspective than is typically found in District Plans, Long Term Plans, transport strategies, and other documents (which typically have 10-year horizons).

This strategy builds on the Our Places - Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan (Spatial Plan) and refreshed Sub-Regional Economic Development Strategy (SREDS), which were both adopted in the first half of 2025. These documents lay out how the region will provide for growth and change over the next 30 years, focusing on regionally significant key moves

8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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and actions. The Spatial Plan also identifies the areas in the Eastern Bay most suitable for growth – i.e., the “where”.

The LGS takes the Spatial Plan several steps forward for the district by further detailing the “why”, and considering the “how,” “when” and “with whom” of Whakatāne District’s future development. Its strategic direction will influence the Council’s future planning and policy initiatives, investment intentions and partnering activities. This strategy also gives residents, iwi and hapū, central and regional government, investors and other partners greater confidence in Whakatāne’s growth priorities and trajectory.

We will revisit the strategy periodically (every six years) and update it to reflect our changing context, new information and evolving priorities.

Developing our strategy

This draft strategy has been developed by drawing on a wide range of existing work and through conversation with many key partners and stakeholders, including:

- Analysing existing strategies, plans and policies from the Council and its partners (including Council’s Long Term Plan 2024-2034, District Plan, Spatial Plan, SREDS, and annual reports and resource management plans prepared by local iwi).
- Drawing on data, mapping and existing technical work prepared for other plans and strategies.
- Reflecting on feedback received from other engagement processes, such as the Long Term Plan 2024-2034, Climate Change Strategy and Spatial Plan.
- Learning from the strategies prepared by other councils, analysing their growth strategies and housing strategies.
- Engaging with iwi and hapū as growth strategy partners.
- Having local conversations with other partners, key stakeholders, council staff and councillors.

Throughout this process, we researched and asked people to consider:

- What opportunities and challenges could growth bring.
- How to balance growth with other important priorities, such as environmental restoration, supporting rural lifestyle opportunities and protecting our cultural heritage.
- How to make sure all people in our community benefit from growth.
- How to provide sufficient and affordable housing.
- How to best grow amid the risks of natural hazards and the impacts of climate change.
- How to best build infrastructure to support current and future development.
- How to provide business and employment opportunities so all residents thrive.

8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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- How the Council can better support positive growth outcomes.

The Big 5 – Our Strategic Moves for the next 30 years

To enable Whakatāne District to grow and change over the next 30 years, we've identified our Big 5 Strategic Moves and 5 Guiding Principles. These support housing and economic growth, well sequenced investment in infrastructure, environmental restoration, and communities that are more resilient in the face of climate change and natural hazards. They are described in greater detail, along with implementation actions in the Strategic Moves section (see pg X).

The Big 5 Strategic Moves

We will focus on these high-level priorities to promote, unlock and guide sustainable growth opportunities.

1. Unlock greenfield opportunities in resilient and market-feasible locations
2. Enable iwi, hapū and whānau development aspirations.
3. Build a vibrant, more resilient and well-connected Town Centre and Kopeopeo mixed-use corridor.
4. Harness Whakatāne District's strengths and the Bay of Plenty's economic tailwinds to attract investment, grow businesses and provide jobs.
5. Prioritise policies, partnerships and investments that deliver for young people and seniors.

5 Guiding Principles

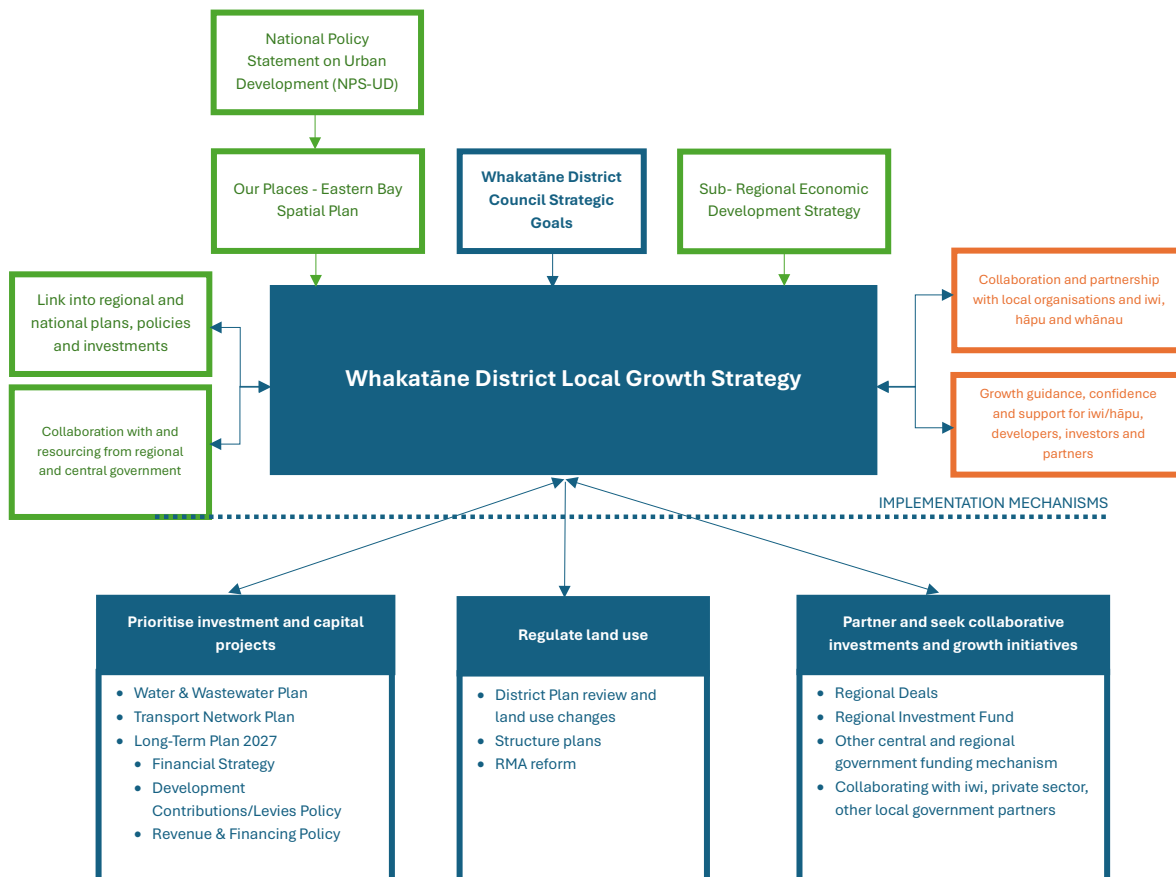
We will consistently align planning, policy and implementation activities with five principles to make sure growth occurs in an inclusive, balanced and sustainable way.

1. Strengthen relationships with iwi, hapū and whānau.
2. Foster communities that are resilient to natural hazards and climate change.
3. Act as strong stewards of our natural environment.
4. Enhance transport connectivity, accessibility and safety.
5. Align Council toward a shared growth, development and social equity agenda.

8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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How it all fits together

To be designed graphically

8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

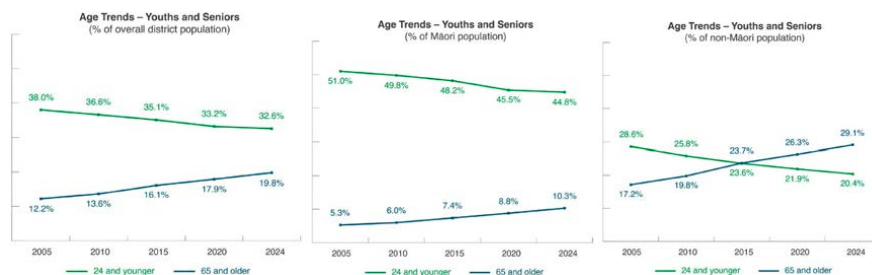
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Our district today Tō tātau rohe i tēnei rā*Our people*

Eight iwi rohe intersect with the district. Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Māhino, Ngāti Manawa, Ngāti Rangitahi, Ngāti Tūwharetoa ki Kawerau, Ngāti Whare, Ngāi Tuhoe and Te Whakatōhea all hold mana whenua within the district. Today, around 38,300 people call the district home, with nearly half identifying as Māori and 13% born overseas.

Our communities are aging rapidly with 20% of the total population, and almost 30% of the non-Māori population, aged 65 and older. We have a youthful population, with 33% of all residents and 45% of Māori aged under 25.

[Designed infographic to be inserted below]

*Our land*

Whakatāne District contains highly diverse ecosystems including beautiful coastal and island landscapes, the Rangitāiki plains, land-sculpting rivers and freshwater lakes, streams and wetlands. There are extensive areas of rugged native bush, plantation forestry and striking geological and volcanic features.

The district is 433,000 hectares, with Te Urewera covering some 40 percent of the land. The Department of Conservation manages large tracts of land in the southern reaches of the district.

In many places the landscape and waterways have been altered by land development and drainage, for forestry, agricultural, housing and urban development, particularly along the coast and northern parts of the district. Although indigenous vegetation and water quality and water flows have been impacted by land-use changes, areas of significant biodiversity remain across the district, and many places are now actively protected and being restored by communities.

[Photo to be inserted – Aerial or wide shot capturing Awakeri, plains, coast, Whakatāne etc.]

8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

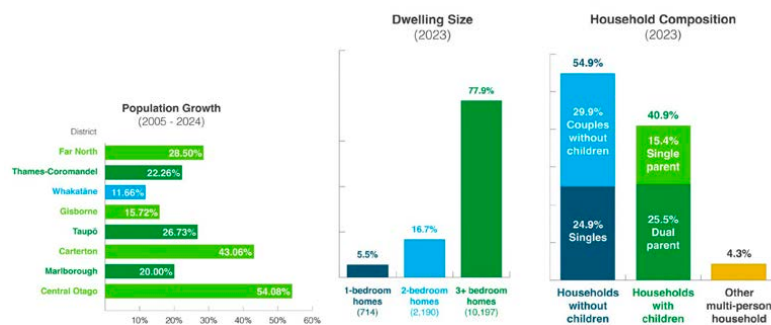
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Our communities

More than half of the district's population live in Whakatāne township and its neighbouring coastal communities. It is the residential heart of the Eastern Bay and has the region's hospital, tertiary education institutions and many cultural and sporting facilities. There are many smaller rural and coastal communities spread across the district from the coast to Te Urewera.

Over the last 20 years, our communities have grown more slowly than other New Zealand districts of similar size and character. At the same time, notable signs of housing supply pressures and affordability challenges have emerged, with housing costs accelerating much more quickly than household incomes. The district also lacks housing choices. Despite nearly 55% of Whakatāne District's households being singles or couples without children, only 22% of housing stock is one or two bedroom homes, and options are also limited for those seeking multi-generational housing options.

[Designed infographics to be inserted below]

*Our economy*

Median household incomes in Whakatāne District trail those in the Western Bay, vary widely across the district and there is significant reliance on pensions, benefits and the accommodation support. Although some industry sectors have been doing well, not all residents enjoy the same quality of life and access to training and employment opportunities. Recent overall Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth has lagged behind the district's peers.

Whakatāne District is the commercial and services hub of the Eastern Bay of Plenty, home to 68% of the region's population and generating 72% of its GDP – \$2.43 billion in 2024. The district has strengths in agriculture, forestry and fishing (14.3% of GDP) and is

8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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recognised as one of New Zealand's food baskets, with kiwifruit, olives, citrus, avocados and a wide range of berry fruit all thriving here.

There are major sustainable forestry operations and value-added manufacturing. The district is also relatively specialised in energy and water services (11.1% of GDP) and the home of Horizon Networks and healthcare and social assistance (8.9% of GDP) with the Whakatāne Hospital, nurse training at the Wānanga and a cluster of local healthcare providers.

The Māori enterprise sector is thriving, making up 24% of all businesses. The tourism sector also has an important presence, accounting for 7% of jobs and 3% of GDP.

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8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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Our growth challenges and opportunities Te whakatipu, ngā wero, me ngā whaiwāhitanga

We are being challenged to think differently about the future as a range of well-known, and emerging opportunities and pressures present themselves.

Change might be inevitable and uncertain, but it can be harnessed to deliver benefits that Whakatāne District's communities care about - stronger business and employment opportunities, more housing choice and affordability, greater resilience in our built environment, healthier people and ecosystems and a more connected social fabric.

The district faces several challenges and opportunities that have been identified across four key themes:

- Changing demographics
- Housing supply, affordability and quality
- Unlocking development
- Growing businesses and jobs

Understanding the key challenges and opportunities Whakatāne must respond to informs our Strategic Moves and Guiding Principles (see [pages X-X](#)).

Theme	Insights and challenges	Opportunities
Changing demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing population, with a relatively sustainable growth rate (~0.5-0.6%), but growing more slowly than peer districts. • Nearly 50-50 split between Māori and Pakeha: Māori population increasing and non-Māori population declining. • Immigration and natural increases are the primary drivers of recent growth. • Overall, more New Zealand-born residents are leaving the district than moving here. • Rapidly aging population. • High proportion of young people (especially Māori), but plateauing as young people leave the district. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the growth aspirations of Māori. • Orient initiatives and investments to accommodate the needs of an aging population. • Focus on providing economic and social opportunities for young people to reduce "brain drain" to other districts. • Support the growth aspirations of immigrant communities.
Housing supply, affordability and quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential consent rates and housing supply are barely keeping pace with growth. • Whakatāne's housing is more affordable than the Bay of Plenty generally, but its affordability is declining quickly. • House and rental prices have jumped significantly in the past 10 years. • House and rental markets are tight by national standards, which can drive up prices. • Housing supply is mismatched to district demographics. • Home type vs. household size: abundance of larger, detached homes and undersupply of smaller homes for smaller households. • Home type vs. age: undersupply of smaller housing options for young people (less income, single or couple) and aging people (less need for space, need for social support). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand housing supply to keep pace – and ideally outpace – population growth. • Diversify the housing stock to include typologies that better support small households, intergenerational households, young people and aging people. • Encourage investment in appropriate social housing. • Strengthen the capabilities of local builders and attract capable regional developers to build new housing typologies. • Enable iwi and hapū housing development and papakāinga aspirations.

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8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relative lack of housing choice and undersupply of certain typologies: intergenerational housing, retirement communities, smaller joined units. The quality of existing homes is a significant concern among residents, especially those living in ageing dwellings. Local builder and developer capabilities have traditionally focused on detached, single-family homes. 	
Unlocking development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural hazard risk, environmental protection and highly productive soils significantly constrain where new development can take place. Market feasibility for new growth is strongest near the coast and in existing urbanised areas. Iwi, hapū and whānau are major landowners in all places suitable for growth. There are numerous iwi, hapū and whānau-led master planning, housing and economic development efforts taking place across the district. Upgrading our roads and water networks is expensive and sometimes not feasible. Our ageing water infrastructure will require significant and costly upgrades to accommodate population growth. NZ Transport Agency funding priorities and constraints make it challenging to attract central government investment in our roading network. In the Spatial Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awakeri, Matatā, and coastal whenua Māori are Priority Growth Areas for greenfield development. Kopeopeo is a Priority Growth Area for infill development and intensification. Murupara and Minginui are Priority Growth Areas for iwi and hapū-led (Council supported) development. Town Centre is the economic and social heart of the district, but is relatively less resilient to hazard risk (especially flooding). Kopeopeo is relatively more resilient and amenity-rich, but has struggled to attract investment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue greenfield development opportunities (Awakeri, Matatā) in line with guidance from the Spatial Plan and in partnership with local iwi and hapū. Partner with iwi and hapū to unlock whenua Māori for development, especially in resilient areas along the coast. Actively support the housing and development aspirations of iwi, hapū and whānau, while protecting the mauri of water and whenua. Promote infill development in Kopeopeo while elevating its public realm and strengthening its connections to the Town Centre. Target transport and water infrastructure investment in areas that achieve the highest benefit to existing residents and enable growth in priority areas. Align sequencing of infrastructure investments with sequencing of Priority Growth Areas. De-risk new development by aligning Council's internal workstreams toward supporting growth. Calibrate development incentives and fees to promote desired forms of development while enabling partial cost recovery.
Growing businesses & jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The economy is growing, but economic growth has lagged behind peer districts. Income levels are lower than the Bay of Plenty overall and unemployment is higher than peer districts. Local Māori have even lower income and higher unemployment on average. The NEET rate is among the highest in the country. Comparative advantages in primary industries, energy and healthcare. Domestic tourism is also a strength. Strong and innovative Māori-owned business sector, but proportionally smaller than the Māori population. Lifestyle advantages related to outdoor recreation, access to natural landscapes and local culture. Vital conduit for and enabler of broader regional economic activity and investments. Western Bay of Plenty is an economic juggernaut and has the attention/investment focus of central government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a growth story that links the district to the Bay of Plenty's economic success, while highlighting Whakatāne's unique value proposition. Build on existing economic strengths and promote innovative enterprises focused on value-added activities. Raise the profile of the Māori business sector and support Māori-owned enterprises. Work with local organisations and iwi and hapū to understand how Council can better support the expansion of their training and employment opportunities for young people.

8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poor-quality roads, capacity limitations and over-reliance on road networks for freight contribute to congestion, lower productivity and higher business costs.• There is misalignment between the local labour force and the roles available, meaning businesses have trouble sourcing the talent they need.• The Eastern Bay has struggled to attract private capital to support industrial growth and broader economic development.	
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8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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Our district in the future Tō tātau rohe āpōpō

This section sets our direction for growth in the district over the next 30 years, including the Strategic Moves needed and actions to build momentum. They help focus our regulatory, service provision, investment and partnering activities towards sustainable growth. Taken together, this section spells out our “growth strategy” for the district – a strategy that aligns with the Spatial Plan and SREDS and builds momentum towards a thriving future for all Whakatāne residents.

Our Priority Growth Areas

[Photos from these areas to be added throughout this section]

The Spatial Plan examined a wide range of opportunities and constraints related to future development in the region and identified several Priority Growth Areas in the Whakatāne District. We have continued to explore these opportunities through consultation with our partners and communities and have identified the following locations as key areas for future growth.

While the Spatial Plan looked at all of Whakatāne District in its analysis of future growth, many areas were ultimately not considered Priority Growth Areas due to their constraints, such as significant natural hazard risks. It is likely that areas not noted as Priority Growth Areas will continue to experience modest, incremental growth and the Council will continue to provide levels of planning and infrastructure in these areas.

Awakeri

Awakeri is a priority for development because of its many advantages: a low hazard profile, good inter-district and regional transport connections (intersection of SH2 and SH30), existing social infrastructure, and large blocks of developable land. Projections in the Spatial Plan indicate the community could support an additional 2,000 residential lots by 2055, along with an energised centre that provides jobs and community amenities.

Next steps for advancing growth in Awakeri include developing a structure plan for the area and continuing to coordinate with landowners, community members, and local iwi and hapū to identify development opportunities and progress a shared vision for the future. Significant infrastructure investments will also be required to enable growth.

Matatā

Matatā serves as a gateway to both the Eastern and Western Bay of Plenty. Its elevated setting and beautiful natural surrounds position it well for future sustainable growth.

8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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The restoration of Te Awa o Te Atua will further strengthen this potential, delivering environmental, economic and cultural benefits.

Next steps for advancing growth in Matatā include investing in a wastewater treatment system to support current and future development, continuing to support Ngāti Rangitihi in driving the Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy and partnering with local iwi and hapū and community members to create a shared vision for the town's future. These actions would enable the town to grow from approximately 260 homes to 600-700 homes over 30 years through a mixture of infill and subdivision of existing residential properties. Additional capacity is also possible over the long-term provided it aligns with iwi and community values and retains the town's character and protects sites of cultural significance.

Coastal whenua Māori

Whenua Māori west of Coastlands (~190-ha) has the potential to accommodate significant investments in new homes and businesses, with conservative estimates placing the opportunity at 950 or more dwellings. This location is relatively well-protected from flood risks and enjoys excellent access to Whakatāne's beautiful coastline as well as nearby amenities in Whakatāne township. As the area is within the Ngāi Taiwhakaea rohe, and Māori land trusts own much of the land, iwi and hapū intentions will guide its future use.

Next steps for advancing growth include the Council working alongside Māori land trusts, Ngāti Awa and Ngāi Taiwhakaea to identify their aspirations for development and, if and when ready, help put in place the necessary planning frameworks and infrastructure investments to enable growth.

Kopeopeo

Kopeopeo presents the district's most promising opportunity for infill and intensification over time. The neighbourhood is relatively elevated from flood hazards, rich in amenities and is close to the Town Centre. Importantly, the area is already plan-enabled and has infrastructure in place to accommodate modest growth. It has the potential to be a second centre of urban activity, with current and future residents enjoying walkable linkages to jobs, education, healthcare, open space (including the redeveloped Rex Morpeth Park) and many places for community members to gather. Next steps for advancing growth in Kopeopeo include aligning the District Plan, Council processes and incentive policies towards promoting higher-density, mixed-use development. Unlocking development will also involve collaborating with local landholding partners such as Ngāti Awa and Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi, as well as advocating for Kopeopeo with the developer community.

8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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Murupara

In the southern part of the district, there are opportunities to progress Māori-led development and master planning initiatives. In Murupara, Ngāti Manawa holds consents to develop 30 homes on Miro Drive and has been leading master planning work to unlock land and drive local economic development. Murupara also has infrastructure in place to accommodate a significantly larger population. Ngāti Manawa are exploring options to develop local industry and employment opportunities to support growth in the township.

Next steps for enabling growth in Murupara include partnering with Ngāti Manawa on land use and infrastructure planning to support their master plan outcomes, as well as helping connect iwi and hapū with additional partners and investors to advance their development aspirations. The Council can also enable Māori-led development in Murupara by assisting Ngāti Manawa to explore planning pathways for papakāinga at Evan's Park and by preparing a business case for a new commercial area along the Te Urewera Rainforest Route.

Minginui

In Minginui, Ngāti Whare has developed a master plan prioritising redevelopment of the town centre along with multipurpose spaces for health services, cultural and educational activities, recreation and whānau gatherings.

Next steps for enabling growth in these areas include continuing to partner with Ngāti Whare and the Minginui Village Incorporated Society on land use and infrastructure planning, as well as helping connect iwi and hapū with additional partners and investors to advance their development aspirations.

8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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Strategic Moves Ngā nekehanga rautaki

We will focus on five Strategic Moves to promote, unlock and guide sustainable growth opportunities:

1. Unlock resilient and market-feasible greenfield opportunities.
2. Enable iwi, hapū and whānau development aspirations.
3. Build a vibrant, more resilient and well-connected Town Centre-Kopeopeo mixed-use corridor.
4. Harness Whakatāne District's strengths and the Bay of Plenty's economic tailwinds to attract investment, grow businesses and provide jobs.
5. Prioritise policies, partnerships and investments that deliver for young people and seniors.

Each Strategic Move has Growth Actions, which are specific implementation activities designed to achieve the broader move. The Council's roles, timeframes, costs and levels of current feasibility have been considered for each Growth Action. Additionally, "vehicles" have been identified to show how these actions will be incorporated into existing workstreams and/or new initiatives.

[Following sections to have graphical layout]

Council's role

Council has a powerful but limited range of approaches it can use to implement our strategic moves, making it essential to collaborate closely with iwi and hapū, local organisations, regional and central government, businesses and investors, and other partners to realise desired growth outcomes. These collaborations will amplify the impact of Council actions and ensure there is broader, all-of-district stewardship of our growth trajectory.

The Council's primary role in growth and development includes:

- **Regulator** – Setting and enforcing plans and policies, including using "carrots and sticks" (e.g., development incentives and fees).
- **Investor** – Using financial means to invest in infrastructure, land, buildings and programmes. This also includes the Council's role as an owner/holder of these assets.
- **Service Provider** – Delivering services and programmes for local residents, businesses and partners.
- **Facilitator** – Bringing collaborators and partners together around a shared goal.
- **Advocate** – Lobbying regional and central government, as well as other potential partners, for support and investment.
- **Partner** – Engaging with other parties to jointly deliver initiatives, projects and services, leveraging each parties core competencies.

8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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Timeframe and cost

We've indicated the timing and level of investment for the Council for each action at a rough order-of-magnitude to assist in sequencing and prioritising actions. These expenditures will be spread across a period of 30 years. Many of these costs have already been budgeted in the Council's Long Term Plan 2024-2034 but may require adjustments to investment priorities and sequencing. In cases where new investments are needed, the Council will actively seek partnerships and cost-sharing arrangements and explore innovative financing tools that help diffuse costs.

Timeframe

- **Near-term:** 1-5 years
- **Medium-term:** 6-10 years
- **Long-term:** 10+ years

Council investment

- **Minimal (\$):** Can be delivered by current Council staff with limited additional cost
- **Low (\$\$):** Up to \$100k (e.g., part-time staff, small study, periodic facilitation)
- **Medium (\$\$\$):** \$100k-\$1m (e.g., new programme, new staff/workstream, larger initiative)
- **High (\$\$\$\$):** Greater than \$1m (e.g., investment in new infrastructure/facilities)

Level of current feasibility

Within our current context and capabilities, some things are more doable immediately or in the short-medium term than others. We've indicated how feasible each action is given these constraints. Actions that are more aspirational – or currently less feasible – should not be dismissed, as conditions will change and these activities often catalyse positive change.

- **Immediately achievable (Immediate):** Achievable with existing resources and minimal staff re-assignment.
- **Achievable with minor enabling activity (Minor enabling):** Generally achievable within existing workstreams, though it may require small adjustments to staff assignments and work programmes.
- **Achievable with major enabling activity (Major enabling):** Achievable with significant adjustments to staff assignments, capabilities, investment priorities and/or council workstreams.
- **Highly aspirational (Aspirational):** Requires fundamental institutional change over a long timeframe (>5 years) to make possible.

8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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(1) Unlock resilient and market-feasible greenfield opportunities*The challenge*

The Spatial Plan estimates that, under the medium-growth scenario, there will be demand for around 2,970 new households and an additional 212 hectares of residential land in the Whakatāne District by 2053. The local housing market is already under pressure, driving up costs for current residents and those looking to move to the district. While some of this demand can be met through infill and further intensification of existing urban areas, it will be critical to strategically open new greenfield opportunities to accommodate residential and commercial growth.

There are several factors that significantly constrain where greenfield development can occur in the district, most notably natural hazard risks and the need to conserve land with important natural taonga or highly productive soils. Market feasibility is also a key consideration, as developers must be able to achieve reasonable returns for projects to proceed.

The opportunity

Opening up new development opportunities outside Whakatāne township will be essential to meet the housing and lifestyle demands of current and future residents. The Spatial Plan identifies several areas suitable for future growth, based on an assessment of natural hazard and climate change risks, environmental attributes and highly productive land. Council will need to prioritise options that are market-feasible and have a high value-to-cost ratio for infrastructure investment.

Future developments in Awakeri, Matatā and whenua Māori west of Coastlands will expand these communities while balancing their existing character and rural lifestyle attributes. They will be well-connected to both Whakatāne township as well as social and economic opportunities regionally. They will also expand and bring new housing options to the district, such as retirement villages, smaller homes, and spaces for intergenerational and combined households. As these areas grow, it will be important to invest in social infrastructure and public amenities alongside new homes and businesses to create complete communities.

Growth actions

Growth action and timeframe	Council role (vehicle)	Council cost	Current feasibility
Various time frames			
1. Enable growth and intensification in greenfield priority growth areas as identified in the Spatial Plan through District Plan changes and targeted next steps:	Regulate (District Plan review)	Various	Various
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matatā: Partner with Ngāti Rangitihī and provide funding for a participatory democracy process to prepare a master plan (building off investments in the Tarawera Awa Restoration Strategy and Matatā wastewater treatment plant). 	Partner & regulate (partner using a new process)	\$\$\$	Minor enabling

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8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

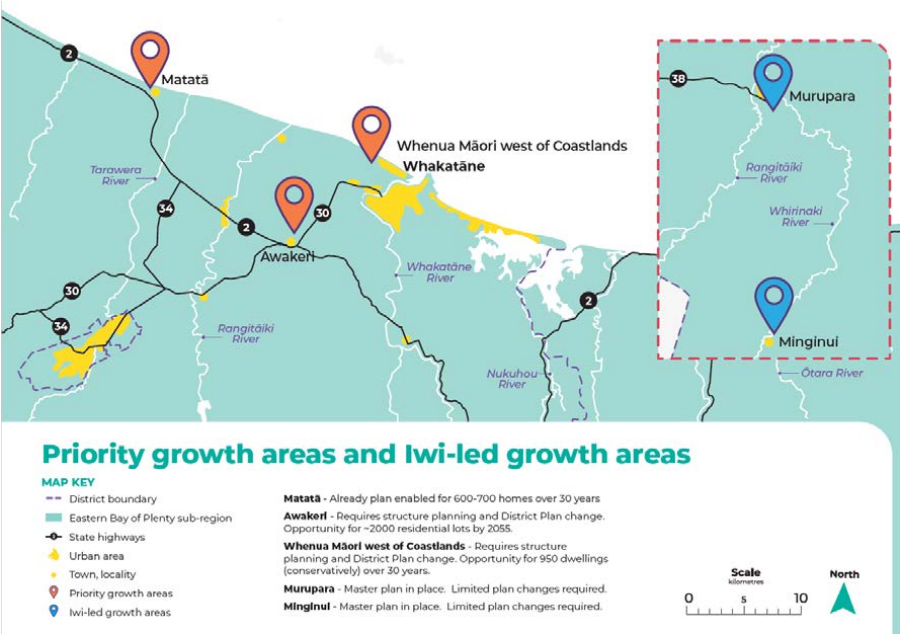
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awakeri: Develop a structure plan across multiple time horizons/scales and work with motivated landowners to deliver development in Awakeri. 	Regulate (new structure plan)	\$\$\$	Immediate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coastlands/coastal whenua Māori: Actively partner with Ngāti Awa, Ngāi Taiwhakaea and Māori land trusts to progress their development intentions for coastal whenua Māori. 	Partner	\$\$\$	Major enabling
Near term			
2. Staff a Development Manager who can drive the assessment and realisation of strategic development opportunities with partners (e.g. retirement villages, Kopeopeo intensification, etc.)	Provide & partner (new staff position/workstream)	\$\$\$	Minor enabling
3. Align future Long Term Plan infrastructure investment and sequencing with Priority Growth Areas and commit to a prioritised infrastructure programme to give development partners and infrastructure providers greater certainty.	Invest & provide (LTP Infrastructure Strategy)	\$\$\$\$	Immediate
4. Better enable development of rural lands that are already fragmented by allowing denser subdivision on these blocks and/or rezoning this land for more intensive use.	Regulate (District Plan review)	\$\$	Minor enabling
5. Prepare a 30-year water & wastewater plan that considers growth and enables resilient, market-feasible greenfield development.	Regulate (new plan)	\$\$	Immediate
6. Prepare a 30-year transport network plan that considers growth and enables resilient, market-feasible greenfield development.	Regulate (new plan)	\$\$	Immediate
7. Draft and adopt a Development Levies Policy that incentivises development which enhances the natural environment (e.g., biodiversity restoration), builds resilience to natural hazards and applies best practice water management.	Regulate (new Development Levies policy)	\$\$\$	Minor enabling
8. Draft and adopt urban design guidelines that encourage more compact suburban development and eco-friendly neighborhoods, while discouraging sprawl	Regulate (new guidelines)	\$\$\$	Minor enabling
Medium to long term			
9. Use innovative financing mechanisms to deliver enabling infrastructure works and spread costs/risks for Council and developers (e.g., value capture, NIFFCo greenfield model, InfraKiwi)	Invest & regulate (New financing mechanisms)	\$\$\$\$	Aspirational

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8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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(2) Enable iwi, hapū and whānau development aspirations*The challenge*

Eight iwi rohe intersect with Whakatāne District and significant area of land are owned by iwi, hapū and whānau. Many tracts of whenua Māori lie within Priority Growth Areas, including nearly all of the coastal land between Coastlands and the airport.

Development of whenua Māori, when aligned with iwi and hapū aspirations, presents valuable economic, social and cultural opportunities to whānau and can help accommodate the district's future growth.

Unlocking whenua Māori for development can be challenging due to land fragmentation and complicated ownership structures. Access to capital is a constraint too, as traditional lenders (e.g., banks) often do not lend to whenua Māori owners and trusts. Planning and regulatory constraints can also add further complexity. Local iwi and hapū have made progress in planning and developing their whenua in recent years, and continued Council support and partnership could help build on this in the future.

The opportunity

Developing whenua Māori is central to accommodating growth and expanding housing and employment opportunities, particularly for current and future Māori residents. Whenua Māori encompasses many of the most resilient and suitable areas for development in the district. Achieving positive development outcomes will require close partnership between the Council and iwi and hapū, a genuine commitment to Māori growth aspirations, and alignment of Council policies, land use regulations and investments related to these lands.

In some instances, this may involve stepping back so iwi, hapū and whānau can deliver outcomes best suited to their needs. In others, it may involve stepping forward to deliver enabling infrastructure and pursue joint development opportunities. Council will need to invest in specialist capability to strengthen partnerships with Māori to achieve shared growth goals.

Growth actions

Growth action	Council role (vehicle)	Council cost	Current feasibility
Near term			
1. Review effectiveness of planning overlays and restrictions on whenua Māori as part of District Plan review to support expansion of papakāinga and better enable Māori development aspirations.	Partner & regulate (District Plan review)	\$\$\$	Immediate
2. Work with iwi and hapū to offer reciprocal practical learning and capacity building opportunities related to land use planning and infrastructure investment (e.g., shadowing, knowledge exchanges, internships).	Partner	\$\$	Minor enabling
3. Grow Council's in-house specialist capability and resources to help support unlocking housing and development on whenua Māori.	Partner, provide & facilitate (new staff position / workstream)	\$\$	Minor enabling

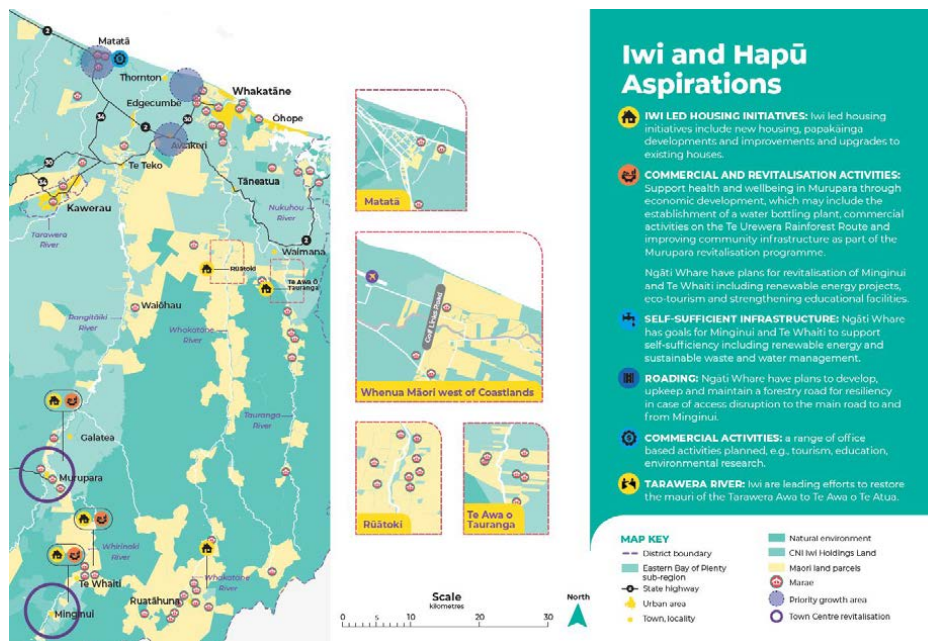
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Near to medium term			
4.	Partner with and support Ngāti Manawa in implementing a master plan for Murupara, including assisting iwi in exploring planning pathways for papakāinga at Evan's Park, preparing a business case for a new commercial area along the Te Urewera Rainforest Route, and developing a 30-home proposal at 5 Miro Drive.	Partner, regulate, invest (master plan and LTP)	\$\$\$
5.	Partner with and support Ngāti Whare in implementing a master plan for Minginui.	Partner, regulate, invest (master plan and LTP)	\$\$\$
6.	Identify and drive a proof-of-concept, joint development project involving a partnership between local iwi and hapū and Council.	Partner & invest (new project)	\$\$\$\$
Near to long term			
7.	Work with iwi and hapū, marae and Bay of Plenty Regional Council to improve the resilience of key sites of significance to Māori (e.g., marae and urupā).	Partner & facilitate (climate adaptation planning)	\$

[Insert following map]



8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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(3) Build a vibrant, more resilient and well-connected Town Centre and Kopeopeo mixed-use corridor*The challenge*

The Town Centre and Kopeopeo are both essential to the district's growth and wellbeing. The Town Centre accounts for nearly 48% of the district's GDP and together, these neighbourhoods function as the service centre for the Eastern Bay. They are also vital to the identity and culture of the district.

While these neighborhoods have the highest concentration of amenities and greatest amount of housing diversity in the district, their development potential remains under-realised and Kopeopeo is poorly integrated with the Town Centre. The Town Centre also faces increasing risks from natural hazards and climate change – risks that are considerably lower for the more elevated Kopeopeo.

The opportunity

Linking the Town Centre and Kopeopeo into an interconnected, mixed-use corridor will build on the Town Centre's economic and cultural strengths while creating more development opportunities in the amenity-rich and more resilient Kopeopeo. This will combine the advantages of both neighbourhoods and expand their existing employment, education and healthcare clusters. Residents and visitors alike will enjoy access to the riverfront and the redeveloped Rex Morpeth Park, shops and restaurants along The Strand and King Street, and cultural taonga like Pōhaturoa Rock and Te Kōputu a te Whanga a Toi.

Encouraging more density and a greater mix of uses – especially along Kopeopeo's more resilient corridors – will provide much-needed housing and activity spaces while reducing the need to spend money on new infrastructure. Integrated planning and improvements in connectivity will make it easier for people to move about these neighbourhoods and signal to businesses and developers that the whole corridor is ripe for investment. This strategic move will help ensure Whakatāne remains the beating heart of the Eastern Bay.

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8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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Growth actions

Growth action and time frame	Council role (vehicle)	Council cost	Current feasibility
Near Term			
1. Prepare an integrated master plan for the Town Centre and Kopeopeo to inform subsequent District Plan changes and aligned Lont Tern Plan infrastructure investment.	Regulate (repurpose Town Centre vision as new master plan)	\$\$\$	Minor enabling
2. Enable higher density, mixed-use development with minimal discretionary review along the Town Centre-Kopeopeo corridor to align with master plan direction.	Regulate (District Plan change)	\$\$\$	Minor enabling
3. Investigate how incentives (e.g., development levies, differential rating) and in-kind support could be better used to unlock and de-risk more affordable, multi-family housing typologies across this area.	Regulate & invest (Council research)	\$	Immediate
4. Assess the feasibility of land value rating in the Town Centre and Kopeopeo to drive more private sector investment and stimulate vacant land development within the corridor over time.	Regulate (Council research)	\$	Immediate
5. In collaboration with insurance industry, investigate how resilient building typologies and renovations/retrofits could better enable the Town Centre to coexist with natural hazards.	Facilitate, advocate, regulate (Council research)	\$	Immediate
6. Encourage the establishment of a business association and/or business improvement district covering both the Town Centre and Kopeopeo.	Facilitate	\$	Minor enabling
7. Support a proof-of-concept project for affordable housing in Kopeopeo, potentially through the contribution of Council-owned land and/or in-kind support.	Partner, invest, facilitate (new process/project)	\$\$\$\$	Major enabling
Near to medium term			
8. Continue to rationalise the leases of the Council's Town Centre assets to encourage more private sector investment and higher density, more resilient development.	Invest & facilitate (lease rationalisation programme)	\$\$\$	Immediate
9. In collaboration with builders and trade programmes, identify ways to broaden local developers' capabilities to enable denser housing typologies and attract experienced regional developers.	Facilitate & advocate	\$	Minor enabling
10. Support redevelopment of Rex Morpeth Park as a vital local and regional asset at the heart of a higher density residential district.	Provide, invest, partner (Rex Morpeth re-development)	\$\$\$\$	Immediate
Near to long term			
11. Support the Wānanga in realising its broader development aspirations and assess the feasibility of expanding student housing.	Facilitate, Advocate	\$	Immediate
12. Enhance multi-modal transport connections – especially pedestrian, active and public transport – to integrate the Town Centre, Kopeopeo (King St) and Rex Morpeth Park.	Regulate & invest (LTP Infrastructure Strategy / Active Whakatāne)	\$\$\$\$	Minor enabling
13. Strategically purchase land in Kopeopeo to better facilitate connectivity and affordable housing development.	Invest (strategic property process)	\$\$\$\$	Minor enabling
14. Enhance the quality of the public realm and access to green space in Kopeopeo over time to better blend with the Town Centre and support private sector investment.	Invest (LTP / Open Space Strategy)	\$\$\$\$	Minor enabling
Medium to long term			
15. Align the Council's infrastructure investments with the direction set in the Town Centre-Kopeopeo master plan, including tilting future Council investments in office and community facilities toward more resilient locations in the corridor.	Provide & Invest (LTP)	\$\$\$\$	Major enabling

8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

[Type here]

Long term			
16. Advocate for and help facilitate the alignment of institutional investment priorities and rules of other strategic investors, to better direct development across both the Town Centre and Kopeopeo corridor over time (e.g., LTP, Harbour Board Trust purpose, other regional investment entities).	Facilitate & advocate	\$\$\$	Aspirational

[Insert following map]



8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

[Type here]

(4) Harness Whakatāne District's strengths and the Bay of Plenty's economic tailwinds to attract investment, grow businesses and create jobs

The challenge

While Whakatāne District is a wonderful place to live and is home to many thriving enterprises, private and central government investment has often bypassed the district in recent years, favouring opportunities elsewhere in the Western Bay of Plenty and Rotorua. Meanwhile, the Western Bay has become an economic juggernaut with the attention of central government – most recently through its 2025 Regional Deal partnership.

Ultimately, these are forces to harness, not resist. Building on the district's existing strengths – including ensuring workers are well-matched to available opportunities and have affordable housing – will better position our local industries to thrive in a competitive environment. Linking Whakatāne's success with the wider region's growth will also help draw public and private investment.

The opportunity

Whakatāne is uniquely situated to continue being both the commercial and residential heart of the Eastern Bay, and the gateway to the Western Bay. Recent trends suggest investment is shifting eastward from Tauranga toward the district, evidenced by construction of the Eastern Link Toll Road and Rangiuru Business Park. By setting a direction that looks west, the district can benefit from the economic activity of the Western Bay while offering a more livable and affordable alternative to find a home, open a business and enjoy the natural and cultural setting. This approach will also support local tourism operators, particularly in Murupara, and build upon Rotorua's success in attracting visitors.

Whakatāne District plays a vital role connecting the region's major economic centres – Ōpotiki's aquaculture, Kawerau's industry, Tauranga's port and Rotorua's tourism. The district also has distinct economic strengths in primary industries, energy, healthcare and tourism, including innovative Māori-owned enterprises across all sectors. Sharing Whakatāne's story, and its central role in sustaining regional growth, will help attract more resources and infrastructure investments. Encouraging entrepreneurial businesses, particularly those focused on value-added products and services, will create local jobs, strengthen the economy and enhance the district's regional influence.

It will also be vital to ensure our natural environment and agricultural soils thrive alongside economic development. Focusing growth through urban intensification and compact, sustainable greenfield development will help us preserve these resources for future generations.

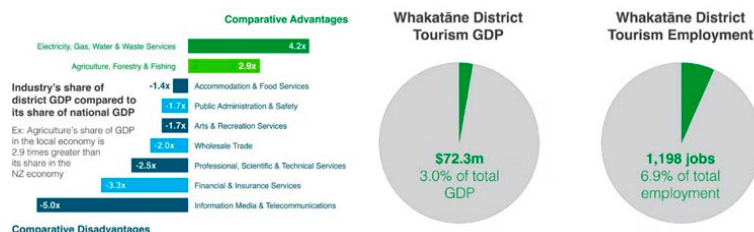
8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

[Type here]

Growth actions

Growth action	Council role (vehicle)	Council cost	Current feasibility
Near term			
1. Identify and zone additional commercial and light industrial land in the District Plan.	Regulate (District Plan review)	\$\$	Immediate
2. Create a growth and development story to generate local enthusiasm/support and share with funders outside the district. Stress the advantages of being near the Western Bay, while also emphasising the unique offer of Whakatāne's economy and lifestyle.	Advocate (new growth story)	\$\$\$	Immediate
3. Proactively assist current and prospective businesses with location and expansion in Whakatāne, with particular expertise in promoting existing and emerging Māori enterprises.	Facilitate & provide (refocused workstream)	\$\$	Immediate
4. Advocate tourism offers geared toward the Upper North Island market, including supporting Māori tourism operations. Link this offer to the broader growth and development story.	Advocate (tourism advocacy channels)	\$\$\$	Immediate
Near to long term			
5. Proactively identify entrepreneurial enterprises, including Māori enterprises aligned with economic development priorities. Make it easier for them to stay/expand in the district through streamlined Council processes, site identification support, partnership facilitation and guidance during planning and consenting.	Provide, facilitate & regulate (internal Council alignment)	\$\$	Minor enabling
Medium to long term			
6. Prepare economic development roadmaps for industry sectors where the district has underdeveloped comparative advantages, beginning with energy, healthcare and/or value-add horticulture.	Facilitate and advocate (sector plans)	\$\$\$	Immediate
7. Position the district as a place for testing innovative finance mechanisms for underwriting transportation infrastructure that links regional markets (e.g., PPP for Pekatahi Bridge, InfraKiwi).	Advocate & invest	\$\$\$	Aspirational
Long term			
8. Retain future options for passenger rail links to the Western Bay, to support long-term urban and economic development in all strategic planning.	Advocate & regulate (future long-term planning)	\$\$	Aspirational

[Designed infographics to be inserted below]



8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

[Type here]

(5) Prioritise policies, partnerships and investments that deliver for young people and seniors

The challenge

Overall, the district's population is ageing with the proportion of residents over 65 growing each year. Many of these residents have greater resources but may be living in homes that are too large, require more healthcare and community support, and face accessibility challenges. Social isolation and loneliness are also growing concerns among older people in the district.

At the same time, many of Whakatāne's young people are facing challenges. The district's NEET rate (youth 15-24 not in employment, education or training) is among the highest in the country, and young people often struggle to find meaningful economic and social opportunities. These issues are especially acute among the district's large rangatahi Māori population.

The opportunity

Focusing on the district's young and older residents will ensure these large and more vulnerable groups are able to thrive as the community grows. An important aspect of this will involve orienting housing initiatives to deliver affordable options that meet the needs of young people, older residents and intergenerational households, including developments that enable people of all ages to live alongside one another in connected communities.

Investments in social infrastructure and creating more shared spaces will strengthen opportunities to connection among youth and seniors. Improvements to connectivity, particularly public and active transport, will make it easier for these groups to move around independently. Linking the Whakatāne Town Centre, Kopeopeo, Rex Morpeth Park and key local institutions into an integrated, accessible mixed-use corridor will help support social connectivity as the population grows.

Partnerships and initiatives will expand the educational and employment opportunities available to young people, helping them develop the skills to enter the workforce and maintain a career. Whakatāne District's existing network of health and social assistance providers will also need to be strengthened to ensure residents have the care they need as they age.

While focused on both ends of the age spectrum, these actions will deliver benefits to the district as a whole.

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8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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Growth actions

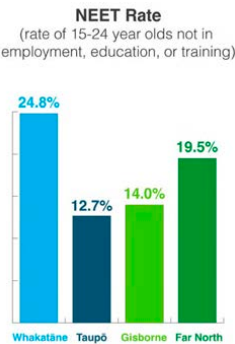
Growth action	Council role (vehicle)	Council cost	Current feasibility
Near term			
1. Better understand the barriers around delivering smaller, more compact and affordable housing typologies (e.g., tiny homes) and remove unessential planning and regulatory obstacles to provide greater housing choice for smaller households and people with less income	Regulate (research and District Plan review)	\$\$	Immediate
2. Better understand the barriers around delivering intergenerational and co-housing typologies and remove unessential planning and regulatory obstacles.	Regulate (research and District Plan review)	\$\$	Immediate
3. Establish an ongoing housing leadership forum (including developers and social sector organisations) to work together on a compelling housing needs story, development opportunities and challenges and share best practices.	Facilitate (new advocacy network)	\$\$	Immediate
4. Mirroring the Council's successful social sector network model, collaborate with employers, educational institutions, social sector organisations and iwi to enable the expansion of training pathways and economic opportunities for youth.	Facilitate (new advocacy network)	\$\$	Immediate
5. Gather and maintain consistent quantitative and qualitative data on housing supply and demand, including demand data broken down into population segments (e.g., age, income, etc.). Make this information open and accessible.	Provide (new data gathering and sharing process and platform)	\$\$\$	Minor enabling
6. Run a pilot within the Council that provides training pathways for youth.	Provide (new internal training pathway)	\$\$\$	Major enabling
Near to medium term			
7. Prioritise providing recreational and community activities for youths and seniors in the Rex Morpeth Park redevelopment.	Partner & invest (Rex Morpeth Park re-development)	\$\$\$\$	Minor enabling
8. Actively develop partnerships with public transport, micro-mobility and on-demand transit providers and streamline consenting for these services to provide more options for mobility-constrained people.	Partner & regulate (bylaw & consenting process changes)	\$\$	Minor enabling
9. Actively attract investment to grow culturally appropriate retirement communities across the affordability spectrum.	Partner, facilitate & advocate	\$\$\$	Minor enabling
Near to long term			
10. Make healthcare and social assistance an economic development priority to build on this comparative advantage and enable greater support for seniors (see Action X in Economic Development Strategic Move).	Facilitate & advocate	\$\$	Immediate
11. Support the continued growth of Māori health organisations and healthcare-oriented education programmes at the wānanga.	Partner, facilitate & advocate	\$\$	Immediate

[Designed infographics to be inserted below]

Year	Population by age group (years), at 30 June (%change 2023-2053)			
	0–14	15–39	40–64	65+
%change	-15.0%	-8.9%	12.1%	50.7%

8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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Guiding Principles Ngā Mātāpono ārahi

Our Strategic Moves and associated actions will align with five Guiding Principles to ensure growth-related activities occur in an inclusive, balanced and sustainable way. These principles encourage partnership as well as alignment with local, regional, national and iwi and hapū-led efforts focused on connectivity, environmental stewardship, natural hazard resilience and social equity.

Our Guiding Principles are:

- Strengthen relationships with iwi, hapū and whānau
- Foster communities that are resilient to natural hazards and climate change
- Act as strong stewards of our natural environment
- Enhance transport connectivity, accessibility and safety
- Align Council toward a shared growth, development and social equity agenda

Guiding Principle	What this means
Strengthen relationships with iwi, hapū and whānau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaningfully partnering with iwi, hapū and whānau on all major growth and development-related initiatives. • Helping iwi, hapū and whānau realise their development aspirations through active support, co-investment (when feasible) and the removal of unessential barriers. • Continually review iwi and hapū strategic and economic development plans and seek to align Council plans accordingly.
Foster communities that are resilient to natural hazards and climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuously aligning growth and development plans with Council's natural hazard adaptation and resilience initiatives. • Incentivising and/or removing barriers to development that contributes positively to adaptation and resilience goals.
Act as strong stewards of our natural environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuously aligning growth and development plans with Council's environmental, recreational and open space initiatives. • Incentivising and/or removing barriers to development and initiatives that contribute to positive environmental outcomes including the mauri of water and whenua. • Setting standards aligned with environmental best practices for sustainably and affordably treating wastewater across the district.
Enhance transport connectivity, accessibility and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investing in enhanced transport connectivity with an emphasis on linking Priority Growth Areas and providing active and safer transport options. • Building relationships with regional and central government to secure resources for transformative transport projects.
Align Council toward a shared growth, development and social equity agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing strong, consistent leadership in support of growth, development and social equity priorities – with growth paying for growth. • Fostering a collaborative, creative and solutions-oriented culture focused on advancing the district's growth. • Investing in specialist capabilities and resources to support growth-oriented partnerships and projects.

8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensuring alignment toward shared growth and social & intergenerational equity outcomes across Council plans and strategies.• Shaping Council processes, systems and organisational design to more effectively support growth actions.
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8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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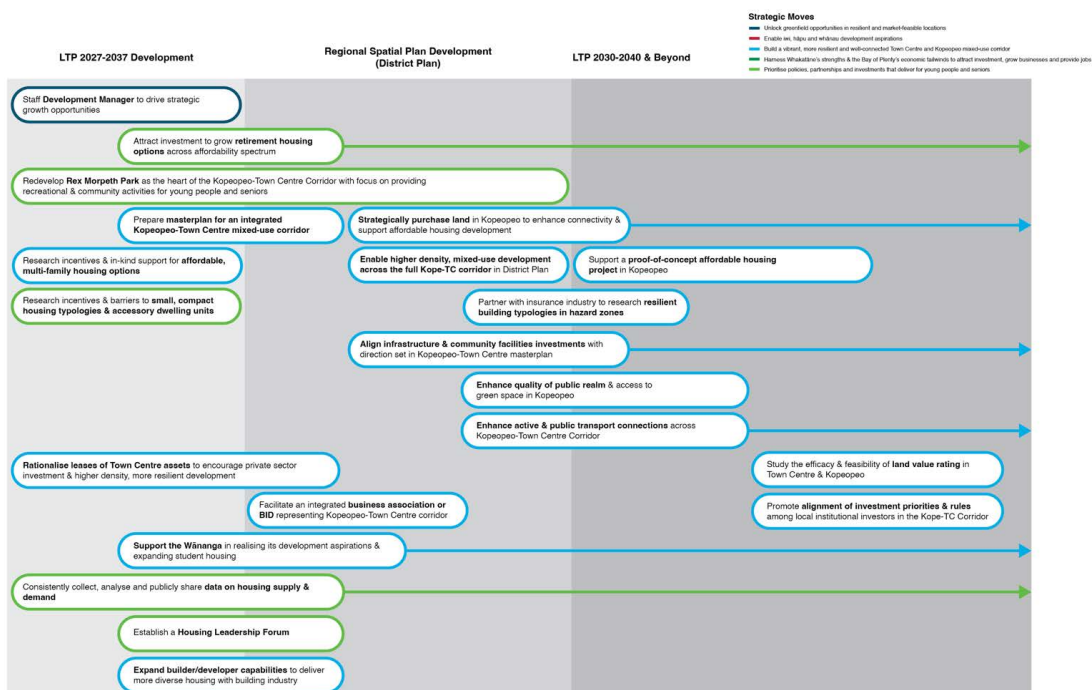
Making it happen Te whakatinanatanga

Planning for growth is complex, takes time and involves many different activities, partners, agencies, investors, developers and communities.

Implementing the direction set out in the Spatial Plan, SREDS and this Local Growth Strategy will include making changes to the Whakatāne District Plan, revising the Infrastructure Strategy in the Long Term Plan, collaborating with a range of existing and new partners and advocating to regional and central government.

Our implementation plan and next steps are set out in the diagram below:

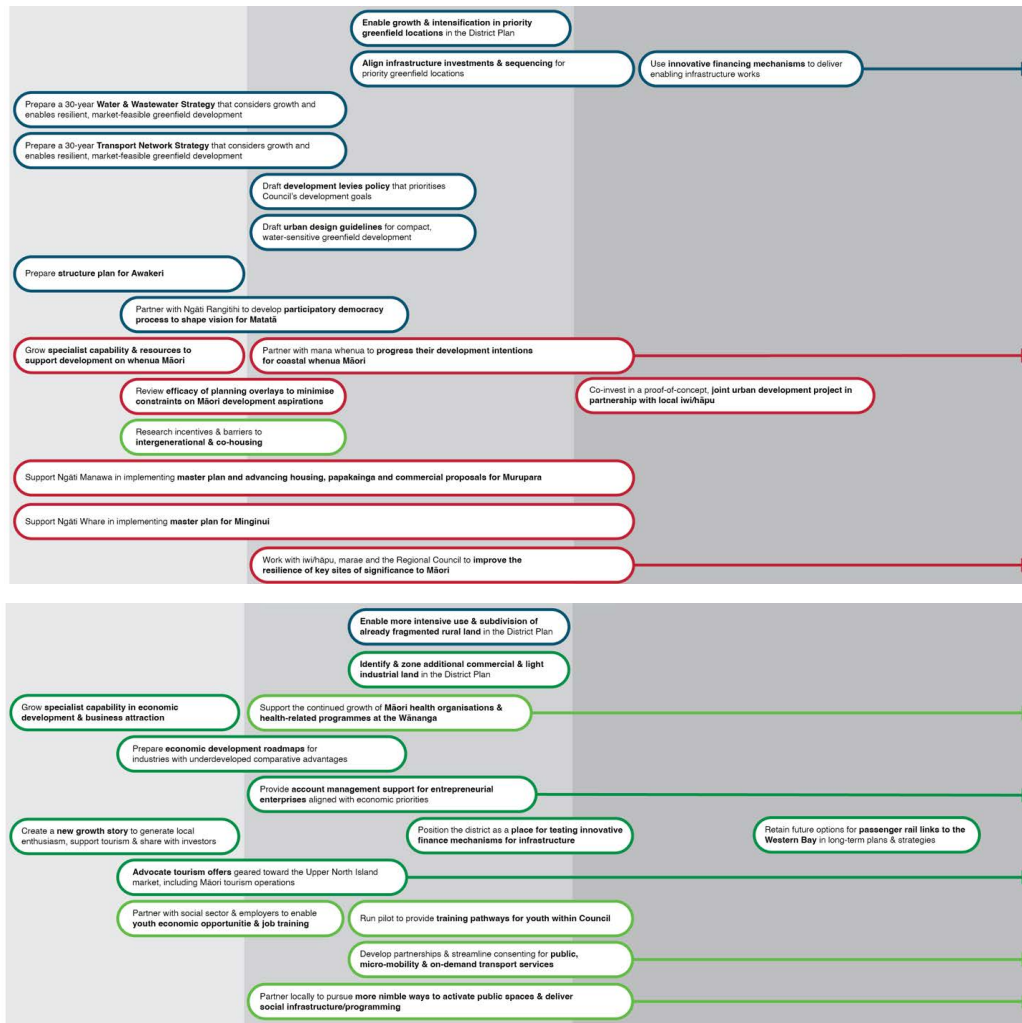
Implementation diagram below showing proposed timing for each strategic action, to be re-designed for readability



Ordinary Council - AGENDA

8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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Critical assumptions and mitigations

We've detailed a set of critical assumptions that underpin our growth planning. If incorrect, they may diminish our ability to implement our Local Growth Strategy and realise our development aspirations. By documenting and continuing to test and update these assumptions, we can put measures in place to offset risks.

Assumption	Mitigations
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8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

[Type here]

Council leaders and staff will consistently champion growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide strong, consistent Council leadership in support of growth efforts. • Internal advocacy and change management (as necessary) to cultivate a shared vision for the district's growth. • Invest in specialist capabilities and resources to facilitate growth-oriented activities across Council workstreams.
Council will have specialist internal and external capabilities available to drive growth-related activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in training and development opportunities for staff to support growth-related activities. • If internal candidates are not available, recruit highly-qualified external candidates consistently support their work remit.
Our population will continue to grow and low-to-medium projections from the Spatial Plan will generally remain accurate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to monitor population growth rates and calibrate growth-related activities, investments and future versions of our Local Growth Strategy accordingly. • Maintain a proactive posture towards growth to enable flexibility as our context changes.
Central government reforms, including Resource Management Act (RMA) reform, will affect the land use planning and investment tools at the Council's disposal, but will not fundamentally undermine our vision and trajectory for growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate new central government rules and tools into growth-related workstreams as they are rolled out. • Continue to move forward the growth actions that have little to no risk of being adversely affected by government reforms. • Continue to align Council's growth activities with our guiding principles of environmental stewardship, community resilience and strengthening iwi, hapū and whānau relationships.
Private sector investment will flow into the district if the actions in our Local Growth Strategy are implemented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the effectiveness of growth actions in supporting investment activity and update future iterations of our Local Growth Strategy to reflect lessons learned. • Maintain consistent communication with private sector partners to better understand opportunities and constraints for investment in real-time. • Remain flexible in how growth actions are implemented to enable continuous improvement and greater efficacy.
Central and regional government agencies will support the district's growth through infrastructure investment, funding assistance and regulatory enablement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently lobby central and regional government for their support, leveraging a compelling growth story and taking a "whole-of-district" advocacy approach that includes partners, iwi and hapū and other investors. • Demonstrate the district's commitment to growth by driving growth actions that require little to no support from regional and central government. • Ensure the scale, timing and sequencing of growth is clear to infrastructure providers and funders.
Local organisational partners and iwi, hapū and whānau will partner with the Council to advance local growth and help implement our growth actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a commitment to driving growth initiatives in collaboration with partners, building trust through shared mahi, joint decision-making and consistent support for their aspirations
Future hazard modeling, insurance retreat and extreme weather events will not fundamentally undermine our ability to develop in Priority Growth Areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to better understand the risks associated with natural hazards and climate change, adjusting future iterations of our Local Growth Strategy accordingly • Implement adaptation and resilience measures (in line with Council's adaptation and resilience workstreams) to enable the district to continue to thrive amid natural hazard risks.

8.4.1 Appendix A – Draft Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy(Cont.)

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Monitoring & review

Successfully implementing the actions in this strategy will rely on regular monitoring, evaluation and review of our progress. The focus will be on assessing how effective our actions are and their contribution to the growth outcomes we seek.

To ensure the Local Growth Strategy remains fit for purpose, a full review of the strategy will occur every six years. The actions will be reviewed and updated more frequently, as they inform annual staff work programmes and guide day-to-day planning, investment, partnership and decision making activities.

8.5 Triennial Agreement 2025 – 2028**8.5 Triennial Agreement 2025 – 2028**To: **Whakatāne District Council**Date: **Thursday, 4 December 2025**Author: **H Keravel / Senior Strategic Policy Analyst**Authoriser: **L Woolsey / GM Strategy and Growth**Reference: **A3016682****1. Reason for the report - *Te Take mō tēnei rīpoata***

The reason for this report is to provide the proposed Triennial Agreement 2025 – 2028 for approval by the Whakatāne District Council. Once approved by Council, the agreement will be available for the Mayor to sign alongside other parties to the agreement.

2. Recommendations - *Tohutohu akiaki*

1. THAT the Council **receive** the Triennial Agreement report; and
2. THAT the Council **approve** the draft Triennial Agreement 2025-2028 for the Bay of Plenty Region's Councils, and
3. THAT the Council **delegate** to the Chief Executive Officer and the Mayor the authority to make any minor amendments required as a result of minor changes requested by other local authorities in the region as part of the adoption process.

3. Background - *He tirohanga whakamuri*

The Council must adopt the Triennial Agreement under Section 15 of the Local Government Act 2002. It establishes a framework, which works towards a collaborative and open approach to addressing regional issues and, to avoid unnecessary duplication.

The triennial agreement must be agreed by 1 March after each local authority election.

This Agreement describes why and how Councils in the Bay of Plenty region will work together and provides an opportunity for improved communication and co-ordination at all levels of local government in our region. It represents a continued commitment amongst the councils to work collaboratively together.

This is an agreement between the following councils of Local Government

- Whakatāne District Council;
- Bay of Plenty Regional Council;
- Kawerau District Council;
- Ōpōtiki District Council;
- Rotorua Lakes Council;

8.5 Triennial Agreement 2025 – 2028(Cont.)

- Taupō District Council;
- Tauranga City Council;
- Western Bay of Plenty District Council.

A Triennial Agreement includes:

- Protocols for communication and co-ordination
- A statement of process for proposed new regional council activities
- Processes and protocols through which local authorities can participate in identifying, delivering, and funding facilities and services of significance to more than one district.

While there is a statutory requirement to have a Triennial Agreement, it is not legally binding. However, Council should note that Section 15(6) of the LGA 2002 requires that if a decision of a local authority is significantly inconsistent with or is expected to have consequences that will be significantly inconsistent with, the Triennial Agreement, the local authority must notify other members with the nature and reasons for the inconsistency and any intention to seek an amendment to the agreement.

4. Discussion – *Kōrerorero*

This agreement represents the shared desire of local government in the Bay of Plenty to work collaboratively to maximise effectiveness and efficiency.

The Triennial Agreement simply outlines an agreement to work collaboratively on matters of mutual interest. It is important to note that decisions to enter into any form of arrangement are the domain of each and every Council.

The 2025-2028 draft agreement builds on the 2022-2025 Agreement. The 2025 agreement is reflecting changes to the Terms of Reference for the Bay of Plenty Strategic Leadership Forum to include strategic investments and issues, opportunities and regional spatial planning.

Following endorsement by each council, the Mayors and Chair of Bay of Plenty Regional Council will sign the agreement on behalf of their authorities so that it is in place by 1 March 2025. There may be some minor editorial and format changes as each of the councils complete the adoption process.

The Bay of Plenty Regional Council will continue as the Secretariat and administrator for the Bay of Plenty Mayoral Forum.

5. Options Analysis - *Ngā Kōwhiringa***5.1. Option 1 – Approve the draft Triennial Agreement****Staff recommended option**

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflects previous conversation involving Mayors and Chief Executive of respective councils. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No disadvantages identified.

8.5 Triennial Agreement 2025 – 2028(Cont.)

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognises that local authorities should collaborate and co-operate with one another to find solutions to local issues.• Provides the opportunity to speak with “one consistent message” to Central Government on issues affecting Local Government in our region.• Meets legislative timeframes.	
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A delegation is being sought for the Mayor and Chief Executive to approve any further changes as required. This is to accommodate any changes made by the other parties if necessary.

This delegation will enable any such changes to be made efficiently, however, if the changes are significant, the matter will be brought back to Council for a decision.

5.2. **Option 2 – Do not approve the draft Triennial Agreement and recommend changes to Bay of Plenty Regional Council**

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No advantages identified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Risk to not meet legislative timeframes• Not adopting the draft agreement could compromise collaboration with other Councils.

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

6.2. **Legal**

There is no legal considerations associated with the recommendations of this report.

6.3. **Financial/Budget Considerations**

There is no budget considerations associated with the recommendations of this report.

6.4. **Strategic alignment**

This report contributes to being a regionally connected District by advocating at a regional and national level on behalf of ratepayers and residents.

8.5.1 Appendix 1 - Draft Triennial Agreement 2025-2028**6.5. Climate Change Assessment**

There are no significant or notable impacts associated with the matters of this report. However, the triennial agreement represents an opportunity to further collaborate with other local authorities to find solutions to climate changes challenges.

6.6. Risks

Under option 2, If the triennial agreement is not approved, there is a risk to not meet legislative requirement timeframes (adoption is required by 1 March 2026).

7. Next Steps – E whai ake nei

Once agreed by the Council, the agreement will be available for the Mayor to sign alongside other parties to the agreement.

The agreement remains in force until it is replaced by another agreement.

The agreement may be varied by agreement between all the local authorities within the regio

Attached to this Report:

- Appendix 1 – draft Triennial Agreement 2025-28

8.5.1 Appendix 1 - Draft Triennial Agreement 2025-2028

8.5.1 Appendix 1 - Draft Triennial Agreement 2025-2028(Cont.)

**BAY OF PLENTY MAYORAL FORUM
TRIENNIAL AGREEMENT**

For the triennium from October 2025 to October 2028

8.5.1 Appendix 1 - Draft Triennial Agreement 2025-2028(Cont.)

Bay of Plenty Mayoral Forum Triennial Agreement

1 Parties to this Agreement

This is an agreement between the following councils of Local Government:

- Bay of Plenty Regional Council
- Kawerau District Council
- Ōpōtiki District Council
- Rotorua Lakes Council
- Taupō District Council
- Tauranga City Council
- Western Bay of Plenty District Council
- Whakatāne District Council

This Agreement does not place any limits on opportunities for neighbouring local authorities, Central Government agencies and non-government organisations to work jointly with Local Government within the Bay of Plenty.

2 Statement of Intent

This Agreement represents the shared desire of Local Government in the Bay of Plenty region to work collaboratively, and to maximise effectiveness and efficiency while delivering our core and statutory services and activities to our communities.

Bay of Plenty Local Authorities will also collaboratively seek to determine what are the high-level strategic regional issues and opportunities over the triennium and beyond.

This Agreement is deemed to meet the requirements of section 15 of the Local Government Act 2002 ("the Act"), included in Appendix 1.

3 Introduction

The Act recognises that individual local authorities are only one player in the achievement of its priorities and desired outcomes, and making efficient use of its resources, and that work to promote its priorities and desired outcomes goes beyond individual local authority boundaries. The Act recognises that local authorities should collaborate and co-operate with one another and a variety of other organisations to find solutions to local issues. The main framework to guide collaboration and co-operation between local authorities within the Bay of Plenty region is the Triennial Agreement.

This Agreement describes why and how councils in the Bay of Plenty region will work together and provides an opportunity for improved communication and co-ordination at all levels of Local Government in our region. This will enable democratic local decision-making and action by and on behalf of communities. It also provides the opportunity to speak with "one consistent message" to Central Government on issues affecting Local Government in our region.

8.5.1 Appendix 1 - Draft Triennial Agreement 2025-2028(Cont.)**4 Principles of this Agreement**

The parties agree to work in good faith together for the good governance of their localities and the region. As signatories to this Agreement each local authority will:

- Continue to promote coordination and application of quality public services, infrastructure and planning for the present and future communities of the Bay of Plenty, by collaborating and cooperating as considered appropriate to achieve priorities and desired outcomes.
- Respect the individual roles and responsibilities of each party to this agreement and the statutory independence and accountability of each council to its own communities and constituencies.
- Recognise that issues and concerns that are shared by some communities and local authorities may be of little relevance to others, and that it is therefore appropriate to have a range of sub-agreements on local issues.
- Acknowledge that collaboration among local authorities is necessary to address increasingly complex governance issues. Many issues cannot be solved by any one organisation acting alone and need joint responses.
- Support the establishment of processes for communication and collaboration at both governance and management levels in ways that will give clear Bay of Plenty perspectives, and enhance the overall performance and reputation of Local Government in the region.
- Recognise that shared services in the region, or joint procurement approaches with joint or separate contracting, can bring efficiencies and savings in terms of planning, administration, consultation and operations; increases in available resources and promotion of cooperative approaches to the allocation of resources.
- Support processes through which all local authorities in the region can participate in identifying, delivering and funding facilities and services of significance to more than one district in the region, in a way that encourages efficiencies to be realised and opportunities to be recognised.
- Recognise the value of undertaking joint processes to engage with communities, Central Government, community organisations and regional and territorial authorities from other regions for issues that cross local authority boundaries.
- Strengthen Local Government collaboration and coordination in the region in ways that enhance relationships with Central Government and other parties that can influence the wellbeing of the region and its communities.
- Ensure a 'no surprises' approach with other parties to this Agreement. This will be given effect by ensuring other parties receive early notification of:
 - (a) Significant proposed decisions that may affect other parties and their communities, and
 - (b) Advice of divergent views on proposed decisions before critical public announcements are made.

8.5.1 Appendix 1 - Draft Triennial Agreement 2025-2028(Cont.)**5 General Protocols****Strategic Leadership Meetings:**

Mayors/Chairs and Chief Executives of each council, party to this Agreement, will endeavour to meet regularly to discuss Regional Priorities, strategic investments and issues, opportunities and Regional Spatial Planning, as per the Terms of Reference and agreed annual schedule of meetings, to give effect to this Agreement.

Any formal public communications from these meetings will be approved by all participating councils prior to their release.

Significant Decisions:

Where a significant decision or issue affects a particular council, or its community, it should, in partnership with the other councils of the region, have the lead role in formulating the collective response of the region's local authorities to that issue or decision.

Where a council makes a decision that is or is likely to have consequences that are significantly inconsistent with this Agreement they will, as soon as practicable, notify all other councils in the region of:

- (a) the decision
- (b) the inconsistency
- (c) the reasons for the inconsistency, and
- (d) any intention of the local authority to seek an amendment to this Agreement.

6 New Regional Council Activities

If the Regional Council or one of its CCOs proposes to undertake a significant new activity, and these activities are already undertaken or proposed to be undertaken by one or more territorial authorities in the region, section 16 of the Act will apply. As such, the Regional Council will, as soon as practicable, inform all territorial authorities within the region of:

- (a) The proposal and the reasons for the proposed activity.
- (b) The nature and scope of the proposed activity and its expected effects on the activities of the other councils in the region.

Any such proposal will be included in the consultation document referred to in section 93A of the Act.

Where section 16 of the Act *does not* apply, but a proposed new activity is significant in terms of the Regional Council's Policy on Significance, and if a special consultative procedure (SCP) is required, the Regional Council will deliver a copy of the statement of proposal, prepared under section 83 of the Act, to all parties to allow them a reasonable opportunity to make submissions during the SCP. The process for mediation between the Regional Council and

8.5.1 Appendix 1 - Draft Triennial Agreement 2025-2028(Cont.)

the territorial authorities if agreement is not reached at the end of the SCP will be as set out in section 16 of the Act.

Territorial authorities will be given a reasonable period of time, but no less than 20 working days, to respond to any proposal that triggers section 16 of the Act. The Regional Council agrees to fully consider any submissions and representations on the proposals made by territorial authorities within the region. The territorial authorities also acknowledge a reciprocal obligation to consult when they are proposing new activities, or changes in current activities, that may have implications for the Regional Council.

7 Significant Facilities and Services

Where there are facilities and services that are considered to be of significance to more than one district, an item will be scheduled for discussion at the next available Mayoral Forum meeting (as noted in the schedule of meetings) or other agreed meeting that includes all likely affected councils.

As soon as practicable, and prior to the meeting, the council(s) that has identified the significant facilities and services will contact the likely affected councils to discuss. In the event that it is not clear which councils will be affected, this can be canvassed at the meeting.

The meeting will facilitate the discussion around the facilities and services including; identifying and confirming the affected area and the process for determining the delivery and funding.

8 Policies and Plans

For the purpose of meeting the requirements of clause 3A of Schedule 1 to the Resource Management Act 1991 (Appendix 1), the consultation process to be used by affected local authorities in relation to the Regional Policy Statement is set out in the latest version of the *Protocol for Bay of Plenty RMA Policy and Plans*. The protocol also covers the agreed consultation process on district plans and regional plans.

The protocol describes when and how local authorities in the Bay of Plenty region consult in relation to Resource Management Act policy and plan preparation and changes. There are four stages of interaction and consultation covered in the protocol. They include:

- (a) Scoping;
- (b) Drafting;
- (c) Notifying and submitting;
- (d) Appeals to the Environment Court.

Each of the local authorities in the Bay of Plenty region is a party to this protocol.

Given the imminent Central Government Resource Management System Reform, the *Protocol for Bay of Plenty RMA Policy and Plans* and its requirements, will need to be updated or replaced during this triennium.

The Regional Council will lead the development of any update or replacement, working with Bay of Plenty councils.

8.5.1 Appendix 1 - Draft Triennial Agreement 2025-2028(Cont.)**9 Resolving Disagreement**

All parties to this Agreement are committed to working strenuously, in good faith, to resolve any disagreements that may arise in relation to its application. Where a party has a significant disagreement with the position of the others, all parties will make every effort to accommodate, acknowledge or at least fairly represent the dissenting view.

Should any disagreement arise, every endeavour will be made to ensure that disagreement is resolved with regard to the broader interests of the regional community and the effectiveness of Local Government in the Bay of Plenty region.

If the affected parties are unable to reach agreement the members may agree by majority decision to either ask Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) or the New Zealand Law Society (NZLS) to appoint a mediator.

Should such a process be unsuccessful any of the councils directly affected may ask the Minister of Local Government to determine the matter.

10 Local Government Reform

Local government reform has been widely discussed over the last decade, both nationally and regionally. The structure of Local Government has largely remained unchanged for the last 35 years and reform of Local Government is likely to be part of any future Central Government agenda. The eight Bay of Plenty councils agree it's important to provide proactive regional leadership and ensure that any reform delivers improved outcomes for Bay of Plenty communities.

In providing regional leadership over the future of Local Government, councils commit to the principle of form follows function. Parties agreeing that all structural options are on the table and no party has any predetermined future structural outcome. Potential structure options being informed by an assessment of roles and functions, their interdependencies, and at what scale delivers improved outcomes.

8.5.1 Appendix 1 - Draft Triennial Agreement 2025-2028(Cont.)**11 Signatories to the 2025 to 2028 Triennial Agreement**

The Agreement is effective from the date of signing until such time as it is either amended by the agreement of all parties or is renewed following the next Local Government elections.

In signing this Agreement, the parties:

- (a) recognise that co-operation and collaboration evolve as a result of successful communication and co-ordination;
- (b) are committed to ensuring that this Agreement delivers tangible outcomes for Bay of Plenty communities; and
- (c) intend that the operation of this Agreement should contribute to the strengthening of regional relationships.

Chairperson Matemoana McDonald
 Bay of Plenty Regional Council

Mayor Faylene Tunui
 Kawerau District Council

Mayor David Moore
 Opōtiki District Council

Mayor Tania Tapsell
 Rotorua Lakes Council

Mayor John Funnell
 Taupō District Council

Mayor Mahé Drysdale
 Tauranga City Council

Mayor James Denyer
 Western Bay of Plenty District Council

Mayor Nándor Tánczos
 Whakatāne District Council

Dated: _____ **2026**

8.5.1 Appendix 1 - Draft Triennial Agreement 2025-2028(Cont.)

Appendix 1 – Legislative Context

Local Government Act 2002

Section 15 states:

- (1) Not later than 1 March after each triennial general election of members, all local authorities within each region must enter into an agreement under this section covering the period until the next triennial general election of members.
- (2) An agreement under this section must include—
 - a. protocols for communication and co-ordination among the local authorities; and
 - b. a statement of the process by which the local authorities will comply with section 16 in respect of proposals for new regional council activities; and
 - c. processes and protocols through which all local authorities can participate in identifying, delivering, and funding facilities and services of significance to more than 1 district.
- (3) An agreement under this section may also include—
 - a. commitments by local authorities within the region to establish or continue 1 or more joint committees or other joint governance arrangements to give better effect to 1 or more of the matters referred to in subsection (2); and
 - b. the matters to be included in the terms of reference for any such committees or arrangements, including any delegations.
- (4) An agreement under this section may be varied by agreement between all the local authorities within the region.
- (5) An agreement under this section remains in force until it is replaced by another agreement.
- (6) If a decision of a local authority is significantly inconsistent with, or is expected to have consequences that will be significantly inconsistent with, the agreement under this section that is currently in force within the region, the local authority must, when making the decision, clearly identify—
 - a. the inconsistency; and
 - b. the reasons for the inconsistency; and
 - c. any intention of the local authority to seek an amendment to the agreement under subsection (4).
- (7) As soon as practicable after making any decision to which subsection (6) applies, the local authority must give to each of the other local authorities within the region notice of the decision and of the matters specified in that subsection.

Resource Management Act 1991

Schedule 1, Clause 3A- Consultation in relation to policy statements

- (1) A triennial agreement entered into under section 15(1) of the Local Government Act 2002 must include an agreement on the consultation process to be used by the affected local authorities in the course of:
 - (a) Preparing a proposed policy statement or a variation to a proposed policy statement, and
 - (b) Preparing a change to a policy statement, and
 - (c) Reviewing a policy statement.

8.6 Temporary Delegation for Submission Approval**8.6 Temporary Delegation for Submission Approval**To: **Whakatāne District Council**Date: **Thursday, 4 December, 2025**Author: **W Vullings / Senior Advisor Strategy and Growth**Authoriser: **L Woolsey / GM Strategy and Growth****1. Reason for the report - *Te Take mō tēnei rīpoata***

The purpose of this report is to seek a short-term temporary delegation to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chief Executive for approval of submissions. This is in the context of a substantial number of Central Government bills expected towards the end of this calendar year.

2. Recommendations - *Tohutohu akiaki*

1. THAT the Council **receive** the 'Temporary Delegation for Submission Approval' report; and
2. THAT the Council **agree** to provide temporary delegation to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chief Executive to approve submissions for the period commencing 5 December 2025 and ending 4 February 2026.

3. Background - *He tirohanga whakamuri*

Central government has signalled an ambitious work programme towards the end of this calendar year and into the new year. This work programme continues to progress key areas of legislative change and reform with numerous implications for local government and the communities we serve. The timing of bills over the Christmas period is not ideal for availability of staff or elected members, and also comes at a time when the new triennium is settling in following local elections. Of note we are also tending to see expedited timeframes for proposals under the current government, often meaning tighter timeframes for making submissions.

4. Discussion – Kōrero

Whakatāne District Council regularly takes opportunities to influence the direction and detail of central government proposals (as well as proposals of other entities) by making submissions. Our Council takes a structured approach involving - regular scanning and tracking to gain visibility of proposals; consideration of the impact and relevance of proposals; consideration of the appetite for submissions against capacity limitations; and conducting a process to articulate a political and/or technical response. Finally, submissions are typically approved through a Council or Committee meeting.

We note that the size and pace of Central Government's work programme at this time, and the timing over the Christmas – new year period will make it more challenging for Whakatāne District Council to respond. Some additional flexibility, in terms of temporary delegation to approve submissions,

8.6 Temporary Delegation for Submission Approval(Cont.)

will enable Whakatāne District Council to be more responsive to submission opportunities over the coming short-term period. Delegation for submission approval has been provided from time to time in the past when timeframes have been challenging.

5. Options Analysis - *Ngā Kōwhiringa***5.1. Option 1: Provide delegation to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chief Executive for submission approval****Recommended option**

- This option requests delegation be provided to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chief Executive to approve submissions from Whakatāne District Council for a specific limited time period.
- The delegation would apply for the period commencing 5 December 2025 and ending 4 February 2026, being the time between the final Council meeting of 2025 and the first Committee meeting of 2026.
- Should delegation be activated, the submission process will continue to seek input from all elected members, but this may have to be through more agile means - such as email rather than briefings and meetings.
- Delegation is requested proactively and may or may not be required, dependent on the process and deadlines set by central government on respective proposals over the period.
- This approach enables Whakatāne District Council to make submissions to central government where it otherwise might not be practical or possible.
- Any submissions that are made within the delegation period will be summarised and circulated at the end of that period.

5.2. Option 2: Do not provide delegation to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chief Executive for submission approval**Default status quo option**

- This option is effectively the status quo and does not seek delegation for submission approval.
- Any submissions from Whakatāne District Council would need to be approved through a Council or Committee meeting.
- Council would have to set extraordinary meetings to manage the submission process, or may forgo opportunities to make submissions due to tight timeframes and impracticality of process.

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

A decision to provide temporary delegation for submission approval is assessed to be of low significance, in accordance with the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.

6.2. Engagement and Community Views

Engagement on this matter is not being undertaken in accordance with Section 6.0 of the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy. This states that the Council will not consult when the matter is not of a nature or significance as to require consultation.

8.6 Temporary Delegation for Submission Approval(Cont.)

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 matter.

7.2. Legal

No specific legal implications have been identified in relation to this matter.

7.3. Financial/Budget Considerations

There is no budget considerations associated with the recommendations of this report.

7.4. Climate Change Assessment

There are no significant or notable climate change considerations associated with the matters of this report.

7.5. Risks

There are no significant or notable risks associated with the matters of this report.

8. Next Steps – E whai ake nei

Staff will continue to scan and track information coming through from central government. As information is released and submissions deadlines set through select committee process, these will be brought forward for Council consideration.

Attached to this Report:

- No attachments to this report

9 Resolution to Exclude the Public - *Whakataunga kia awere te marea***9 Resolution to Exclude the Public - *Whakataunga kia awere te marea*****9.1 Resolution to Exclude the Public****RECOMMENDATION**

THAT the Whakatāne District Council **agree** to exclude the public from the following part(s) of the proceedings of this meeting, namely:

1. Public Excluded minutes of Extraordinary Council – 19 November 2025
2. Air Chathams Loan Repayment Report

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).

Item number and General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under section 48 for excluding the public	Plain English reason for passing this resolution
Item 1: Public Excluded minutes of Extraordinary Council – 19 November 2025	As per reasons given in the public agenda for the 19 November Extraordinary Council meeting i.e. - Section 7 (2)(b)(ii) - Section 7 (2)(g) - Section 7 (2)(i) - Section 7 (2)(j)	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	As per reasons given in the public agenda for the 19 November Extraordinary Council meeting
Item 2: Air Chathams Loan Repayment Report	7(2)(b)(ii) Be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information	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	Air Chathams have provided confidential information, including their application to central government, and the report includes the airline's loan liability. If made public, it could prejudice their application and commercial position.

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

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

1.1 Public Excluded Minutes Extraordinary Council Meeting 19 November 2025

2 Reports - *Ngā Pūrongo*

2.1 Air Chathams Loan Repayment