SmartGrowth Leadership Group
Agenda for Meeting No. SG26/09

Date and time	**16 September 2026 at 9:00am**
Venue	**Bay Of Plenty Regional Council, 1 Elizabeth Street, Tauranga (Chambers)**

SmartGrowth Leadership Group – Committee Members

Chairperson	Mayor James Denyer
Bay Of Plenty Regional Council	Cr. Stuart Crosby
	Cr. Kat MacMillan
	Cr. John Scrimgeour
	Cr. Kate Graeme (alternate)
Tauranga City Council	Mayor Mahé Drysdale
	Deputy Mayor Jen Scoular
	Cr. Marten Rozeboom
	Cr. Glen Crowther (alternate)
Western Bay of Plenty District Council	Cr. Margaret Murray-Benge
	Cr. Grant Dally
	Cr. Graeme Elvin (alternate)
Tangata Whenua Representatives	Matire Duncan
	Whitiora McLeod
	Hakopa Tapiata
	Heta Gardiner
	Riki Nelson (alternate)
MCERT (former Department of Internal Affairs)	Rebecca Maplesden (alternate)
MCERT (former Ministry for Housing and Urban Development)	Sarah Stevenson (alternate)
Ministry for Transport	
Priority One	Dave Courtney (Non-voting)
Te Whatu Ora – Te Manawa Taki	Joanne Gibbs (Non-voting)

Transport System Plan	Dean Kimpton (Non-voting)
	Sean Jones (alternate)
Waka Kotahi	Andrew Corkill (Non-voting)
	Susan Collins (alternate)

Quorum 11

Meeting Frequency Quarterly

SmartGrowth Leadership Group – Terms of Reference

Purpose:	The purpose of the Joint Committee (SmartGrowth Leadership Group) is to undertake and implement strategic spatial planning across the western Bay of Plenty sub-region[1] in accordance with the SmartGrowth Strategy and the outcomes from the Urban Form and Transport Initiative. The SmartGrowth Leadership Group carries out its purpose in accordance with the delegations set out in the Agreement.
General Principles:	The SmartGrowth Leadership Group operates under the following principles: • Supporting an integrated approach to urban growth and strategic / spatial planning which incorporates cultural, economic, environmental and social well-being. • Building on the SmartGrowth 'live, learn, work and play' vision. • Reinforcing an integrated planning approach incorporating land use, all infrastructure and funding. • Building on existing SmartGrowth work, including the outcomes from Urban Form and Transport Initiative, and the general SmartGrowth arrangements already in place. • Adopting a shared evidence base so that all parties are using common data. • Recognising and supporting the existing Urban Form and Transport Initiatives which will underpin the development of the 2023 SmartGrowth Strategy. • Having an integrated SmartGrowth Strategy for the sub-region which includes the requirements for a future development strategy under the National Policy Statement on Urban Development. • Taking account of the Western Bay of Transport System Plan and its priorities. • Acknowledging the benefits of a collaborative approach to urban growth and spatial planning, and to share responsibility for such planning between parties. • Supporting the values, and economic and social aspirations of tangata whenua while protecting cultural identity. • Sustaining and improving the natural environment. • Responding to climate change at a strategic level. • Promoting affordable housing.

[1] The 'sub-region' refers to the territorial areas of Tauranga City council and Western Bay of Plenty District Council.

Monitoring and Review:	The SmartGrowth Leadership Group has responsibility for: • Monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Urban Form and Transport Initiative, including the key performance indicators. Reviewing and recommending any changes to the SmartGrowth Strategy if circumstances change.
Membership:	That representation of the SmartGrowth Leadership Group be comprised of: • Three elected member representatives each as appointed by the contributing local authorities, including the Mayors of Tauranga City and Western Bay of Plenty District – voting • Four representatives to be nominated by tāngata whenua - voting • An Independent Chairperson, to be appointed by the Leadership Group, to chair the Group – voting • Up to three Ministers of the Crown – voting • Additional Ministers, if and when relevant and required – non-voting • One Te Whatu Ora – Te Manawa Taki representative – non-voting • One NZTA representative – non-voting • One Water Services Entity B representative – non-voting • One Transport System Plan representative – non-voting • One Priority One representative – non-voting • One alternate member per voting organisation That the standing membership of the Leadership Group shall be limited to 22 members (including the Independent Chairperson), but the SmartGrowth Leadership Group has the power to co-opt up to a maximum of three additional non-voting members where required to ensure the effective implementation of any part or parts of the SmartGrowth Strategy.
Meeting Frequency:	Quarterly, or as necessary and determined by the Independent Chairperson.

SmartGrowth Leadership Group
Agenda for Meeting No. SG26/06

Date and time	**16 September 2026 at 9:00am**
Venue	**Bay Of Plenty Regional Council, 1 Elizabeth Street, Tauranga (Chambers)**

Order of Business

Item	Topic		Page
1.	Karakia		
2.	Apologies		
3.	Conflict of Interest		
4.	Public Forum (if required)		
5.	Confirmation of Minutes Confirmation of the Minutes of the SmartGrowth Leadership Group: (SG26/06) dated 17 June 2026. Recommendation: That the minutes of the SmartGrowth Leadership Group (SG26/06) dated 17 June 2026 be confirmed as a true and correct record.	(Paper A)	5 - 15

Part A: Agenda Business

Item	Topic		Page
6.	Quarterly Report – September 2026	(Paper B)	16 - 45
7.	Tū Pakari Report – September 2026	(Paper C)	46 - 48
8.	Transport System Operating Framework	(Paper D)	49 - 63
9.	Public Excluded Session That the SmartGrowth Leadership Group: 1. Agree that the public be excluded from the following parts of this meeting: a) Approval of Closed Minutes – 19 March 2026 b) Priority Development Area Tracker 2. Note that this resolution is made in reliance on section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and that the reports are to be considered under closed in accordance with s7(2)(i) - enables any local authority holding information to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations). 3. Noted that at the end of the closed session the meeting will move back into open. NB – The agenda for the "Public Excluded session" will be circulated separately.		

SmartGrowth Leadership Group Minutes for Meeting No. SG26/06

Date and time	**17 June 2026 at 9:00am**
Venue	**Bay Of Plenty Regional Council, 1 Elizabeth Street, Tauranga (Chambers)**

Members		
In attendance	Mayor James Denyer	Chairperson
In attendance	Cr. Stuart Crosby	Bay Of Plenty Regional Council
In attendance	Cr. Kat MacMillan	Bay Of Plenty Regional Council
In attendance	Cr. John Scrimgeour	Bay Of Plenty Regional Council
In attendance	Cr. Kate Graeme (alternate)	Bay Of Plenty Regional Council
In attendance	Mayor Mahé Drysdale	Tauranga City Council
In attendance	Deputy Mayor Jen Scoular	Tauranga City Council
In attendance	Cr. Marten Rozeboom	Tauranga City Council
In attendance	Cr. Glen Crowther (alternate)	Tauranga City Council
In attendance	Deputy Mayor Margaret Murray-Benge	Western Bay of Plenty District Council
In attendance	Cr. Grant Dally	Western Bay of Plenty District Council
In attendance	Cr. Graeme Elvin (alternate)	Western Bay of Plenty District Council
In attendance	Matire Duncan	Tāngata Whenua Representatives
In attendance	Whitiora McLeod	Tāngata Whenua Representatives
In attendance	Hakopa Tapiata	Tāngata Whenua Representatives
In attendance	Heta Gardiner	Tāngata Whenua Representatives
In attendance	Riki Nelson (alternate	Tāngata Whenua Representatives
In attendance	Rebecca Maplesden (alternate)	Department of Internal Affairs
In attendance	Sarah Stevenson (alternate)	Ministry of Housing and Urban Development
-		Minister for Transport
In attendance	Andrew Corkill (Non-voting)	Waka Kotahi
In attendance	Cole O'Keefe (alternate)	Waka Kotahi
In attendance	Dave Courtney (Non-voting)	Priority One
Apologies	Sarah Fenwick (Non-voting)	Te Whatu Ora – Te Manawa Taki
Apologies	Dean Kimpton (Non-voting)	Transport System Plan
In attendance	Paul Tarrant (alternate)	Transport System Plan

Quorum 11

Meeting Frequency Quarterly

Support		
In attendance	Craig Batchelar	SmartGrowth Strategic Advisor
In attendance	Nichola Lennard	SmartGrowth Technical Advisor
In attendance	Te Pio Kawe	SmartGrowth Pou Ārahi Advisor
In attendance	Elisha Rolleston	SmartGrowth Kai Ārahi Advisor
In attendance	Eileen Mares	SmartGrowth Secretariat
In attendance	Ernst Zoellner	Kainga Ora
In attendance	Josephine Tam	Kainga Ora
In attendance	Marty Grenfell	Tauranga City Council
Apologies	Fiona McTavish	Bay Of Plenty Regional Council
In attendance	Matt Potton	Western Bay of Plenty District Council

SG26/06.01 Karakia Tīmatanga

Heta Gardiner opened the meeting with a Karakia.

Chair Mayor James Denyer welcomed Heta Gardiner as the SLG Tāngata Whenua representative, following his appointment to replace Riki Nelson. Riki will now serve as the alternate representative for all four Tāngata Whenua representatives on the SLG.

SG26/06.02 Apologies

Apologies for absence received from Sarah Fenwick.
Apologies for lateness received from Andrew Corkill and Councilors Scrimgeour, Elvin, Dally, Murray-Benge.
Apologies for early departure received from Councilors Crosby and Graeme.

Moved by: Cr. Kat MacMillan	Seconded by: Mayor Mahé Drysdale

That it be Resolved

That the apologies be accepted.

CARRIED

SG26/06.03 Declaration of Conflict of Interest

No declarations received

SG26/06.04 Public Forum

There were no public forum items.

SG26/06.05 Confirmation of Minutes (Paper A)

The Committee considered the minutes of SmartGrowth Leadership Group (SG26/03) dated 19 March 2026 circulated with the agenda.

Moved by: Cr. Kat MacMillan	Seconded by: Mayor James Denyer

That it be Resolved

That the minutes of SmartGrowth Leadership Group (SG26/03) dated 19 March 2026 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

CARRIED

SG26/12.06 SmartGrowth Quarterly Report (Paper B)

Craig Batchelar spoke to the SmartGrowth Quarterly Report (Paper B) and the group discussed:

Voting Rights

Government has proposed amendments that would restrict voting rights on council committees to elected members only. If enacted, the amendments would affect the SmartGrowth Leadership Group, which is a committee established under Schedule 7 of the Local Government Act 2002. Under the proposal, voting rights for the independent chair, Crown representatives, and Tāngata Whenua representatives would be removed.

It was further noted that Regional Spatial Planning Committees are excluded from the proposed changes, as they will be established under separate planning legislation.

Going for Housing Growth

Financial incentive ball park estimate for the sub-region $2 to $3Million per year.

The Group discussed whether the incentives currently proposed are largely focused on supporting new development rather than intensification which would be against the SmartGrowth principals that support both greenfield and urban intensification developments. It was confirmed that they would apply to all housing.

Concern was expressed that intensification projects can be more challenging and costly due to site-specific considerations, including geotechnical requirements.

It was noted that councils have a key role in developing incentives to encourage intensification, given the advantages of utilising existing infrastructure rather than investing in new infrastructure to support greenfield growth. However, members acknowledged that greenfield development will remain necessary to accommodate future growth. It was further noted that the Regional Deal highlights greenfield development to recognise the additional complexity and costs involved, and the importance of alignment with, and support from, central government to enable its successful delivery.

It was also noted that Te Papa is identified as a Priority Development Area (PDA) and remains a key focus for SmartGrowth. Members observed that greater emphasis may be required to support intensification outcomes, particularly given the predominance of single-storey housing within the city.

Affordability was discussed and if more research is needed to see where infrastructure should be developed.

It was highlighted that Maori land is under serviced. E.g. Welcome Bay/Kaitemako has 2 main water lines that service public land but not the adjacent 500 acers of Maori land. Connection would enable affordable housing for that Maori community.

Group discussed the vision of the Commercial Centre Strategy.

The SmartGrowth vision of "live, work, learn and play" was confirmed but the programme can only be implemented in stages and seek to progress where it can within the constraints and opportunities of government policy of the day. These different drivers influence the programme, but the vision stays the same.

Transport System Plan

Paul Tarrant was introduced as the acting TSP Programme Manager. The current focus of the TSP programme for 2026/27 is the Transport System Operating Framework (TSOF) Version 3 review which will recalibrate the existing 30-year transport programme to reflect updated information, current priorities, and policy changes.

Amendment to Appendix 2 – TSP Timeline for Tauranga City Council's consultation is March – April 2027.

Development Sector Group

The DSG members recommended at their last meeting held on 10 June 2026 the need to update the Housing and Business Assessment as it is well out of date being 5 years old.

It was confirmed that DSG is kept up to date about the ongoing RSP work through that meeting by all SmartGrowth Partners. The transition into the new regime should manage to keep the confidence of the development sector in future housing delivery. It was confirmed to DSG that the RSP will be informed by the existing sub-regional FDS as a foundation for the new regional spatial plan.

Marae as Centres

Framework should be included/linked in the Regional Transport Plan and Infrastructure Planning to ensure infrastructure/connection between the Maori land.

Three Waters SLG Membership

The Group discussed Recommendation 2 and whether three representatives from the Joint Water Organisation should be appointed to the committee. It was noted that the committee does not make decisions on water matters; rather, the purpose of the representation is to ensure the Joint Water Organisation is informed of growth aspirations and priorities across the region and can maintain strategic alignment with SmartGrowth objectives.

Members also noted that all other partner organisations are represented by a single member and an alternate, and consideration was given to maintaining a consistent approach to representation across the committee.

Moved by: Deputy Mayor Margaret Murray-Benge	Seconded by: Cr. Marten Rozeboom

<u>That it be Resolved</u>

That the **SmartGrowth Leadership Group:**

1. **Receives** the report "Quarterly Report – June 2026".
2. **Invites** the new Western Bay of Plenty District Council and Tauranga City Council joint water organisation to appoint a representative to the SmartGrowth Leadership Group as provided under the SmartGrowth Leadership Group (Joint Committee) Agreement 2023.

It was noted that Whitiora McLeod abstained from voting on Item 2.

CARRIED

SG26/06.07 Tū Pakari Report June 2026 (Verbal)

Te Pio Kawe acknowledged Heta Gardiner and welcomed him to the committee and invited the Tāngata Whenua Representatives to speak.

Marae as Centres

It was suggested to link the Marae as Centre's workstream with Priority One's Energy Leadership Group to put some strategic weight on the model. Te Pio Kawe answered that CTWF replied to the same question for the Commercial Centre's linkage by doing a stocktake of existing infrastructure for Marae. Any gaps identified through this process should be assigned to the appropriate organisation or responsible party for action.

Ngāti Hangarau Rural Community Zone / Bethlehem papakāinga

Hapu management plan of Ngāti Hangarau includes to retain the rural character of the zone. The land trust is engaging with Tauranga City Council around infrastructure services, e.g. wastewater. Alternative option is septic tanks.

Tū Pakari

Tāngata Whenua Representatives to SLG highlighted that Tū Pakari aren't the voice of tāngata whenua and therefore some matters should be directed to Tāngata Whenua Representatives themselves. The Tū Pakari report gives a summary of the actions to date but does not represent the tāngata whenua view on such matters. Suggestion was made that a Combined Tāngata Whenua Forum report should be put on the SLG agenda as a standing item to show the tāngata whenua view on the current SLG matters. This will be discussed offline with SmartGrowth Advisory Team.

Moved by: Hakopa Tapiata	Seconded by: Cr. Kat MacMillan

That it be Resolved

That the **SmartGrowth Leadership Group:**

1. **Receives** the report "Tu Pakari Report – June 2026".

CARRIED

SG26/06.08 NZTA – Strategic Transport Plan – June Update (Paper C)

Cole O'Keefe spoke to the update report (Paper D)

Group Discussion

It was confirmed that the work is taking a wider multi-modal approach, with KiwiRail actively involved in the workstream exploring both freight and passenger transport opportunities and challenges.

It was noted that costs, constraints, and timing implications will be assessed during Stage 3 of the plan. Consideration is also being given to supporting infrastructure and services, such as park-and-ride facilities, and to ensuring alignment with existing strategies and plans, including UFTI.

The importance of involving council staff throughout the process was highlighted to ensure the Regional Spatial Plan appropriately reflects existing plans, initiatives, and detailed work programmes, even where implementation responsibilities sit with other organisations.

Engagement with the community was encouraged. Safety issues of State Highway 29 were noted and the more development is enabled, the worse the issues will be if not taken care of.

Very constrained environment funding-wise especially from a transport perspective in terms of national land transport fund / funding prioritisation. Interventions have been planned for many years for the area. Some have been undertaken others have gone unfunded.

It was confirmed that these plans are evidence based and not constrained by election cycle political priorities. They look into best practice internationally and are built on previous works that looked into vulnerability and testing this against today's elements. Should priorities change in the future options/plans will be already available to put in place.

NZTA used existing tāngata whenua project groups for engagement e.g. Tauriko and Takitimu North Link. No direct consultation with iwi or hapu only with representative on the forums yet. Suggestion was made to engage with any directly affected hapu.

It was noted that advocacy for this issue is ongoing through a number of channels, including the implementation of this plan, the region's representation at the Upper North Island Strategic Alliance (UNISA) table led by Mayor Mahe Drysdale, the development of the Regional Deal, and regular engagement between NZTA and the region's councils.

Members acknowledged that the National Land Transport Fund is insufficient to meet all transport investment requests across the country. While NZTA recognises the significant transport needs within the Bay of Plenty, it was noted that there are also a number of projects and investments already in the pipeline for the region.

It was noted that the Infrastructure Commission has released its report recently with Central Government accepting all recommendations within. The findings will flow through to NZTA as and when they are implemented.

NZTA advised that the Katikati Bypass project identified in the Regional Deal currently has no funding allocated. It was noted that the prioritisation processes associated with both the Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP) and the Regional Deal will help provide greater clarity on the project's future funding and delivery pathway.

Moved by: Deputy Mayor Margaret Murray-Benge	Seconded by: Cr. Grant Dally

<u>That it be Resolved</u>

That the **SmartGrowth Leadership Group:**

1. **Receives** the report "NZTA – Strategic Transport Plan – June Update".

<u>CARRIED</u>

SG26/06.09 Population Projection Review (Paper D)

The Bay of Plenty Population Projections Working Group commissioned the University of Waikato's Te Ngira Institute for Population Research to independently review the Stats NZ 2023-base population projections for the Bay of Plenty. The review was initiated following a significant upward revision in projected long-term population growth for the region, and in particular the SmartGrowth area, with implications for housing demand, infrastructure investment, growth sequencing, and long-term planning. The review also responds to emerging national housing growth policies that may increase reliance on Stats NZ high-growth projections.

The review assesses the methodology and assumptions underpinning the projections, examines the drivers of the revised growth outlook, and considers implications for regional growth management and infrastructure planning.

Michael Cameron of the Te Ngira Institute presented his findings to the group and explained how population projections are modelled.

Michael confirmed that Future Proof uses Te Ngira projections since 2006.

It was noted that the review confirmed concerns raised following the release of Stats NZ's population projections in October 2025. As a result, Stage 2 will involve Te Ngira undertaking a more detailed and refined population projection exercise for the Bay of Plenty region and its constituent local authorities. The projections are to be used as a foundation for the RSP.

Assumptions that there is a population coming to pay for the investments. What happens if not…?

It was also noted that the current projections are produced at a broader regional level rather than at the SA2 (suburb-level) scale. Developing ethnicity group projections, including Māori population projections, would add further complexity to the analysis.

Concerns raised about Central Government using Stats NZ statistics for growth projections. Signalled national direction to use Stats NZ high +20% for land supply targets even though Stats NZ medium amounts would possibly be closer to the reality. It would be very difficult to supply additional land in the subregion to meet this target. It was also noted that different projections are used for infrastructure planning because of the cost implications.

It was noted that SmartGrowth's role is to plan for and enable growth through the provision of land use planning, zoning, and infrastructure to support Government-directed population growth. Responsibility for the integration of new residents, including fostering welcoming communities and cultural connections, sits with individual local authorities rather than SmartGrowth.

Moved by: Cr. John Scrimgeour	Seconded by: Deputy Mayor Jen Scoular

That it be Resolved

That the **SmartGrowth Leadership Group:**

1. **Receives** the report "Population Projection Review".

CARRIED

SmartGrowth
Building our futures together

SG26/06.10 Resource Management Reform – Mayoral Forum Report (Paper E)

The report Resource Management Reform – Mayoral Forum Report (Paper E) was taken as read. No questions or comments were raised.

NZTA confirmed the importance of remaining closely engaged in the Spatial Planning process to ensure alignment with its current transport planning activities.

Moved by: Mayor Mahé Drysdale	Seconded by: Cr. John Scrimgeour

That it be Resolved

That the **SmartGrowth Leadership Group:**

1. **Receives** the report "Resource Management Reform – Mayoral Forum Report".

CARRIED

SG26/06.11 Priority One – Western Bay of Plenty Regional Deal Update (Paper F)

Dave Courtney spoke to the update report (Paper F).

Confirmed that regional level connection as well as linkage to SmartGrowth for the Implementation Plan development.

Implementation Governance as per signed agreement "Western Bay of Plenty Deal" - page 6:

Responsible Ministers and Mayors and Chair: Deal Strategic Oversight and leadership	✓ Ministers for Infrastructure and Local Government ✓ Mayors Tauranga City Council and Western Bay of Plenty District Council, and Chair Bay of Plenty Regional Council.
Western Bay of Plenty Deal Oversight Board: Deal-level governance and monitoring.	✓ Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Tauranga City Council and Western Bay of Plenty District Council Chief Executive Officers ✓ Priority One (Economic Development Agency for Western Bay Sub Region) Chief Executive Officer. ✓ Chair of the Combined Tāngata Whenua Forum ✓ Deputy Secretary Department of Internal Affairs, Deputy Chief Executive Officer National Infrastructure Funding and Financing Limited, and Director Regional Relationships - Waikato/Bay of Plenty for New Zealand Transport Agency ✓ An independent representative appointed by the Crown ✓ An independent representative appointed by the Councils ✓ Oversight Board Executive Function.

Steering Group(s), Working Committee(s) (as required)	✓ Operational oversight and coordination ✓ Day to day planning and implementation (Working Committees) ✓ Delivery agencies & Councils.
Advisory Groups (as required)	✓ Smartgrowth and other Advisory Groups to be determined.

Implementation Plan will come back to elected members for Council approval as well as Central Government.

Appointment of iwi representatives sitting with iwi/ tāngata whenua. Priority One can inform tāngata whenua what is needed within which timeframe.

Tāngata Whenua representatives highlighted it would be important to them that tāngata whenua priorities will be delivered.

Priority One confirmed that the membership of the steering/working groups is currently being developed. Some could seek participation from SmartGrowth Senior Manager Group sub-committee. Some initiatives are economic, other social infrastructure to land, housing and transport

Working group below steering group. Trying not to create duplication. So where possible, existing structures/workstreams will be used. E.g. to deliver a refreshed sub-regional spatial plan as part of the regional spatial plan.

RON's projects will be entirely funded by the National Land Transport Fund and sit with NZTA and are tied to the 2027 GPS. Whereas local roading components are supported with 51% central government funding and sit within the RLTP priorities.

Connecting Mount Maunganui and Katikati bypass projects are connected to the asset recycling programme and are likely to be delivered 2030 and beyond based on the Crown funding uplift capabilities and the region's capability to deliver.

The Deal and its projects do not sit outside any decision-making body, but confirms between this region and central government which projects are of most interest and will elevate prioritisation.

Members highlighted alignment needed between SmartGrowth and Regional Deal to avoid duplication

It was confirmed to the members that the Oversight Group will have Maori representation. The Tāngata Whenua Representatives on SLG will take this matter offline and work through possible pathways of representation for all iwi/hapu on the Regional Deal.

Moved by: Deputy Mayor Margaret Murray-Benge	Seconded by: Cr. Marten Rozeboom

<u>That it be Resolved</u>

That the **SmartGrowth Leadership Group:**

1. **Receives** the report" Priority One – Western Bay of Plenty Regional Deal Update".
2. **Receives** the agenda attachment Western Bay of Plenty City and Regional Deal Summary
3. **Notes** that Priority One representatives have provided further updates at the meeting.

<u>CARRIED</u>

SG26/06.10 Implementation Plan Update for 2026-27 (Paper G)

Craig Batchelar spoke to the Implementation Plan Update (Paper G) and highlighted;

The Implementation Plan is required under the National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD) and supports delivery of the SmartGrowth Strategy, including the Future Development Strategy (FDS). It is a coordination document to help all SmartGrowth Partners align their resourcing efforts.

Main change is the inclusion of some of the regional deal commitments that have a direct link to housing delivery and spatial planning, and of interest to the wider partnership. Their inclusion leads to update reporting to SLG and visibility on progress. One commitment of the Regional Deal is a “Refreshed Sub-regional Spatial Plan” which has been incorporated into the SmartGrowth Implementation Plan and contributing workstreams have been identified.

When the implementation plan was developed it was identified that the public did not want heavy, emitting industries in the region. The related action in the plan (Consider pathways for heavy and emitting industries to potentially relocate to low sensitivity areas and/or implement progressive environmental improvements) is an unresolved issue. Alternative land areas have not been identified to date.

Correction for page 98 of the agenda. Under Delegated Authority to Approve Updates the text should read: “The SLG has delegated authority to approve updates to the IP under the SLG Joint Agreement 2023 without reference back to the partner organisations.”

The identified Preliminary PDAs should be called “preliminary” in the Implementation Plan.

Crown entities named under FDS key actions in relation to the Regional Deal include Te Puni Kokiri with DIA being the lead agency.

Moved by: Deputy Mayor Margaret Murray-Benge	Seconded by: Cr. Kat MacMillan

<u>That it be Resolved</u>

That the **SmartGrowth Leadership Group**:

1. **Receives** the report “SmartGrowth Implementation Plan Update for 2026-27”
2. **Approves** the SmartGrowth Implementation Plan Update for 2026-27 with changes as recommended for the reasons as set out in the summary table.
3. **Authorises** the SLG Chair to make minor editorial and factual changes or corrections where necessary.
4. **Notes** that the SmartGrowth Implementation Plan may require further amendment after a Regional Deal Implementation Plan is finalised later in 2026.

It was noted that Whitiora McLeod abstained from voting on Item 2.

<u>CARRIED</u>

SG26/06.11 Public Excluded Session

The SmartGrowth Leadership Group:

1. **Agree** that the public be excluded from the following parts of this meeting:
   a) Approval of Closed Minutes – 19 March 2026
   b) Priority Development Area Tracker

2. **Note** that this resolution is made in reliance on section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and that the report are to be considered in public excluded in accordance with s7(2)(i) - enables any local authority holding information to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations).
3. **Noted** that at the end of the closed session the meeting will move back into open.

Moved by: Deputy Mayor Jen Scoular	Seconded by: Mayor Mahé Drysdale

That it be Resolved

The meeting moved to closed at 1:05pm

The meeting resumed in open at 1:08pm

CARRIED

SG26/06.12 Other Business

Chair Mayor Denyer informed the members about Ernst Zollner's imminent departure from Kāinga Ora and recognised his significant contribution to SmartGrowth and spatial planning nationally over the past nine years through his roles with Kāinga Ora and HUD/MBIE.

His leadership in establishing the Urban Growth Partnerships, championing the Priority Development Area concept, and supporting the Housing System Plan refresh was noted. Appreciation was expressed for his ongoing collaboration, insight, and commitment to partnership across central and local government.

SmartGrowth wishes him well in his new role as Chief Strategy and Partnerships Officer with Waikato Waters.

SG26/06.13 Karakia Whakamutunga

Heta Gardiner formally closed the proceedings.

The meeting concluded at 1:10pm

Confirmed as a true and correct record.

Mayor James Denyer

Chairperson

Date

Quarterly Report September 2026

Committee name	SmartGrowth Leadership Group
Meeting date	Wednesday, 16 September 2026
Author(s)	SmartGrowth Advisory Group
Purpose	Quarterly Update on SmartGrowth Activities

Executive Summary

SmartGrowth is entering a significant transition period as the new planning system, Regional Deal implementation and preparation of the Bay of Plenty Regional Spatial Plan begin to converge.

The Planning Bill is expected to be enacted shortly. Current proposals would require establishment of a Spatial Plan Committee and secretariat in early 2027, with the first Regional Spatial Plan progressing through notification, hearings and decisions during 2028 and final adoption in early 2029.

The recently released illustrative National Policy Direction provides further clarity on the emerging planning framework for spatial planning, including a strong emphasis on abundant development opportunities, competitive urban land markets and infrastructure-enabled growth. These directions will have significant implications for the refreshed Subregional Spatial Plan and the future Regional Spatial Plan.

SmartGrowth is aligning its refreshed Subregional Spatial Plan programme with this process, building from the existing Strategy and Future Development Strategy rather than starting again. This transition will require a review of the SmartGrowth operating model in the first quarter of 2027 to clarify the future relationship with the Spatial Plan Committee and secretariat, including governance, responsibilities, resourcing and funding.

The transport funding environment is becoming tighter. Recent Government direction signals greater emphasis on maintenance, resilience, value for money and better use of existing networks, with new improvements facing a higher funding threshold. This reinforces the importance of maintaining a clear, prioritised and evidence-based subregional growth and transport investment programme.

A number of supporting SmartGrowth workstreams are progressing in parallel. These include the Housing System Plan refresh, Development Opportunities process, Commercial Centres Strategy, Te Puna and Minden Spatial Plan, strategic transport planning and updated regional and subregional population projections through to 2080. Collectively, these will provide key inputs to the Subregional Spatial Plan refresh and future Regional Spatial Plan.

Recommendations

That the SmartGrowth Leadership Group:

- **Receives** the Quarterly Report September 2026.
    - **Notes** that the Government released an illustrative National Policy Direction (NPD) on 25 August 2026, with feedback closing on 16 October 2026, and **authorises** the Chair of the SmartGrowth Leadership Group to approve and provide feedback on behalf of SmartGrowth.
- **Notes** the appointment of Carlo Ellis as Tū Pakari Pou Ārahi.
- **Records** its appreciation for Te Pio Kawe's service to SmartGrowth.

Operating Environment

Resource Management System Reform

Planning Bill and Natural Environment Bills

The Planning Bill and Natural Environment Bills are now before Parliament's Environment Committee.

The Select Committee reported back on 20 July 2026, with legislation expected to be passed into law in September.

The key changes recommended by the Select Committee include:

  - Amending the goals to create 'abundant' competitive urban land markets, to enable infrastructure (rather than plan and provide for) and environmental enhancement, and to add reference to food and fibre production.
- The adverse effects of climate change are now entirely excluded.
  - RSP may focus in greater detail on certain parts of the region;
  - A simplified list of core obligations for the preparation of RSPs rather than the 'mandatory matters'. The option to include 'other matters of strategic importance' in an RSP appears to have now gone;
  - Removal of requirement to prepare "scenarios", but "options" still need to be considered ("*identify and assess a range of options for delivering on the strategic priorities for growth and change within the region*")
  - RSPs can incorporate information from existing RMA Documents.
  - A Process Agreement is still required but with a more focused scope, and the local authorities of a region must work together to appoint a Spatial Plan Committee (SPC). The Spatial Plan Committee has an enduring role covering both preparation of the RSP and oversight of its implementation.
  - New requirement for SPC to have at least one member with knowledge, skill, and experience relating to te ao Māori and Māori development.
  - SPC must appoint a secretariat for technical and administrative support. The Process Agreement must set out how the secretariat will be established and managed. Central Government participation in the secretariat is now required.
- Removal of the requirement for the RSP to be consulted on in accordance with the LGA (special consultative procedure).
  - Transition timeframes have been extended from date of Royal Assent:
    - 12mths for National Instruments (NPD and Standards) relevant to RSP
    - 21mths for notification Draft RSP (or 9mths after National Instruments)
    - 30mths (9 months after RSP notification) – Adopt first RSP
- RSPs would still begin before Treaty arrangements are fully agreed, however there's potentially more time for equivalency agreements to land.

Illustrative National Policy Direction

The Government released an illustrative National Policy Direction (NPD) on 25 August 2026 to show how national direction may operate under the new planning system. It is not Government policy, but it provides an early indication of the direction likely to shape the first Regional Spatial Plans. The illustrative NPD is consistent with the direction signaled through earlier Government announcements and the Planning Bill, so there are few real surprises.

A significant feature is the emphasis on competitive urban land markets and “abundant” development opportunities. Spatial plans would be expected to identify enough land for urban development that there is no expectation of future land scarcity, while land use plans would be required to take a highly enabling and permissive approach to development. Planning provisions are expected to be predictable and avoid unnecessary constraints on investment.

Urban growth boundaries would not be permitted, and additional development capacity may need to be released where planning constraints are contributing to non-competitive land markets.

This is a significant issue for the subregion, where future growth is constrained by infrastructure capacity, natural hazards, productive land, sites and areas of cultural significance, coastal and landscape values, and other spatial constraints. A key issue for the Subregional and Regional Spatial Plan processes will be how to demonstrate an abundant and competitive supply of development opportunities while still addressing these constraints and infrastructure sequencing requirements.

There is a strong emphasis on infrastructure-led spatial planning, but not necessarily growth that is dependent on publicly funded infrastructure. The illustrative NPD directs Regional Spatial Plans to prioritise growth in areas “where infrastructure can efficiently support growth and change” and to sequence growth, change and infrastructure to support both “efficient public investment” and “strategic opportunities for development where infrastructure may be provided via private or other means of investment”.

Consideration may be needed of how a greater role for privately enabled infrastructure and growth could affect existing council investment programmes, cost recovery, network efficiency and the financial position of councils, including the long-term ownership, operation and renewal of infrastructure initially provided by private parties.

A stronger rural production protection framework is proposed. "Rural production zones" would be expected to recognise primary production as the leading and anticipated land use, with planning provisions managing reverse-sensitivity effects and limiting incompatible activities that could constrain ongoing rural production. The NPD also introduces the concept of "high value growing areas", which would be identified for their regional or national significance to food production and protected from development that could compromise their long-term productive use. At the same time, the framework allows some flexibility for land to transition to other uses where there are enduring constraints on productive use or where broader growth objectives justify change.

Regional Spatial Plans would be required to provide for Māori participation, identify and protect sites of significance to Māori, and identify strategic opportunities for the development of identified Māori land. The NPD also proposes that Treaty settlement redress and arrangements be carried through with the same or equivalent effect under the new system.

The NPD signals a much more enabling and property-rights-oriented planning system. The presumption is that private land use should be enabled unless restrictions are necessary, and “change is not, in and of itself, an adverse effect”. Planning provisions would be expected to be permissive, predictable, and avoid unnecessary constraints on investment. The illustrative NPD also confirms a shift toward nationally standardised planning approaches, and proportionate, risk-based management of environmental and natural hazards.

The Management Group has not yet considered whether SmartGrowth should provide feedback on the illustrative NPD. Given its significance for the subregion and the forthcoming spatial planning process, it is likely that a response will be developed before submissions close on 16 October 2026. Providing feedback would be consistent with SmartGrowth’s previous practice of commenting on significant national policy and planning reform proposals affecting the subregion.

Any SmartGrowth feedback is likely to focus on the proposed requirement for abundant development opportunities, the treatment of infrastructure constraints and growth sequencing, and the implications of a potentially greater role for privately funded infrastructure. Consideration may be needed of how greater use of privately enabled infrastructure and growth could interact with existing council investment programmes, cost recovery, network efficiency and the financial position of councils, including the long-term ownership, operation and renewal of infrastructure initially provided by private parties.

Access and download the complete illustrative National Policy Direction **here**.

Urban Land Market Officer

The Government has announced an Urban Land Market Officer as part of the new planning system. This independent role would assess whether urban land markets are competitive, monitor land-market performance, and advise councils and central government on actions needed to improve competitiveness.

This is a significant development as it gives more substance to the Planning Bill's objective of creating "abundant" competitive urban land markets and signals more active central monitoring of whether councils are enabling sufficient development opportunities.

Going for Housing Growth - Funding and Delivery

Financial Incentives

As reported previously, Budget 2026 has allocated $400 million nationally over four years to introduce a new financial incentive for councils to encourage housing growth. From April 2027, councils will receive payments linked to the number of new homes consented with higher rates of growth attracting larger payments.

The initiative is intended to address financial disincentives associated with growth and provide additional funding to support growth-related infrastructure and services. Payments from the Incentives for Growth Fund will be made to councils on 1 April each year, based on the number of building consents approved in the 12 months up to 31 January.

The fund is modest compared with the infrastructure costs associated with growth but will defray some costs councils incur in enabling housing growth. The first payment will be made on 1 April 2027. Estimated payments for councils are included on the HUD website. Tauranga City Council is estimated to receive $0.79m and Western Bay of Plenty District Council $0.34m. Detailed information can be found **here**.

Infrastructure funding settings for Fast-track developments

The Government has announced changes to infrastructure funding settings for Fast-track developments.

The intent is to ensure councils can recover the infrastructure costs generated by these developments, consistent with the principle that growth should pay for growth. This sits within the second pillar of Going for Housing Growth: improving infrastructure funding and financing.

The announced changes will not apply to projects already approved or where a substantive application has already been lodged with the EPA when the amendments take effect.

Flexible Fund

The Government has announced that the first stage of the Budget 2025 Flexible Fund had identified 33 preferred delivery partners proposing 823 social and affordable rental homes, exceeding the original target of 675–770 homes. Tauranga is one of the nine investment locations.

The proposals are now progressing through stage two, where the final projects and number of homes will be confirmed, with delivery expected from July 2027. Budget 2026 has provided a further $69.2 million for the Flexible Fund, targeting an additional 1,800–2,250 homes from 2028/29.

In the Budget 2025 Flexi Fund Tauranga had an allocation of 50 homes to be a mix of affordable rentals and social homes. These are to be delivered by Emerge Aotearoa Housing Ltd, Accessible Properties Ltd, Tauranga Community Housing Trust and Manawa Community Housing Trust.

Arataki - Our 30-year plan – Updated

Arataki is NZTA – Waka Kotahi's long-term view of the land transport system's needs over the next 30 years. It places strong emphasis on affordability, maintaining and making better use of existing networks, strengthening resilience, enabling urban growth and taking a more integrated whole-of-system approach.

For Tauranga and the western Bay of Plenty, Arataki supports a more integrated multimodal transport system, including improved public transport, travel demand management, strategically located bus hubs and staged land-use development aligned with growth planning. It also identifies the need for further planning on SH29 between Piarere and Tauranga, continued investigation of rail improvements between Auckland, Hamilton and Tauranga, and significant state highway investment to support growth at Takitimu and Tauriko West.

The overall direction is consistent with SmartGrowth's emphasis on integrating land use and transport planning, while reinforcing the need to stage and prioritise investment carefully in a constrained funding environment.

Major Transport Projects Pipeline

On 9 July 2026, NZTA – Waka Kotahi released its Major Transport Projects Pipeline, setting out phasing for projects including the Roads of National Significance and major public transport projects.

TNL Stage 1 and SH29 Tauriko (Ōmanawa Bridge) fall in the "Phase 1" category for projects currently in construction or undertaking procurement for construction.

Takitimu North Link Stage 2A and 2B, and SH29 Tauriko (wider scope) fall into "Phase 2" – future pipeline - preparing for construction, and route protection. Progression for these projects is subject to funding availability.

Ministerial Statement on Land Transport Investment

A Ministerial Statement on Land Transport Investment was released on 13 August 2026.

The Ministerial Statement signals a significantly tighter land transport funding environment for the 2027–30 period and beyond.

National Land Transport Fund revenue is expected to be largely absorbed by maintenance, operations, renewals, public transport services, resilience, debt repayment and projects already underway. As a result, new improvement projects will face a higher funding threshold, with stronger emphasis on value for money, affordability, sequencing and making better use of existing networks before committing to new infrastructure.

For SmartGrowth, the statement reinforces the importance of integrating land use and transport planning and maintaining a clear, prioritised and evidence-based subregional investment programme. It also points to the need to continue to consider alternative funding mechanisms.

Transit-oriented development is specifically identified as a future investment priority, alongside resilience, economic productivity, safety and demand management tools such as time-of-use charging and tolling.

Regional Deals and future Spatial Plans are also identified as mechanisms for aligning central and local government decisions on growth, housing, infrastructure and economic development, although investment will continue to be subject to wider affordability, value for money and sequencing choices.

Implementation Plan Workstreams

Implementation Plan Annual Update 2026

The updated Implementation Plan is now available on the SmartGrowth website. Only very minor changes were made following SLG approval at the last meeting.

The only substantive change was to include an updated H2T plan to illustrate the outcomes from the corridor spatial study.

The final version can be found here: [SmartGrowth Strategy 2024-2074]

Mapping the Path to an Integrated Regional Spatial Plan

Spatial Plan Committee and Process Agreement

Papers for the 10 September Mayoral Forum meeting were distributed to SLG in addition to the agenda for information.

The papers cover:

- Preparing for the BOP Regional Spatial Plan: seeks feedback and direction on the proposed regional spatial planning approach, governance principles and options for the future Spatial Plan Committee.
- Process Agreement Options Report: provides the supporting analysis on the proposed plan structure, regional and sub-regional issues, roles, governance arrangements and Spatial Plan Committee options.
- Mayoral Forum presentation: summarises the legislative context, work completed to date, proposed governance and programme approach, and the next steps towards establishing the Regional Spatial Plan process.

Refreshed Western Bay of Plenty Subregional Spatial Plan

The Refreshed Subregional Spatial Plan will update the existing SmartGrowth spatial framework and provide the western Bay of Plenty input into the future Regional Spatial Plan.

The current programme anticipates the Process Agreement being completed in late 2026, with the Spatial Plan Committee and secretariat established in early 2027. The refreshed subregional spatial plan content would then be developed through 2027, ahead of approval of the draft RSP for notification.

On the current indicative timetable, the draft RSP would be notified in 2028, followed by hearings and decisions later in 2028, with local authority decisions and final adoption in early 2029. These dates remain subject to enactment of the legislation, national direction, and confirmation of the regional programme.

Key matters for SLG are maintaining alignment between the subregional and regional programmes, resolving remaining spatial and infrastructure planning gaps, and keeping partner-led workstreams on programme.

A review of the SmartGrowth operating model will be required in the first quarter of 2027 to respond to establishment of the Spatial Plan Committee and its secretariat, including the future division of responsibilities, governance, resourcing and funding arrangements.

Commercial Centres Strategy

The project has moved from an evidence-based review and introductory Stage 1 engagement into preparation for Stage 2.

Current work is concentrated on agreeing a strategic centre classification, preparing the Stage 2 engagement package, aligning the programme with the Regional Spatial Plan (RSP), and progressing the Marae as Centres Implementation Plan relationship.

The next milestones are:

- Oct-Dec 2026: Further Engagement / Finalising the economic report
- Early 2027: Draft Strategy.
- Mid 2027: Draft final document (status to be confirmed)

These timeframes may be subject to change depending on other factors such as the new legislation and national direction.

Development Opportunities Process

The Development Opportunities process provides a structured way to consider significant housing, business land and infrastructure proposals that are not currently identified in the SmartGrowth Future Development Strategy. Expressions of interest were sought in late 2025, with proposals assessed against strategic, infrastructure and policy considerations to determine whether they warrant further consideration through future subregional and regional spatial planning.

The individual proposals are commercially sensitive and are therefore considered in the closed part of the meeting. A separate report in that part of the agenda sets out the findings from the process and the implications for future spatial planning.

Housing System Plan Refresh

The Housing System Plan (HSP) has been refreshed to provide a practical, coordinated programme for delivering the SmartGrowth Strategy's "Homes for Everyone" outcomes.

A summary of the HSP is attached as **Appendix 1.** This summary version is still subject to a final review by the Housing Working Group. Once finalised the full version will be available on the SmartGrowth website.

The HSP is an implementation plan rather than a new strategy, with actions focused on housing advocacy, evidence and monitoring, and improving housing choice and affordability as directed by the SmartGrowth Strategy.

The HSP has been developed collaboratively through the Housing System Working Group, involving local and central government, tāngata whenua and housing development sector interests. It responds to continuing affordability pressures, constrained housing supply, changing household needs, and the need for a wider range of housing tenures and typologies.

Initial priorities include strengthening engagement with central government housing investment processes, developing an annual Subregional Housing Story, identifying and escalating barriers to housing delivery, promoting successful intensification and mixed-tenure development, supporting impact investment, and strengthening Community Housing Provider capacity.

The Plan is intended to remain a living implementation programme, reviewed annually and reported through the SmartGrowth quarterly reporting cycle.

SGIG considers that detailed implementation should remain with the Housing System Working Group, with SmartGrowth management and governance retaining oversight through regular reporting rather than approving each individual action or amendment.

For SLG, the refreshed HSP and Working Group now provides the intended structured basis to help SmartGrowth partners monitor housing system performance, identify systemic barriers and coordinate advocacy and intervention across partners, including through the Regional Deal and emerging national housing policy settings.

Te Puna Minden Spatial Plan

Initial community engagement on the Te Puna and Minden Spatial Plan has been completed, with feedback now being used to develop develop the preferred growth scenario in the lead up to the draft Spatial Plan.

The early community engagement identified support for protecting the area’s rural and village character, with future growth expected to be carefully managed and supported by infrastructure. Some key themes that came out of the early engagement include transport and road safety, protection of productive land and the natural environment, greater housing choice, strengthening Te Puna Village as a community hub, and recognition of tāngata whenua values.

WBOPDC is undertaking an additional round of engagement with the Te Puna Minden Community Ideas Forums in October this year to discuss the preferred growth scenario before confirming the draft spatial plan for wider public engagement.

The draft Spatial Plan is expected to be released for formal consultation in early 2027 alongside the other Spatial Plans that WBOPDC is progressing (Te Puke, Katikati, Waihi Beach Bowentown and Athenree).

Following the further round of community engagement, it will be refined and presented to Western Bay of Plenty District Council for adoption.

The project forms part of the wider local spatial planning programme and will inform the refreshed SmartGrowth Subregional Spatial Plan and future Regional Spatial Plan.

Regional Population Projections

Following SLG consideration of the draft Regional Population Projections Review in June, the next phase of work has now been confirmed with Te Ngira – Institute for Population Research (Waikato University).

The work will prepare updated regional and subregional population projections through to 2080 with a robust supporting demographic analysis.

A joint Regional Working Group has been established to oversee the project, with representation being coordinated across the participating councils, tangata whenua and central government.

Recent discussions with MCERT have confirmed there are no issues with proceeding with the proposed approach. While future national direction may prescribe particular projections for statutory housing-capacity purposes, partners will still require a credible best-estimate demographic series for spatial planning, infrastructure, transport and investment planning.

The project is now underway, with a final draft expected by 28 October 2026, enabling consideration by SLG at its 16 December 2026 meeting.

Marae as Centres Implementation Framework

This is reported on separately through the Tū Pakari quarterly report (See Paper C).

Waka Kotahi Strategic Transport Plans

NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi is progressing work on the two strategic transport plans relevant to the western Bay of Plenty: the Hamilton to Tauranga Strategic Corridor Plan and the Tauranga Strategic Urban Network Plan.

For the Hamilton to Tauranga corridor, the initial assessment highlights the importance of SH1 and SH29 as national freight and inter-regional connections, alongside issues around resilience, constrained sections of the corridor, growth-related pressure, rail capacity, and access to key industrial and logistics areas.

For the Tauranga urban network, the key challenges include congestion and limited alternative routes, the effects of rapid urban growth, resilience and natural hazard exposure, and the need to better integrate state highways with local roads, public transport, walking and cycling, and future development areas.

The projects have developed draft high-level strategic approaches to address the challenges identified in this first stage. The project teams are now working on identifying a suite of activities to address the identified challenges and give effect to the strategic approach, and on the preparation of the plan itself.

Engagement with council partners will continue throughout this work. NZTA's indicative programme is to progress this work through 2026, with final plans expected in the second half of the 2026/27 financial year.

Hamilton to Tauranga Corridor Spatial Study

This H2T Corridor Spatial Study was completed earlier this year.

An Implementation Framework has now been prepared jointly by SmartGrowth and Future Proof to translate the completed corridor study into an ongoing programme of work. There is an "umbrella" action already in the SG Implementation Plan.

The Implementation Framework has more detailed actions to develop and maintain a coordinated inter-regional spatial plan for the corridor, supported by tasks covering spatial planning alignment, updated growth modelling, critical infrastructure, infrastructure-capacity mapping, development monitoring, rail, marae and papakāinga access, environmental and cultural constraints, and funding and financing.

While most of the actions relate to the Waikato region, the framework is proposed to be maintained jointly, with annual co-reporting through the SmartGrowth and Future Proof Implementation Plans.

Partnership to support the provision of health and education facilities

The Regional Deal includes commitments to establish separate independent joint planning groups for health and education.

The groups will bring together the Western Bay of Plenty subregion, Health New Zealand and the Ministry of Education respectively, to align future facility and network planning with anticipated urban growth and the refreshed spatial plan.

Terms of reference, membership, work programmes and reporting arrangements are to be developed through the Regional Deal Implementation Plan process.

Monitoring

Priority Development Areas

A separate report is included in this agenda (See Paper F).

Strategic Alignment

City and Regional Deal

The Deal Oversight Board has now met twice and the Responsible Group, comprising Ministers, Mayors and the Regional Council Chair, has met once. These discussions have been positive and constructive and have provided clear direction for development of the Regional Deal Implementation Plan.

Jeremy Lightfoot, Chief Executive of MCERT, and Steph Rowe, Deputy Chief Executive – Delivery, have been confirmed as members of the Deal Oversight Board. MCERT has also established a dedicated City and Regional Deals team, led by Paul Swallow, to support implementation across the programme.

Co-funding from Te Puni Kōkiri and partner councils has been confirmed for the implementation planning phase of the Activating the Māori Economy initiative.

Implementation planning is progressing across all Deal objectives and initiatives, with relevant Crown agencies engaged on their commitments and delivery roles. A draft Implementation Plan is expected by 18 September, followed by refinement and discussion with elected members. The final draft is then expected to be considered by the Deal Oversight Board on 6 October, before approval by Ministers, Mayors and the Regional Council Chair in the week commencing 13 October.

The Implementation Plan will provide a high-level overview of the intended timing and phasing of the major initiatives. Some elements will remain contingent on subsequent Long Term Plan processes, central government funding decisions and other implementation approvals.

Regional Land Transport Plan

SmartGrowth has been in touch with the team at BOPRC developing the draft RLTP. There will be opportunities later this year to ensure there is good alignment between the RLTP and SmartGrowth.

Transport System Plan

Parth Sheshodia from Tauranga City Council will be taking over the Transport System Plan Programme Manager role. Shaun Jones has recently returned to support this transition and the completion of the Transport System Operating Framework on a limited basis.

The principal task for the current quarter is to finalise the updated Transport System Operating Framework. This is a separate item on the agenda and will be presented to SLG by the TSP team.

UNISA

UNISA Mayors and Chairs met on 7 August and approved, subject to minor amendments, the UNISA Agreement for the current triennium, the Upper North Island Story, and the UNISA Value Proposition. These documents will provide the strategic framework and narrative for UNISA's work over the current term.

GHD also presented the proposed scope for the refresh of the Upper North Island Ports Study. Mayors, Chairs and Chief Executives supported the project and provided minor feedback on the scope. See Appendix 2.

The study will now progress, with only limited changes expected to the proposed work programme.

Energy Leadership Group

Priority One's energy project is progressing as a practical, business-facing work programme aligned with the Energy Leadership Group (ELG), chaired by Mike Pond of Beca, and supported by local business.

The current core deliverable is an education series that brings businesses together with energy specialists, peers and innovators to explore cost-efficient solutions, strengthen resilience and support confident planning for the region’s energy future. Two events have been completed to date, each attracting around 90 registrations.

The first explored Battery Energy Storage Systems, including applications and architectures, commercial use cases, battery fire risk and mitigation, thermal energy storage, and industrial heat upgrade opportunities. The Biomass session highlighted regional opportunities and constraints, including local pellet supply, modern boiler performance, and emerging processing capacity. The third event, held on 3 September, focused on transport decarbonisation for heavy transport and commercial fleets, with discussion shaped around practical fleet transition pathways. Future potential topics include energy optimisation and efficiency, industrial process heat, and low-temperature geothermal.

Alongside the education series, regional energy modelling is progressing in collaboration with the University of Waikato, with early outputs expected to inform a year-end ELG workshop and future strategy discussions. This will allow the ELG to revisit the original strategic priorities and consider whether to continue, refine or reprioritise initiatives based on new evidence and business input.

Stakeholder Communications and Engagement

Development Sector Group (DSG)

The meeting is scheduled for 9 September. A verbal update of outcomes will be provided at the SLG meeting.

Governance, Management and Administration

Local Water Done Well Representation on SLG and SGIG

The SmartGrowth Leadership Group (Joint Committee) Agreement 2023 includes provision for “Water Services Entity B” to be represented on the Leadership Group, by a nominated person with speaking rights but in a non-voting capacity.

With the establishment of the new joint water organisation, an invitation has been extended for the appointment of a representative as intended by the Agreement. This also includes an executive representative on SGIG.

This formal membership is unlikely to be activated until mid-2027, with regular updates provided in the meantime.

Tu Pakari Pou Arahi Strategic Advisor

SmartGrowth recently completed an open market procurement process for the Tū Pakari Pou Ārahi role.

Following the evaluation process, Te Aro Pū Consultants (Carlo Ellis) has been appointed to the role. Carlo joined the SmartGrowth Advisory team on 17 August 2026.

We acknowledge Te Pio Kawe for the excellent leadership, advice and support he has provided to SmartGrowth as Tū Pakari Pou Ārahi over the past five years. Te Pio was also part of the original team that developed the first SmartGrowth Strategy back in 2004. His wisdom and commitment have been greatly valued, and we extend our sincere thanks for his dedicated service.

Appendix 1: Housing System Plan Summary

SmartGrowth
Building our futures together

WESTERN BAY OF PLENTY SUB-REGION

Housing System Plan

2026 – 2029 | AT A GLANCE

Contents

Housing System Snapshot

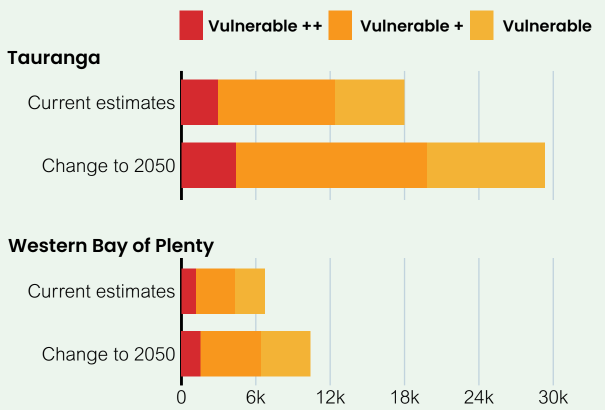
The Sub-regional Housing Challenge

Future housing demand

	2025-2032	2032-2052
Tauranga	9,680 additional homes	20,090 additional homes
Western Bay	4,100 additional homes	3,570 additional homes

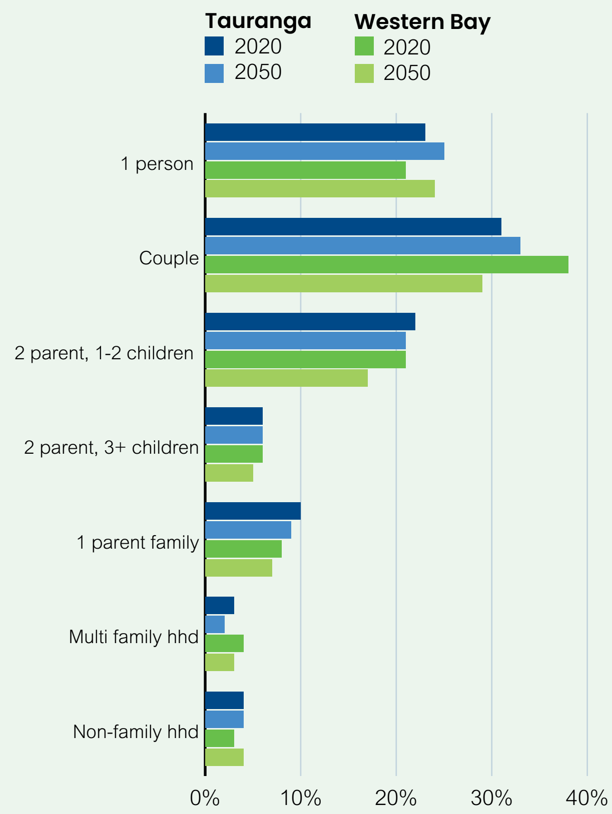
Vulnerable households

Extra households per category



Source: Update to SmartGrowth Housing and Business Capacity Assessment 2022

Household types



Housing stress

Housing register:
816 applicants (June 2026)
Source: msd.govt.nz

Rent since 2016
- Tauranga City **up 63%**
- Western Bay of Plenty District **up 69%**

House prices since 2016
- Tauranga City **up 68%**
- Western Bay of Plenty District **up 133%**

Source: SmartGrowth Development Trends Technical Report 2025

Home ownership

Households who own their home
(including family trusts)

Tauranga **69.4%**
Western Bay **76.2%**
New Zealand **66%**

Source: Stats NZ Census 2023

SmartGrowth's Role in the Housing System

A Transformational Shift under the SmartGrowth Strategy

Homes for Everyone

The homes and communities we live in are the foundation of our wellbeing. All residents in the western Bay of Plenty sub-region deserve to live in a safe, warm, dry home that they can afford.

Targeting actions across all agencies that will strengthen the segments of the housing system that are facing the most significant challenges. This will be addressed through the Housing System Plan.

Growth Directives:

- A range of housing types, tenures and price points is provided within all growth areas and Māori land.
- Public housing supply is increased and aligns the typologies of new and existing housing stock to match the needs of the community.
- Proactively support the delivery of social and affordable housing in existing urban areas and growth areas.
- Provide land and infrastructure sufficient to address identified short-, medium- and long-term shortfalls in housing and business development capacity.

Homes for Everyone – Housing Continuum

Supported / Subsidised housing			Affordable housing			Market housing	
Emergency & transitional housing	**Social housing**	**Pensioner housing**	**Community affordable rental**	**Market affordable rental**	**Market affordable housing**	**Open market rental**	**Home ownership**
Short term subsidised housing. Tenants contribute a proportion of income towards rent.	Subsidised rental housing where tenants pay a proportion of income towards rent.	Subsidised rental housing for independent seniors over 65 years old.	Subsidised rental housing where rents are often set at a percentage of market rent (e.g. 70-80%) or as a portion (e.g. 30%) of income.	Rental housing at or slightly below market levels.	Housing at or slightly below market levels.	Rental housing at or above market levels.	For sale housing at a range of price points.

Housing on Whenua Māori
Communal, intergenerational.
Marae / Hapū &
Māori Land Trusts providers
Iwi PSGE option

A range of Māori land title options

Desired Outcomes

Western Bay of Plenty: A great place to live, learn, work and play

Housing Outcomes

1 Emergency and transitional housing
Reduce to minimum.

2 Social housing
Steadily increase supply specific to waitlist.

3 Pensioner housing
Increase ‘fit for purpose’ supply.

4 Community affordable rental
Increase supply to reduce pressure on Social Housing.

5 Market affordable rental
Increase significantly through specifically targeted supply.

6 Market Affordable Housing
Grow affordable alternative products.

7 Open market rental
Increase targeted supply.

8 Home ownership
Maintain take up and reduce displacement.

9 Housing on Whenua Māori
Increase the use of Māori land to provide affordable healthy, safe, inter-generational housing solutions for whānau.

Increase supply and upgrade existing housing on whenua Māori

Improve the current 26% Māori home ownership rates in WBOP subregion

Housing System Plan on a Page

Housing Outcomes

1. **Emergency and transitional housing**
   Reduce to minimum.
2. **Social housing**
   Steadily increase supply specific to waitlist.
3. **Pensioner housing**
   Increase 'fit for purpose' supply.
4. **Community affordable rental**
   Increase supply to reduce pressure on Social Housing.
5. **Market affordable rental**
   Increase significantly through specifically targeted supply.
6. **Market Affordable Housing**
   Grow affordable alternative products.
7. **Open market rental**
   Increase targeted supply.
8. **Home ownership**
   Maintain take up and reduce displacement. Improve the current 26% Māori home ownership rates in WBOP subregion.
9. **Housing on Whenua Māori**
   Increase the use of Māori land to provide affordable healthy, safe, inter-generational housing solutions for whānau.

Systemic Risks

- Housing affordability pressures
- Supply and demand constraints
- Mismatch between housing typologies and household needs
- Sustainable tenancy
- Entrenched housing inequality

Opportunities

- Planning reform and policy alignment
- Western Bay of Plenty Regional Deal
- Funding and partnership mechanisms
- Diversification of housing tenures
- Transition to more climate-resilient urban forms
- Identified long-term growth pathways
- Papakāinga development as a long-term system contributor

Strategies

- Strengthen early intervention and prevention pathways to reduce inflow into homelessness.
- Support a pipeline of affordable housing supply choice
- Expand pathways to sustainable homeownership
- Incentivise delivery of under-supplied housing types
- Enable targeted interventions for seasonal workers
- Avoid unintended loss of public housing stock arising from policy and funding decisions
- Enable delivery of diverse and alternative housing typologies
- Establish central support / advisory function on housing system
- Improve system targeting and outcomes monitoring
- Strengthen pipeline visibility and delivery/investment coordination
- Establish place-based, delivery-focused partnerships to deliver mixed-tenure communities
- Use intensification to improve system efficiency and affordability
- Build community acceptance for intensification
- Build capability and capacity within Māori housing providers

Key themes

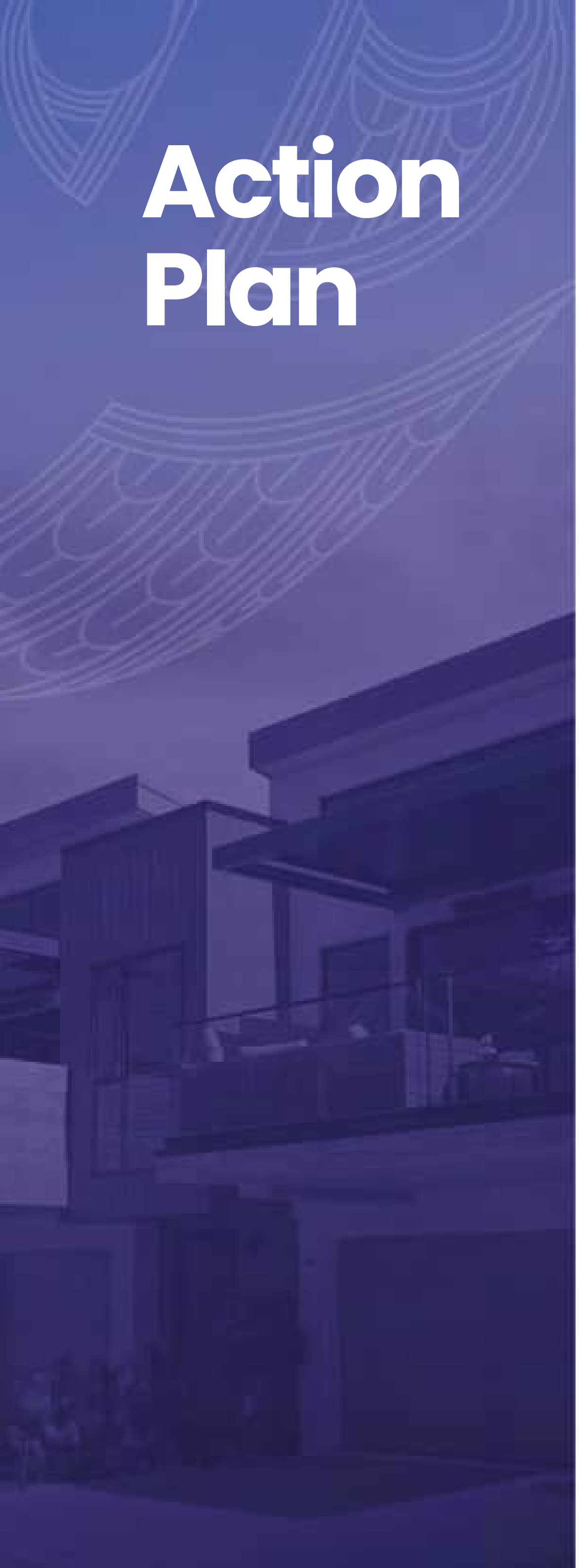
1. Housing System Advocacy
2. Evidence and Monitoring
3. Promoting choice and affordable housing

Actions

- Housing Investment Plan
- National, Regional and Local Policy Development
- Subregional Housing Story
- Housing System Improvements
- Research Housing for People with Disabilities, including Elders, and Homelessness
- Promote Residential Intensification
- Support Impact Investment
- Boost Community Housing Provider Capacity

Implementation and monitoring

The actions require a detailed programme, with its own work plan, resource requirements and where necessary, funding assessment.



Housing System Advocacy Actions

Action 1
Housing Investment Plan

Take steps to ensure that the central government Housing Investment Plan (HIP) takes into account the current state of the housing system in Tauranga/Western Bay of Plenty:

- Establish a working relationship with the relevant team(s) in MCERT.
- Provide information and aligned to the HIP planning cycle.

Timeframe	Short (next 1-3years)
Indicative cost and funding	Within existing resourcing
Who	Housing System Working Group

Action 2
National, Regional and Local Policy Development

Establish a collective capability to support development of national, regional and local housing-related policy or initiatives:

- Achieve recognition by SmartGrowth partners of the Housing System Working Group as a stakeholder in policy development or initiatives that affect housing delivery.
- Provide timely, collective responses to policy development consultation requests and opportunities.
- Provide Housing Delivery advice where requested to inform implementation of the Regional Deal.

Timeframe	Short (next 1-3years)
Indicative cost and funding	Within existing resourcing
Who	Housing System Working Group

Evidence and Monitoring Actions

Phase 1

Action 3
Subregional Housing Story

Based on existing available data and information, to develop, publish and maintain an annual report on the current state of the housing system in Tauranga/Western Bay of Plenty:

- Updated and published annually.
- Informed by partner research and information.
- Highlighting the areas of particular need, including geographic areas of high deprivation.
- Targeted towards decision makers in policy, regulatory and impact investment.

Timeframe	Short (next 1-3years)
Indicative cost and funding	Low additional resourcing
Who	Housing System Working Group

Action 4
Housing System Improvements

Identify and prioritise barriers to housing delivery outside PDAs and at neighbourhood and/or site level, and provide coordinated advice to SmartGrowth partners and Regional Deal implementation processes:

- Quarterly update on housing delivery in the subregion.
- Identify barriers, case examples and next steps to address barriers.
- Recommend escalation of issues that present a significant risk to housing delivery.
- Align reporting with Development Sector Group issues identification.

Timeframe	Short (next 1-3years)
Indicative cost and funding	Within existing resource
Who	Housing System Working Group

Phase 2

Action 5
Research Housing for People with Disabilities, including Elders, and Homelessness

Compile research (e.g. working with Housing System Working Group partners and/or other relevant organisations such as Kāinga Tupu Task Force) to assist with long term delivery:

- Project scoping and resourcing.
- Project management.

Timeframe	Medium
Indicative cost and funding	Moderate project funding required
Who	Housing System Working Group

Promoting Choice and Affordable Housing Actions

Phase 1

Action 6
Promote Residential Intensification

Demonstrate mixed tenures and housing typologies through intensification projects:

- Identify and document case studies of successful delivery.
- Work with developers and media to promote community awareness of successful delivery in practice.

Timeframe	Short (next 1-3years)
Indicative cost and funding	Low additional resourcing
Who	Housing System Working Group

Action 7
Support Impact Investment

Promote the use of local impact investment to support delivery of social, affordable to rent and buy housing and housing on whenua Māori:

- Identify forums and opportunities in raising HSWG profile and share experience.
- Provide a prospectus of housing investment opportunities, aligned with the Subregional Housing Story.
- Work with impact investors to understand and resolve investment barriers.

Timeframe	Short (next 1-3years)
Indicative cost and funding	Low additional resourcing
Who	Housing System Working Group

Phase 2

Action 8
Boost Community Housing Provider Capacity

Support existing Community Housing Providers to increase their operational and delivery capacity to participate effectively in contestable funding and delivery processes:

- Facilitate collaboration between SmartGrowth partners and CHPs to strengthen strategic alignment, support funding bids, and improve delivery outcomes.
- Encourage partnerships between existing CHPs and iwi/hapū rather than creating new delivery entities, to leverage existing expertise, accreditation, and organisational capability.

Timeframe	Medium
Indicative cost and funding	Within existing resources
Who	Housing System Working Group

SmartGrowth - An urban growth partnership involving Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Tauranga City Council, Western Bay of Plenty District Council, tāngata whenua and central government. The purpose of SmartGrowth is to take a collaborative and coordinated approach to managing and shaping growth within the western Bay of Plenty sub-region.

SmartGrowth
Building our futures together

For more information visit
smartgrowthbop.org.nz

Appendix 2: Upper North Island Ports Study Scope

Level 1 104 Spring Street
Tauranga, Bay of Plenty 3110
New Zealand
GHD.com

Your ref: Upper North Island Strategic Alliance (UNISA) Port Study
Our ref: 12701683

06 July 2026

Craig Rice
Chief Operating and Financial Officer
Tauranga City Council
By email

Draft Offer of Service: Upper North Island Ports Study

Dear Craig

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss UNISA's desire to reassess demand, capacity, interconnections and strategy options for the Upper North Island Ports. We appreciate the opportunity to submit this proposal.

There have been significant changes in the New Zealand environment since the 2012 report that Gareth Stiven and David Norman developed, as well as changes in the global trading environment. At the same time, various voices have called for a reassessment of the future of Auckland port. The opportunity is not simply to update the numbers. It is to understand which conclusions from 2012 remain robust, which assumptions no longer hold, and what those changes mean for future investment and policy decisions.

This offer sets out our proposed approach to complete this work. We welcome feedback on this Offer.

Regards

David Norman
Chief Economist / Executive Advisor

+64 27 801 8483
David.norman@ghd.com

1. Summary of the 2012 report

The 2012 study assessed long-term freight demand and infrastructure capacity across Upper North Island (UNI) ports (Auckland, Tauranga, Whangārei) to 2041. It projected steady growth in trade driven by population, globalisation, and primary exports (notably logs and dairy), with throughput expected to grow faster than underlying import/export volumes due to rising trans-shipment activity and a shift toward hub-and-spoke shipping models.

The report concluded that:

- The UNI port system, in its existing structure, could accommodate future demand with a combination of incremental infrastructure investment and significant operational efficiency improvements.
- Containerisation and larger vessels would place increasing pressure on container ports and infrastructure (berths, storage, dredging), while domestic freight costs—particularly inland transport—would strongly influence optimal port configuration.
- Auckland faces the greatest constraints due to competing land uses and expansion limits, while Tauranga and Northport offer capacity flexibility.
- Major system reconfigurations (e.g. shifting activity to Northport or building a new port) were found to be uneconomic relative to incremental expansion.

Overall, the study concluded that the preferred strategy was a competitive, multi-port system supported by price signals, incremental investment, and retained flexibility.

2. What has changed since 2012?

Since 2012, the Upper North Island freight system has undergone several structural changes.

- Inland port capacity has expanded significantly, most notably through MetroPort (Wiri) growth and the development of Ruakura, supporting greater rail-enabled distribution.
- Trade composition has shifted, with fluctuations in log exports, changes in fuel imports following the closure of Marsden Point and an accelerated shift toward EVs, and continued containerisation.
- Shipping patterns have evolved toward larger vessels and alliance-based networks, increasing pressure on channel depth, berth productivity, and landside interfaces. Supply chains have become more complex and resilience-focused, driven by global disruptions, growing emphasis on economic security, and the growth of e-commerce.
- Constraints have intensified—particularly in Auckland, where competing urban land uses and waterfront pressures limit expansion, while a three-fold increase in cruise ships (and mostly larger ones) since 2012 also competes for space.

These changes collectively raise questions about whether incremental optimisation remains sufficient, or whether a more strategic reconfiguration of port roles, inland logistics, and infrastructure investment is now warranted.

3. Objectives of the proposed work

The updated report will:

- Reassess freight demand, port capacity, and supply chain performance across the Upper North Island
- Review and rebuild demand/supply models
- Test whether the 2012 projections and system configuration remain valid
- Evaluate infrastructure constraints, allocation of freight across ports, and total supply chain costs.
- Consider what has materially changed since 2012, including inland port development, trade patterns, and shipping trends
- Determine whether incremental expansion remains optimal or if structural change is now justified.
- Identify the strategic implications for future investment, planning and policy.

4. Methodology

This section sets out the practical steps we will take to gather evidence and prepare a defensible, coherent analysis focused on the set objectives.

4.1 Launch project and re-confirm objectives

Goal: Project initiation and scope confirmation

We will initiate the project by meeting with your UNISA Governance Group to confirm the purpose, scope boundaries, and intended use of the updated study. This step will ensure alignment on key strategic questions, clarify success criteria, and confirm expectations for both the short insight report and the more detailed refresh.

4.2 Reconstruct the demand-side analytical framework

Goal: Understanding recent freight demand and its drivers

This step will identify which elements remain robust and where assumptions—such as stable port shares or gradual system change—may no longer be valid in the current context.

Having built the 2012 framework, our project team understands the core analytical framework, including how demand was defined, modelled, and translated into implications for ports and infrastructure.

The model itself will need to be rebuilt to reflect today's economy, trade patterns and data sources. This includes mapping each import and export category to the most appropriate industry in New Zealand to account for volumes that change with population growth rather than industry growth, for example.

This provides an opportunity to revisit the original assumptions, incorporate developments over the past fourteen years, and ensure the analytical framework remains fit for purpose.

4.3 Identify areas of change since 2012 and validate why

Goal: Understanding what has changed

Having completed the demand analysis, we will identify areas where projections and expectations from 2012 have taken a different path. We will complete further limited (up to eight interviews) engagement with the specific sectors where relevant (e.g. mineral fuels importers, horticulture exporters, freight forwarders etc.) to understand why these different paths have eventuated.

This step ensures that the analysis reflects real-world behaviours, commercial drivers, and practical constraints rather than relying solely on modelling. It will help explain not just what changed, but why.

We anticipate being partway through this stage when we provide a formal in-person **Update to Mayors and Chairs** on progress at their 7 August 2026 meeting.

4.4 Re-estimate freight demand projections and scenarios

Goal: Developing future demand scenarios

Incorporating feedback from industry, we will develop demand projections and scenario modelling that reflect today's operating environment, and the expectations of how the sector will change over the next 30 years, ensuring consistency with the structure of the original study while acknowledging new realities. This will include reassessing growth rates, containerisation trends, and transhipment activity, alongside sensitivity testing to account for risks and uncertainties, and potential disruption.

4.5 Update network configuration and interdependencies

Goal: Understanding the evolving logistics network

We will map the current logistics system across the Upper North Island, including ports, inland ports, rail, and road infrastructure. Particular attention will be given to developments since 2012, such as the Ruakura Inland Port and expansions at Wiri, to understand how these have altered system dynamics, modal choices, and competitive relationships between ports.

Part of this work will be to re-examine parts of the logistics network that yielded surprising results in the 2012 work, including the role of transhipment.

4.6 Assess infrastructure supply capacity and system constraints

Goal: Evaluating the sufficiency of the logistics system

We will review the capacity and performance of key port and network infrastructure, using a combination of updated data and benchmarking against comparable systems. This will include reassessing constraints related to berthage, storage, access, and operations, as well as the implications of larger vessel sizes and potential efficiency improvements.

At this stage we (before the end of October 2026) would also deliver a **Short Insight Report** on key learnings from the demand and supply assessments, subject to further validation work to be completed in the next step. The goal of this work would be to equip UNISA Mayors and Chairs for advocacy to central government in advance of the General Election.

4.7 Test and validate with stakeholders

Goal: Ground-truthing our findings with the sector

As we bring the demand and supply sides together, we will undertake targeted engagement interviews with up to eight key stakeholders within the logistics task—such as port operators, freight users, and transport providers—to test the findings and to gauge their views on any obvious gaps or unreasonable assumptions.

4.8 Identify and evaluate strategic options

Goal: Developing strategic options for the Upper North Island

We will develop and evaluate a set of strategic options for the Upper North Island ports system. This will include assessing different network configurations, potential optimisation pathways, and responses to emerging risks, with a focus on economic efficiency, resilience, and deliverability.

We will further consider the regulatory environment, including consenting processes and competition regulation insofar as it relates to ports.

4.9 Draft findings and review

Goal: Preparing a draft report for feedback

We will **prepare and present** in person a **Draft Report** summarising key findings, updated insights, and strategic implications. This will be shared with your Project Lead(s) as well as the **Mayors and Chairs** and other relevant stakeholders to test conclusions, refine messaging, and ensure the outputs are aligned with decision-making needs.

4.10 Deliver final report

Goal: Completing the UNISA study

Following one round of feedback consolidated and coordinated by your Project Lead, we will finalise the analysis and reporting, ensuring that conclusions are clear, evidence-based, and directly relevant to the client's strategic objectives. The final deliverables will include both a concise, accessible summary of key findings and a detailed refreshed report to support advocacy and future decision-making.

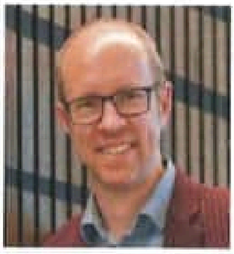
4.11 Aligning your Scope and our Offer

The table below shows how the scope you provided is matched to the work we will undertake as set out in our Proposal.

Scope provided by you	Where this is covered in our Offer
a) Demand & Assumptions	
Freight growth projections and scenario modelling	Reconstruct the demand-side analytical framework Identify areas of change since 2012 and validate why Re-estimate freight demand projections and scenarios
Container vs bulk trends and implications	
b) Network & Capacity	
Role of ports within the wider system	Update network configuration and interdependencies
Interdependencies (ports, inland ports, rail, road)	
Infrastructure constraints and timing of investment	Assess infrastructure supply capacity and constraints
New additions to the wider system since 2012 (eg Ruakura Inland Port and Wiri expansion)	Update network configuration and interdependencies
c) Strategic Options	
Viability of different port/network configurations	Identify and evaluate strategic options
Opportunities for optimisation, specialisation, or collaboration	
d) Risks & Uncertainties	
Economic, regulatory, and infrastructure risks	Re-estimate freight demand projections and scenarios Identify and evaluate strategic options
Sensitivity to demand variation and disruption	
e) Implications for the Upper North Island	
Competitive positioning	Assess infrastructure supply capacity and system constraints Identify and evaluate strategic options
Investment priorities and sequencing	
Partnership and advocacy opportunities	Identify and evaluate strategic options Test and validate with stakeholders Draft findings and review

5. Our Team

Our team includes the two lead authors of the 2012 reports authors – Gareth Stiven and David Norman. They will be supported by other technical staff across GHD including David Walker, who will be the technical reviewer of our work internally.

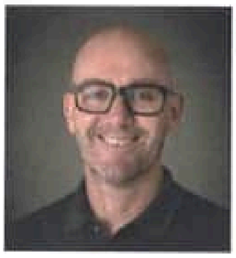


David Norman
Project Director / Demand / Strategy

David Norman is Chief Economist at GHD. Immediately prior to his role at GHD, he was Chief Economist at Auckland Council for 4.5 years. David understands the operating environment for ports and their need to balance business imperatives with political realities.

Among his many ports and logistics related projects, David was a lead author of the 2012 UNISA report, completed two in depth studies of the New Zealand logistics and distribution task and the role of larger ships in the freight task for Westpac, and has completed assessments of current and potential operations for ports in New Zealand.

He recently undertook a scenario assessment for Ports of Auckland that considered how different patterns of export and import growth may affect volumes and revenue.



Gareth Stiven
Supply / Strategy

Gareth Stiven is an independent strategy, economics and public policy consultant specialising in infrastructure, governance, public policy and financial strategy. He advises boards and senior executives on major investment decisions, organisational reform and long-term strategic planning.
Gareth has more than 30 years' experience across consulting, local government, central government and the utilities sector. As a Director at PwC, he led the original Upper North Island Freight Story in 2012 alongside David Norman. More recently, he has advised Auckland Council on local government reform, transport governance and funding, and has supported the establishment of several new water service entities, including long-term financial strategies, pricing and governance frameworks. Gareth is recognised for combining economic analysis, financial strategy and practical implementation experience to help organisations navigate complex policy and investment decisions.

David Walker
Technical Review

David Walker is a Principal and APAC Advisory Market Lead at GHD with more than 30 years of experience providing strategy, policy & planning, economic, and infrastructure advisory services. He has worked extensively with local and central government, utilities, ports and infrastructure providers across New Zealand and internationally. David specialises in strategic infrastructure asset management, funding and investment strategies and economic evaluation. At GHD he works closely with its ANZ Movement Strategies service which has a focus on freight, logistics and ports.

PAPER C

Tū Pakari Report September 2026

Committee name	SmartGrowth Leadership Group
Meeting date	**Wednesday, 16 September 2026**
Author(s)	Carlo Ellis, Tū Pakari Pou Ārahi - Strategic Advisor Elisha Rolleston, Tū Pakari Kai Ārahi - Technical Advisor
Purpose	To update the SmartGrowth Governance Group on the progress the Combined Tangata Whenua Forum (CTWF) have made since we last met in September 2025

Executive Summary

The Combined Tangata Whenua Forum (CTWF) has met regularly including a special workshop on 2 September to maintain momentum through a period of change. This has been complemented by the CTWF's sub-committee Te Rōpu Arotahi meetings designed to enable technical discussions to progress priority areas. This is a fairly recent structure that is gaining stability as parties test appropriate work pathways.

The new Tū Pakari Pou Arahi Strategic Advisor has been appointed and onboarded with particular acknowledgement to the SmartGrowth advisory team and the previous Pou Arahi for their professionalism and support.

The Regional Deal has been a priority and tangata whenua are working through alignments to galvanise support. The next CTWF formal meeting will be a crucial update on content and progress.

Tangata Whenua representation is being reviewed and strengthened.

Existing work programmes are being reviewed and strengthened noting that plenty of great work has formed the current basis and the focus is on enhancing outcomes with specific target dates identified.

Recommendations

That the SmartGrowth Leadership Group:

1. **Receives** the report "Tū Pakari Report for September 2026".
2. **Acknowledges** the service of Te Pio Kawe in support of SmartGrowth over a significant period of time.
3. **Notes** the appointment of Carlo Ellis as Tū Pakari Pou Arahi Strategic Advisor.

Tū Pakari Pou Arahi transition

Firstly we acknowledge the longstanding body of work provided by Te Pio Kawe guiding and supporting the voice of tangata whenua to inform SmartGrowth. It cannot be underestimated the commitment and drive he has contributed over his time in the Pou Arahi role and in keeping with his standing in the Māori community we look forward to the immense value he will continue to provide on behalf of Ngāi te Ahi.

Carlo Ellis started in the Pou Arahi role in mid August and has been working his way through onboarding. Priority tasks include meeting with key personnel, attending meetings across the SmartGrowth structure to develop a strong sense of interconnection and influence, close analysis of the initiatives updated below and formulating a strategic approach which will inform how Tū Pakari can support progress in a strong and united manner.

Combined Tāngata Whenua Forum Outcomes Performance Measures Framework (OPMF)

You have received overviews of the OPMF and its components in previous reports. We are currently focused on consolidating support and understanding as a foundation for strong delivery. It is essential that the outcomes are meaningful for tangata whenua first and foremost whilst maintaining a clear focus on the strategic priorities that drive SmartGrowth. With the new Pou Arahi onboarding this is an opportunity to stress test the framework, clarify expectations and align the efforts of the respective partner organisations and their teams.

The focus over this next period is developing a strong combined commitment to delivering actions to achieve the targeted outcomes.

We expect to have a substantial update at the next SLG meeting.

The WBOP City and Regional Deal

The Regional Deal has dominated attention especially as tangata whenua work through the right channels and levels of support to inform the development of key components. There will always be robust debate when opportunities like these arise and we should expect those conversations to arise with major shifts that are coming eg RM Reform, Local Government Reform and Water Reform. These are no different to the robust discussions happening at Council tables as these same influences arrive.

CTWF representatives are working proactively to update and understand mandates, roles and responsibilities in anticipation of these changes and adapting to Treaty settlements as they land. There is urgency for the Regional Deal with timeframes upon us but the current discussions should inform future interactions. It is important for the partner agencies to understand tangata whenua processes run on a different cycle and to create space for these discussions to land.

The key themes being developed on our behalf are strong and an update will be presented to the CTWF on 30 September that will enable feedback and refinement ideally galvanising support.

The focus is sharing key components of the Regional Deal, that have been developed at speed, to seek united support and understanding.

Tangata Whenua Representation

There are a number of reviews and processes currently underway including updating Terms of References, updating the CTWF Chairperson election process, which leads on to aligning the appointment of CTWF representatives to the SmartGrowth Leadership Group and some of the subsequent support processes. At the last workshop further work has been identified to enable key decisions to be made which will be tabled at the 30 September meeting with an aim of confirming each of these aspects.

The focus is on finalising each of these components to strengthen and support the voice of tangata whenua throughout SmartGrowth.

Marae Centres Approach

It is noted that previous discussions suggested linking with Priority One Energy Leadership Group which will be a priority action going forward. The Tū Pakari team has reviewed the work done so far and we are excited by the opportunity to demonstrate a tangata whenua centric perspective that will enhance planning and delivery across the region.

We have identified some areas to strengthen as well as an action plan targeting a substantive update at the next SLG meeting.

Next Steps

Given we are only weeks into the transition period we expect more clarity to present in our next report. It is important to gather a strong understanding of the inner workings before seeking out any enhancements. However we also understand the need to hit the ground running and maintain momentum on priority areas.

We invite any feedback and input into areas you would like to see prioritised, strengthened and/or maintained. We are actively developing how we will present our updates in a manner that is strongly aligned to strategic priorities and equally we will need support throughout the structure to deliver outcomes for Māori so they see and feel themselves as part of the solutions SmartGrowth facilitates.

Transport System Operating Framework 2026

Committee name	SmartGrowth Leadership Group
Meeting date	Wednesday, 16 September 2026
Author(s)	Western Bay of Plenty Transport System Plan Partnership
Purpose	To seek endorsement of the Western Bay of Plenty Transport System Operating Framework (TSOF) 2026 as the agreed sub-regional framework for prioritising transport investment.

Executive Summary

The TSOF converts the SmartGrowth and Urban Form and Transport Initiative (UFTI) direction into a practical, evidence-based programme of transport priorities. It identifies the most significant transport system gaps, evaluates project options consistently, and sequences investment across 0-3, 4-10 and 10+ year horizons.

- **Short Term: 0–3 Years (2027–2030)** The near-term programme focuses on delivering committed projects efficiently, managing construction effects, and putting optimisation and safety improvements in place.
- **Medium Term: 4–10 Years (2031–2037)** The medium-term programme supports urban growth and intensification, delivers multimodal improvements, and addresses key resilience and safety gaps.
- **Longer-Term Projects (2038+)** Projects planned for delivery beyond 2037 include major corridor upgrades, strategic growth infrastructure, and more investment in the public transport network.

The 2026 refresh is the third iteration of the framework. It reflects updated growth and transport evidence, the current Government Policy Statement on land transport, changing funding settings, higher delivery costs and the status of projects already in the pipeline.

The near-term programme focuses on committed work, network efficiency and deliverable safety improvements. Medium- and longer-term priorities retain the projects needed to support growth, public transport, walking and cycling, and network resilience. Roads of National Significance are managed through separate government-led processes.

The update identifies high-impact transport system gaps across the network, including Hewletts Road, Totara Street, SH29 Tauriko, SH29A, and Takitimu Drive / SH2. New gaps have also been added for Cameron Road North, 11th Avenue, and Te Puke. These gaps provide the evidence base for future programme development and project prioritisation.

SmartGrowth endorsement will confirm that the transport programme remains aligned with the sub-region’s agreed growth direction and provides partners with one coherent basis for subsequent planning, funding and delivery decisions.

Recommendations

That the SmartGrowth Leadership Group:

1. **Receives** the report "Transport System Operating Framework 2026".
2. **Endorses** the TSOF 2026 as the draft sub-regional framework for transport system prioritisation.
3. **Notes** that the TSOF 2026 has been developed collaboratively through the Transport System Plan Partnership and has been subject to governance engagement through Tauranga City Council on 17th and 18th August 2026, Western Bay of Plenty District Council on 8th September 2026, and a Bay of Plenty Regional Transport Committee workshop on 4th September 2026. The TCC City Future Committee, on 18 August, endorsed the TSOF 2026 Update as the draft sub-regional framework for transport system prioritisation, subject to engagement with the community.
4. **Notes** that endorsement confirms strategic alignment; it does not commit partner agencies to fund or deliver individual projects, which remain subject to business cases and statutory funding decisions.
5. **Supports** the use of the TSOF 2026 to inform SmartGrowth implementation, council Long-Term Plans, the Regional Land Transport Plan and future National Land Transport Programme funding priorities.
6. **Notes** that the indicative cost estimates within the TSOF are high-level and will be refined through future project-specific business case processes.

Strategic context

The TSOF is the prioritisation link between the sub-region's strategic growth direction and the statutory processes that determine what is funded and delivered.

Planning layer	Role
SmartGrowth Strategy	Sets the long-term sub-regional growth direction.
UFTI	Translates that direction into the Connected Centres land-use and transport vision.
Transport System Plan	Defines what the transport system needs to achieve over the medium term.
TSOF 2026	Identifies what should be prioritised and sequenced first.
RLTP, LTP and NLTP	Determine funding, timing and delivery through statutory processes.

What has changed in 2026

- The Prosperity objective has been added alongside Access, Safety, Sustainable Urban Growth and Emissions, strengthening the focus on freight and the strategic network.
- The evaluation places greater emphasis on benefit-cost performance and deliverability, reflecting current national policy and funding settings.
- Existing projects in planning, design or delivery are prioritised in the 0-3 year programme; most new major projects are sequenced into later periods.
- Multimodal, growth and resilience investments remain within the programme, although some are sequenced later because of funding and delivery constraints.

Category	2023 Programme (TSP v2)	What actually happened	2026 Update (TSP v3)
Committed / delivered projects	8 projects committed or in delivery (e.g. Cameron Road Stage 1, Baylink, Papamoa East Interchange)	All 8 completed or moved into construction as planned	Removed from the active programme – delivered
Delayed / reprogrammed projects	12 projects timed for 2024–2033	Delayed due to change of government, funding constraints, and affordability	Retimed into 2027–2030, 2031–2037, or 2038+ (see Figure 3)
Removed or consolidated projects	7 projects/activities in the 2023 programme	Cancelled (e.g. Transport Choices Programme), reassigned to KiwiRail, or combined into other projects / the Tauranga Strategic Urban Network Plan (TSUNP)	No longer separately tracked in the TSOF
New projects added	Not included in 2023	Identified through partner input and 2023 transport modelling	4 new projects added (Cameron Road – Chapel to Elizabeth Street; 11th Avenue; Welcome Bay Road rural sections; Te Puke Spatial Plan improvements)
Investment objectives	Four objectives (Access, Safety, Sustainable Urban Growth, Emissions)	Reviewed against GPS 2024 and freight/productivity priorities	Five objectives – Prosperity added
MCA weighting	Benefits/Cost weighted 14%	Reviewed to better reflect value-for-money expectations under GPS 2024	Benefits/Cost increased to 25%; Affordability and System Enabling reduced to 10% each

Partner and governance engagement

The refresh has been undertaken collaboratively through the TSP Partnership, comprising Tauranga City Council, Western Bay of Plenty District Council, Bay of Plenty Regional Council, NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi and iwi partners. This has included project reviews, methodology workshops and review of draft outputs.

- Tauranga City Council – 17 August Workshop and 18th August City Futures Committee
- Western Bay of Plenty District Council – 8th September Workshop
- Bay of Plenty Regional Transport Committee workshop – 4th September Workshop

This governance engagement is separate from statutory and project-level public engagement. Further community input will occur through LTP and RLTP consultation and as individual projects progress through business case and design stages.

Implications of endorsement

Endorsement provides a shared investment framework and strengthens coordinated advocacy and funding bids. It does not approve expenditure, fix project timing or remove the need for partner decisions. Costs are indicative and will be refined through project-specific business cases. Delivery remains subject to available local and national funding and agency capacity.

Next steps

- Finalise and publish the TSOF 2026 and supporting summary material.
- Use the endorsed priorities to inform the RLTP, partner LTPs and NLTP funding applications.
- Monitor policy, funding, growth and delivery changes, with the framework refreshed on its three-year cycle.

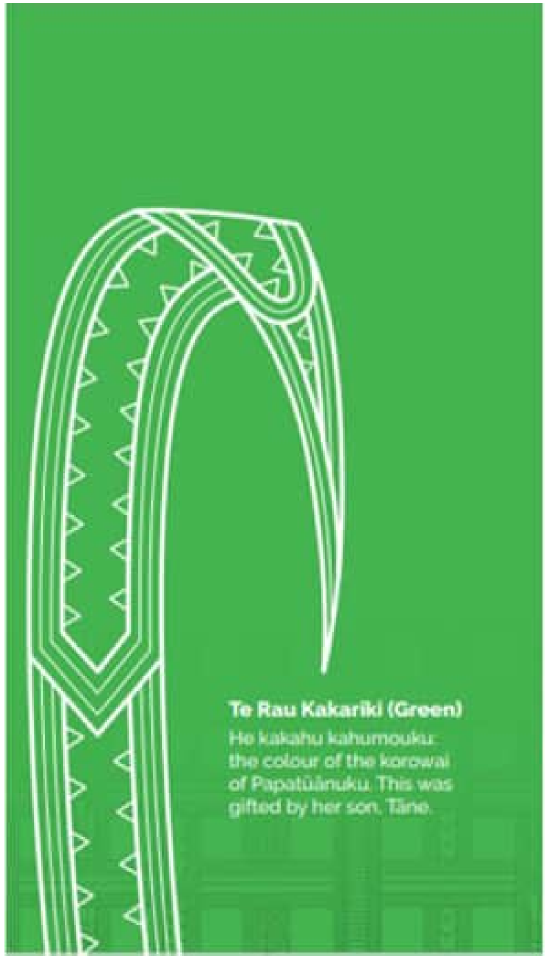
Appendix 1: Presentation – TSOF Update

THE WESTERN
BAY OF PLENTY
TRANSPORT
SYSTEM PLAN

Western Bay of Plenty Transport System Operating Framework

TSOF Version 3 Update — August 2026

Purpose



Briefing on the western Bay of Plenty Transport System Operating Framework (TSOF 2026), ahead of consideration by the City Futures Committee on 18 August 2026, covering:

- updated TSOF 2026 strategic transport investment framework recommendations
- approach to community engagement

Contents

- From strategy to delivery (SmartGrowth, UFTI and TSP)
- TSP and its Objectives
- What is the TSOF
- Evaluation Methodology and Weighting Criteria
- Proposed Programme (Years 0-3 and 4-10)
- Indicative Costs and Key Risks
- Community Engagement Approach
- Recommendations for Council

Sensitivity: General

From Smart Growth to UFTI

Smart Growth sets where and how the region grows

UFTI connect urban form to transport system design

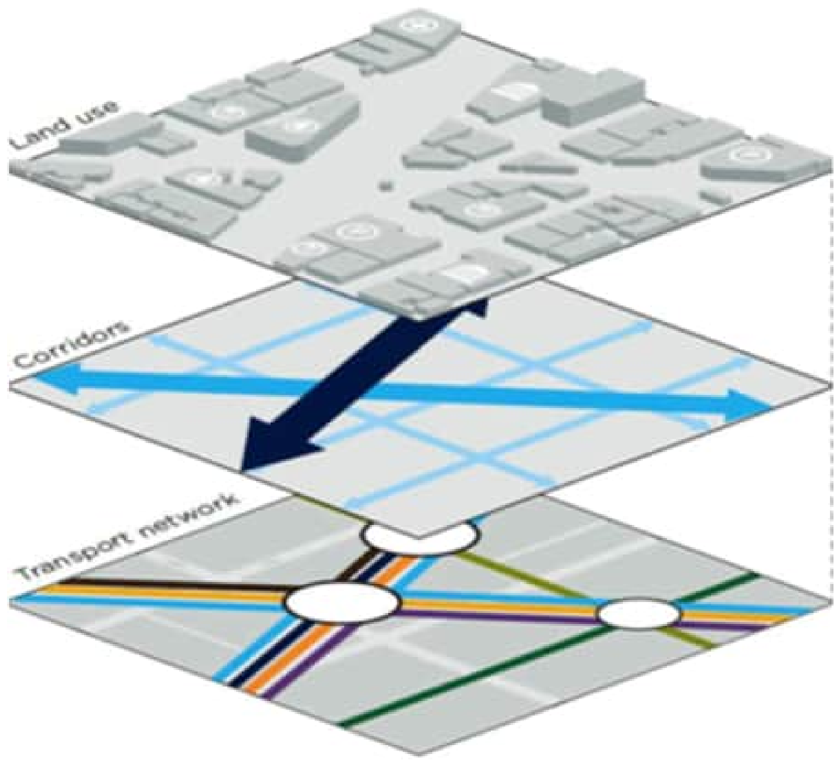
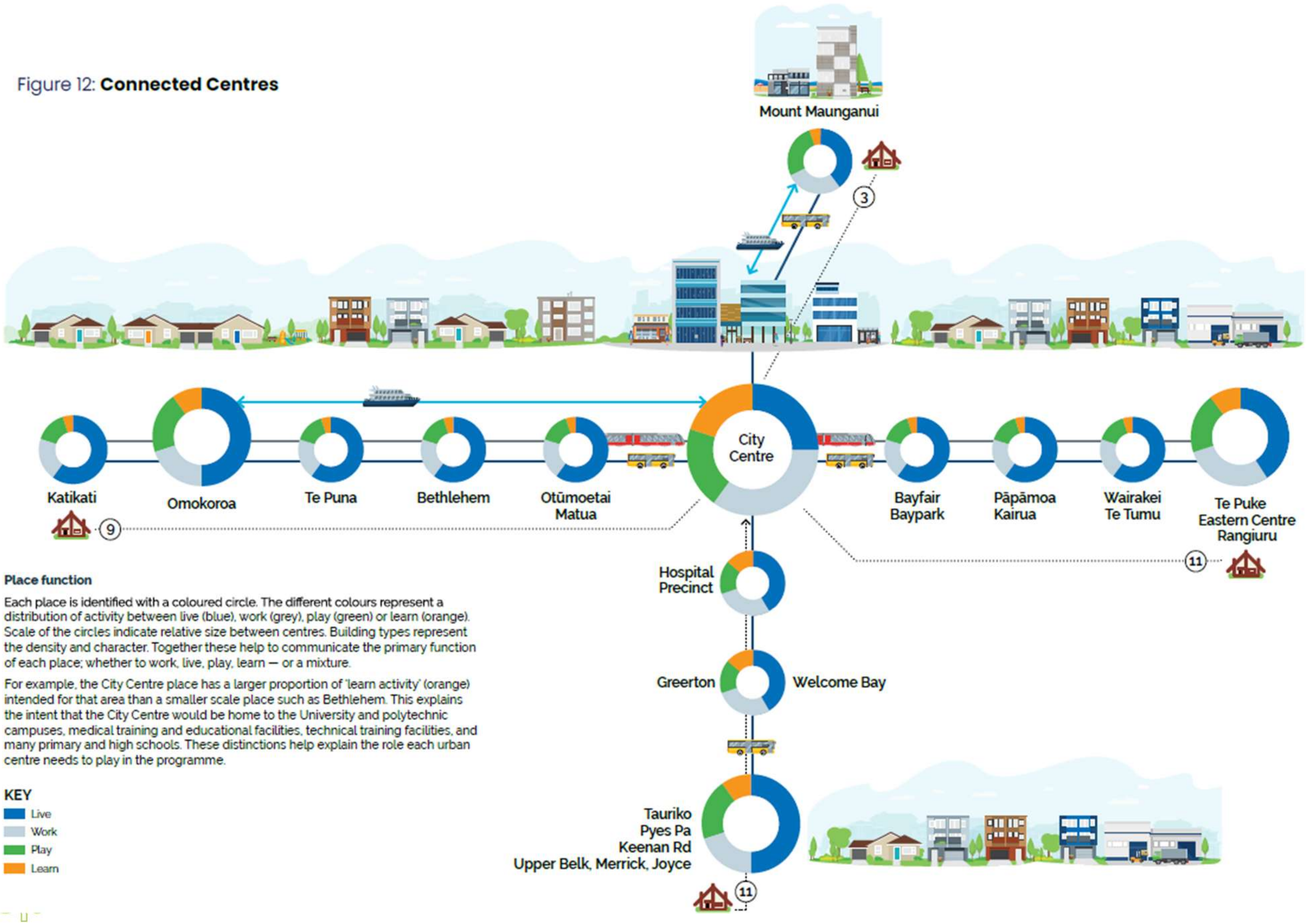


Figure 12: **Connected Centres**



Place function

Each place is identified with a coloured circle. The different colours represent a distribution of activity between live (blue), work (grey), play (green) or learn (orange). Scale of the circles indicate relative size between centres. Building types represent the density and character. Together these help to communicate the primary function of each place; whether to work, live, play, learn — or a mixture.

For example, the City Centre place has a larger proportion of 'learn activity' (orange) intended for that area than a smaller scale place such as Bethlehem. This explains the intent that the City Centre would be home to the University and polytechnic campuses, medical training and educational facilities, technical training facilities, and many primary and high schools. These distinctions help explain the role each urban centre needs to play in the programme.

KEY

- Live
- Work
- Play
- Learn

TSOF – Turning Strategy into Delivery

- The Transport System Operating Framework is the western Bay of Plenty sub region's agreed strategic framework for prioritising transport investment.
- First developed in 2020, reviewed in 2023, refreshed for 2026. In advance of each RLTP
- It is:
  - developed collaboratively by all partners
  - the current agreed strategic transport framework for the western Bay of Plenty sub region

- It provides an evidence base for :
  - new investment and level of service gaps across the transport network
  - a prioritised programme of projects (0-3, 4-10, 10+ years)
  - for council LTP and NZTA RLTP and NLTP decisions

- It does NOT:
  - approve funding or commit Council to delivering any project
  - replace statutory consultation processes (LTP, RLTP)

Revised Evaluation Criteria: Weighting Changes

The MCA evaluation tool retained its three-pillar structure but adjusted weightings to emphasise benefit-cost performance.

Gap Impact

14% ✓ unchanged

From the gap assessment — how significantly the gap affects achievement of TSP objectives.

- Weighted 14% (unchanged)

Alignment to UFTI

42% ✓ unchanged

Does the project support UFTI Connected Centres outcomes?

- Support planned urban growth (14%)
- Support urban form outcomes (14%)
- Support strategic journeys (14%)

Feasibility

45% ▲ adjusted

Increased 3% overall; internal shifts favour benefit-cost.

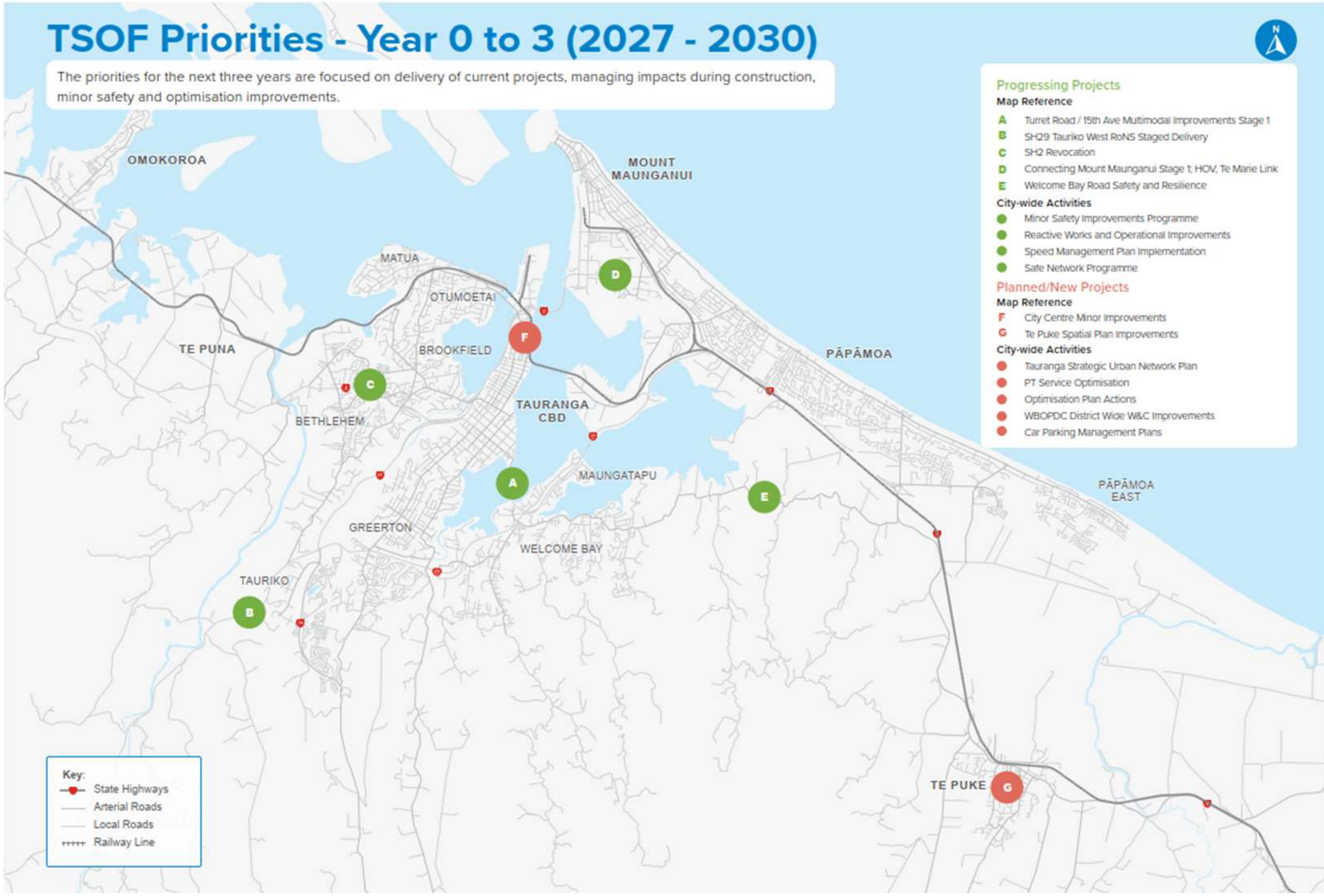
- Affordability ↓ 4% → now 10%
- System enabling ↓ 4% → now 10%
- **Benefits / Cost ↑ 11% → now 25%**

Key impact: Projects with stronger benefit-cost ratios are now ranked higher, improving deliverability focus of the programme.

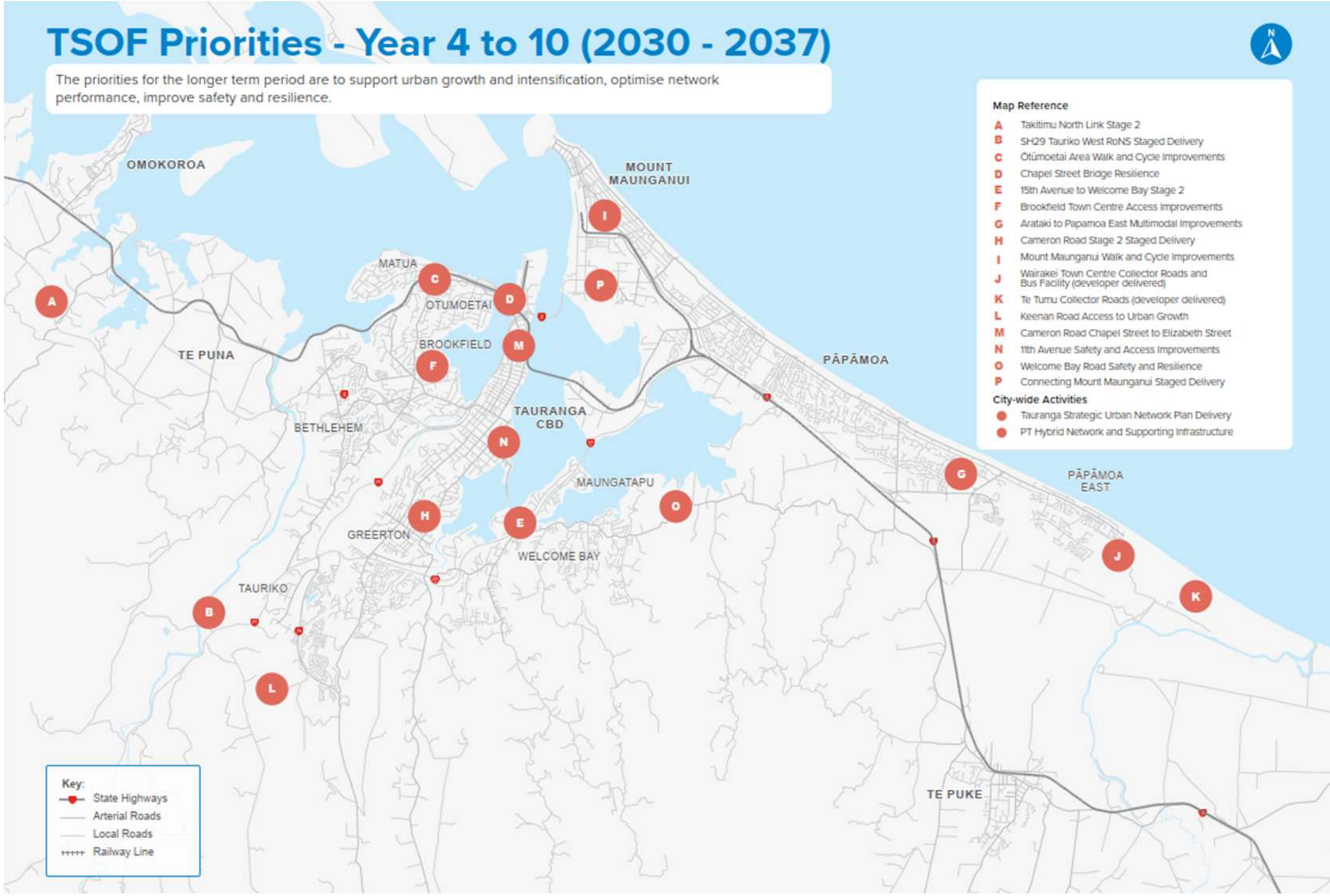
Key Changes: TSOF v2 (2023) vs TSOF v3 (2026)

Change Area	v2 (2023)	v3 (2026)	Net Impact
New Objective	Four objectives: Access, Safety, Urban Growth, Emissions	Five objectives — Prosperity added (freight/strategic network focus)	**↑ Road and freight projects**
MCA Weighting	Benefits/Cost ~14%, Affordability 14%, System Enabling 14%	Benefits/Cost 25% (+11%), Affordability 10% (–4%), System Enabling 10% (–4%)	**High BCR projects ranked ↑**
PT & Cycling	Accessible Streets (A&B), PT enhanced services — Years 0–3	All deferred to Years 4–10 or beyond. GPS24 funding withdrawn.	**Significant delays**
TDM / Behaviour Change	Prioritised for delivery 2024–2026	Deferred — Government funding removed under GPS24	**Cancelled short-term**
Modal Shift Target	15% bus+cycle mode share modelled as achievable	Without PT/cycle funding, this target will not be realised in modelled timeframes	**↓ Mode shift outcomes**
Cost Estimates	2023 values	2026 values — approx. 5% uplift applied to all projects	**Higher programme cost**
New Projects Added	Not included	Cameron Rd (Chapel–Elizabeth), 11th Ave, Welcome Bay Rd (rural), Te Puke Spatial Plan	**4 new entries**
RoNS Projects	Tauriko Stage 1 only in programme	Tauriko Stages 3 & 4, TNL Stage 2 — all confirmed RoNS; managed outside TSOF	**Significant committed spend**

Years 0-3 (2027-2030): Delivery Focus



Years 4-10 (2030-2037): Growth Focus



Why These Priorities? Sequencing Rationale

1 Existing pipeline first

Projects already in planning/design/construction are prioritised. Completing business case phases and moving to implementation is now the primary objective. Starting new major projects in the 0–3 year window was assessed as unaffordable and undeliverable given existing workload.

2 Benefit-cost drives ranking

The revised MCA gives 25% weighting (up from ~14%) to Benefits/Cost. Projects with demonstrably high BCR — like road safety works and corridor upgrades — rank higher. Multi-modal and PT projects generally score lower on this criterion, influencing the 4–10 year programme composition.

3 Government funding alignment

GPS24 prioritises economic growth, productivity and Roads of National Significance (RoNS). PT-heavy and cycleway projects face funding constraints. The programme reflects what is realistically fundable through NLTF — PT and cycling improvements are deferred, not abandoned.

4 Urban growth drives long-term sequencing

Growth areas (Tauriko, Papamoa East, Te Tumu, Keenan Road, Wairakei) sequence delivery of developer-funded collector roads and public infrastructure to align with staged development. Sustainable Urban Growth is the single most consistent objective across both programmes.