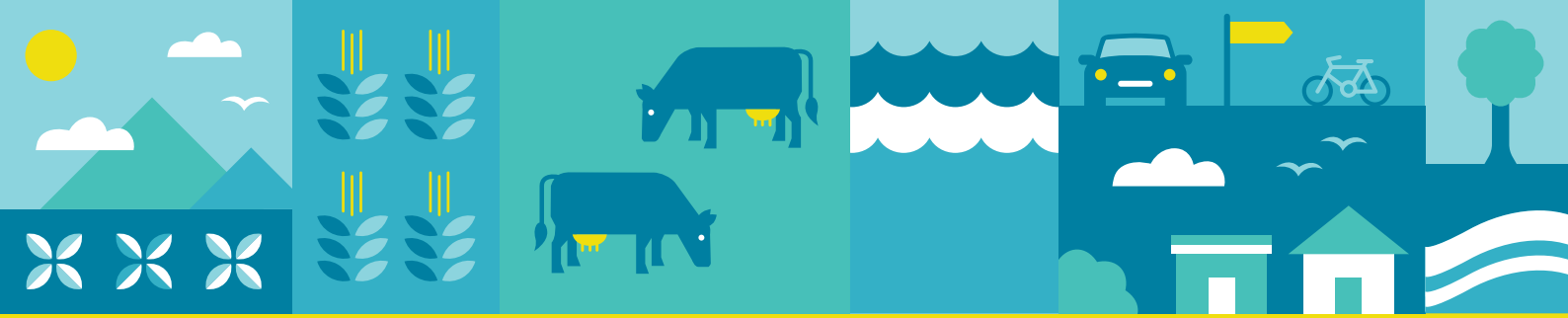


UNISA

Value PROPOSITION 2026

UPPER NORTH ISLAND STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

Auckland Council
Te Kaunihera o Tāmaki Makaurau

BAY OF PLENTY REGIONAL COUNCIL TOI MOANA

Northland REGIONAL COUNCIL

Waikato REGIONAL COUNCIL
Te Kaunihera ā Rohe o Waikato

Hamilton City Council
Te kaunihera o Kirikiriroa

Whangarei District Council

Tauranga City

The Upper North Island Strategic Alliance is a trusted, collaborative forum

Established in 2011, the Upper North Island Strategic Alliance (UNISA) comprises councils from the four Upper North Island (UNI) regions of Northland, Auckland, Waikato and Bay of Plenty plus the largest city in each being Whangārei, Hamilton and Tauranga. Mayors and Chairs of member Councils represent the Alliance, bringing inter-regional collaboration and action, coordinated planning, and collective advocacy to achieve better outcomes and greater efficiency across the UNI and for the benefit of the nation.



UNISA exists to ensure this nationally significant region thinks, plans and advocates collectively.

UNISA provides the value of:

Partnership

For government, UNISA is the trusted partner on matters affecting the UNI helping to deliver national outcomes through regional alignment.

For member councils, Mayors and Chairs partner on issues of mutual interest and needing a coordinated inter-regional response.

UNISA works beyond the parameters of local authority boundaries, helping to navigate solutions and enabling projects that work for inter-regional outcomes. As we move into significant changes to local government and planning systems, UNISA continues as an enduring forum providing a strategic view of the issues, needs and opportunities of the Upper North Island and the 57% of the nation's population that it represents.

Conduit and connection

Government agencies, UNISA partners and other councils in the UNI understand inter-regional connections and how to capitalise on these.

UNISA supports better working relationships between central government, its agencies, and Alliance partners. UNISA acts as an established, trusted forum for government and its agencies, increasing the efficiency and simplicity of engagement with member councils representing most of the nation's population and economic activity. This is particularly relevant at the start of engagement processes where issues are common across UNISA partners. For member councils, UNISA is an avenue for direct advocacy to central government.

Influence and momentum

Government agencies, UNISA partners and other councils in the UNI understand inter-regional issues and opportunities, particularly those of national influence, and the responses needed.

UNISA produces well-evidenced information products for inter-regional issues needing a unified narrative, including the recently developed Infrastructure Development Plan and the Upper North Island Freight Story. UNISA deliverables have provided evidence-based planning tools, supported infrastructure and economic development decisions, improved tourism coordination, and contributed to national-level environmental biosecurity policy tangible actions which we see the benefits of today.

What does success look like?

- UNISA is a regular early engagement partner for central government on matters affecting the Upper North Island.
- UNISA partners, other councils in the Upper North Island and government agencies understand inter-regional connections and how to capitalise on these.
- Better working relationships within UNISA and with central government.
- UNISA is recognised for well-evidenced coordinated views on matters of significance for the Upper North Island and these influence actions needed for the region.
- An understanding of the success of the whole of the UNI rather than just the separate regions that it is made up of – they all play a part.

The Upper North Island is strategically important to New Zealand.

Combining **population density, economic output, infrastructure networks, trade access, and resource availability**, the Upper North Island (UNI) is the **engine room of New Zealand's economy** and a critical link to global markets.

The UNI has the greatest population (over half) and labour force concentration in the country. Growth has increased more rapidly in the UNI than for the rest of the country and that's projected to continue. Over 50% of the national GDP is produced in the UNI with Auckland being the country's financial, commercial, and corporate hub, and Northland, Waikato and Bay of Plenty contributing strongly through healthcare, technology, agriculture, energy, and exports. It is also the home to a large and growing Māori economy.

Auckland Airport is the main international gateway. Five of the approved place of first arrival (PoFA) marinas in the nation being popular arrival points for ocean travelers, are in the UNI. The region is the primary entry and exit point for **international trade**, linking New Zealand to global markets and in particular Asia-Pacific. Ports of Auckland, Tauranga and Northport handle a large portion of imports/exports supported by Ruakura Inland Port, the state highways and the rail lines. All of which are critical parts of the country's supply chain. Sector diversity across the region adds to resilience - **finance, technology, and services** (Auckland); **agriculture and dairy processing** (Waikato) and **forestry, horticulture, and logistics** (Bay of Plenty and Northland).

UNISA Membership

The member councils are: Northland, Waikato and Bay of Plenty Regional Councils, Auckland Council, Whangarei District Council, and Hamilton and Tauranga City Councils. Mayors and Chairs represent the alliance. To extend the impact of UNISA, each regional council is responsible for representing and communicating with the councils in their respective regions.

UNISA is also committed to inviting non-member councils to join UNISA's governance meetings where there are items of shared interest on the agenda. Representation from the Ministry for Cities, Environment, Regions & Transport (MCERT), Kiwirail, and the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) Waka Kotah within UNISA meetings enables discussion and advocacy of regional priorities through central government channels.

Communication & strategic deliverables

There are three key documents for UNISA:

- The Upper North Island Story
- The Upper North Island Strategic Alliance Value Proposition
- The Upper North Island Strategic Alliance Priority Work Programme identifying a targeted set of initiatives where coordinated regional effort can achieve the greatest impact.

Since its establishment, UNISA has delivered a range of collaborative inter-regional projects. These have focused on areas of common interest or mutual benefit, pooling the resourcing and expertise across member councils for greatest impact. Most recently published is the UNISA Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP). The IDP identifies the key infrastructure projects (freight, transport, energy and ports) for each of the UNISA member councils, and weaves together the story of how the priority programmes and projects will realise the potential of the UNI. The aspiration for this plan is that it will provide an agreed statement for UNI projects which will be used to continue to engage with central government, showing that UNISA is a credible alliance to partner with.

Read the IDP, other UNISA publications and further information about the Alliance here: Upper North Island Strategic Alliance.

UNISA Priority Projects

Northland

- Dry dock
- Marsden Point rail link
- Energy bridge
- RoNS Northland corridor (includes SH1 Brynderwyns)

Rail

- Triple track expansion through Auckland
- East Coast Main Trunk Corridor
- North Island Main Trunk Corridor
- Double tracking to second Kaimai Tunnel

Auckland

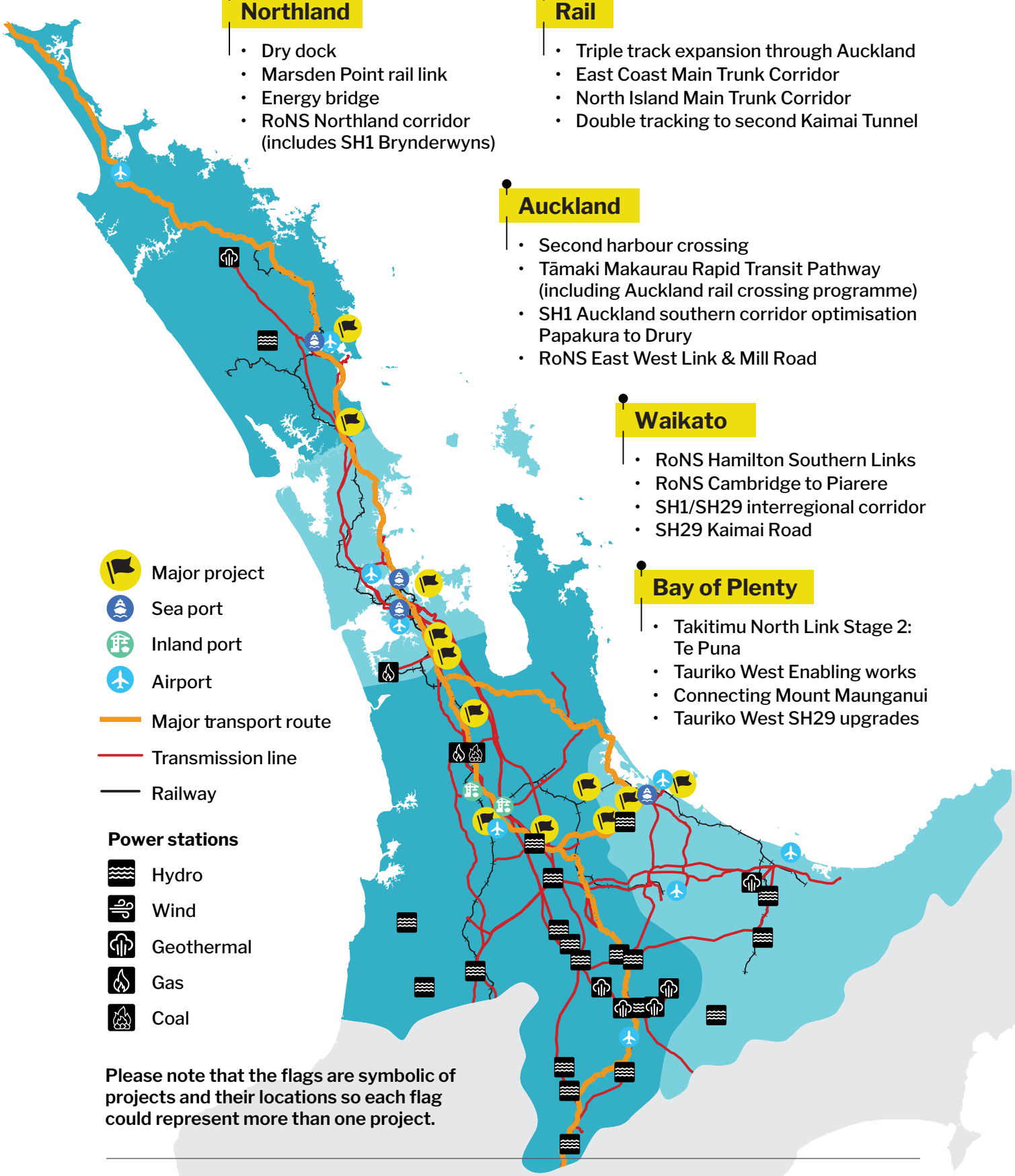
- Second harbour crossing
- Tāmaki Makaurau Rapid Transit Pathway (including Auckland rail crossing programme)
- SH1 Auckland southern corridor optimisation Papakura to Drury
- RoNS East West Link & Mill Road

Waikato

- RoNS Hamilton Southern Links
- RoNS Cambridge to Piarere
- SH1/SH29 interregional corridor
- SH29 Kaimai Road

Bay of Plenty

- Takitimu North Link Stage 2: Te Puna
- Tauriko West Enabling works
- Connecting Mount Maunganui
- Tauriko West SH29 upgrades



Please note that the flags are symbolic of projects and their locations so each flag could represent more than one project.



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