

Date: Thursday 27 March 2025
Time: 10.00am
Meeting Room: Reception Lounge
Venue: Auckland Town Hall
 301-305 Queen Street
 Auckland

Tira Hautū / Governing Body

OPEN ATTACHMENTS

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Note: The attachments contained within this document are for consideration and should not be construed as Council policy unless and until adopted. Should Councillors require further information relating to any reports, please contact the relevant manager, Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson.

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AUCKLAND COUNCIL

Te Whakaaetanga o Tāmaki Makaurau

Auckland Deal: light touch proposal

New Zealand's gateway
to productivity and growth.

February 2025



Item 7

Attachment A



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Te Whakaaetanga o Tāmaki Makaurau: **Auckland Deal** | 2

Region and contact details

Tāmaki Makaurau, Auckland, is New Zealand’s only major international city and its engine of growth and productivity. Spanning 4,894 square kilometres (1.8% of New Zealand’s land area), the region is home to over one-third of New Zealand’s population, contributes nearly 40% of national GDP and is its main gateway for people, trade, innovation and investment. Auckland has higher labour productivity than the rest of New Zealand and is the centre of the country’s most valuable and productive growth industries, with 116 of New Zealand’s top 200 tech firms based in Auckland.

The region has a rich cultural history with 19 iwi and hāpu who maintain a strong connection to this whenua. It has an outstanding natural environment and urban amenities which contribute to its global appeal as a thriving place to live, work, invest in and visit.

The region has grown faster than the rest of the country and accounts for a significant proportion of its urban growth in recent years – it has a mature planning framework, capable and effective local governance with a track record of financial discipline in times of rapid growth, and strong private and Māori institutions. Auckland Council is an experienced, effective and trustworthy partner of the government, demonstrated in major joint projects such as City Rail Link and the Auckland Housing Programme, as well as recent successful agreements with the Government on water reform and transport reform.

Major public and private investment in Auckland – including mega-projects like City Rail Link, Eastern Busway and Central Interceptor, and private investment in data centres and large-scale development – is poised to dramatically improve the region’s connectivity, productivity and capacity for growth if leveraged well.

Auckland is ready for a new type of relationship with central government – an Auckland Deal – based on a partnership that will unlock long-term, sustainable growth that benefits both the region and the nation.

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Te Whakaaetanga o Tāmaki Makaurau: **Auckland Deal** | 3

1. Executive summary – New Zealand’s gateway to growth and productivity

Auckland is seeking a new kind of partnership with the Government to empower the region to drive its own success and realise its potential as **New Zealand’s major international city – a thriving, beautiful and innovative place that boosts regional and national prosperity.**

The case for the Auckland Deal

Fixing key problems and unlocking Auckland’s growth and the advantages of a major, internationally competitive city will deliver a huge productivity dividend to the nation.

<p>a. Auckland’s opportunity – an Auckland Deal would harness Auckland’s advantages as NZ’s major international city and commercial centre.</p> <p>Small, developed nations benefit from thriving major cities that generate economic growth and productivity from the agglomeration of people, businesses, ideas and institutions. Unlocking these advantages for Auckland and New Zealand – and positioning it to compete globally for talent and investment – will have major economic benefits for New Zealand.</p>	<p>Scale, density</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Largest urban area and economic centre 33% of population, could soon reach two million up to 40% of New Zealand’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is generated here. 	<p>Productivity, high-value industry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$86,000 GDP per capita, 15% higher than NZ on average largest share of manufacturing, logistics, agriculture, financial services. 	<p>Gateway for trade, investment and people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A super diverse population connected to the Pacific and the world, including its largest populations freight hub, 91% of NZ’s international air freight and ~36% of its sea, by value home to 50% of NZ’s immigrants. 	<p>Major public and private sector investment</p> <p>Building on the existing infrastructure, resulting in a more efficient network than the rest of New Zealand.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auckland Council plans to invest \$295b over 30-years in investment in infrastructure – including a major investment in water and resilience. Major projects including City Rail Link and Eastern Busway are poised to dramatically improve network. Urban growth and regeneration; large-scale projects enabling 20,000 homes New Zealand International Convention Centre set to open in 2026 digital backbone, 65% of the nation’s data centre capacity – through private investment major private investment / FDI planned: e.g. Fisher & Paykel (\$220m HQ), Precinct Properties (\$1.5b downtown redevelopment), major planned upgrades to Port and Airport.
<p>Innovation, technology, research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concentration of research, technology, startups, capital 50% of research assets (universities, Crown Research Institutes); 60% tech industry - strengths in medicine, defence, finance, and creative technologies. 	<p>Outstanding natural environment and amenities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19 iwi and hapū with strong interests a rich history and multi-ethnic population outstanding natural environment and urban amenity. 	<p>Capable and effective institutions</p> <p>Strong existing partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective local governance with a track record of partnership, good planning, fiscal discipline, and growth strong private, iwi and social institutions. 	<p>Demonstrating confidence in Auckland.</p>		

These advantages mean unlocking growth in Auckland is more efficient and attainable and has the biggest impact on NZ’s productivity and global competitiveness.

Auckland needs to be positioned to compete for talent and investment with other international cities, not other NZ regions.

The case for the Auckland Deal (continued)

Fixing key problems and unlocking Auckland's growth and the advantages of a major, internationally competitive city will deliver a huge productivity dividend to the nation.					
<p>b. Auckland's challenges/the problems to fix –</p> <p>an Auckland Deal would empower Auckland to fix key challenges and constraints that are holding back growth. Auckland has unique challenges that require specific solutions, but it lacks the tools to fix them. Current settings do not support Auckland Council to foster economic growth in Auckland –ratepayers bear the cost of growth infrastructure, but increased tax revenues flow to central government. Under these settings, growth could lead to declining – not rising – living standards.</p>	<p>Challenges</p>	<p>Auckland's GDP per capita premium (10-15% more productive than NZ) not as high as comparable cities (25 – 35%).</p> <p>If Auckland achieved that premium, NZ's GDP could be 3-7% higher. A more productive Auckland would drive higher wages, investment and living standards. While Auckland is NZ's centre of research and innovation, it lags its international comparators in this metric.</p>	<p>Productivity and innovation are not as high as they should be.</p>	<p>Auckland is experiencing growing pains that constrain growth,</p>	<p>Congestion, housing unaffordability, infrastructure deficits (such as wastewater constraints), environmental degradation and an increasing rate burden to pay for growth put constraints on growth and reduce the quality of life in Auckland. These harms the nation's productivity and potential for agglomeration benefits.</p>
	<p>Which means Auckland needs</p>	<p>Long-term integrated planning</p>	<p>Moving away from constant changing plans.</p>	<p>Levers and focus to drive higher productivity and innovation</p>	<p>Auckland has lacked the national focus and levers that other international city (such as Australia's State Capitals) use to drive higher productivity and innovation.</p>
<p>b. Auckland's challenges/the problems to fix –</p> <p>Auckland bears the cost of growth, but tax benefits flow to the government, and it lacks effective tools to plan, fund and share the benefits of growth.</p> <p>Auckland Council also lacks simple tools to deal with growth constraints such as congestion and parking in a way that is unique to Auckland. Neither does it have a say on major government levers, such as immigration and international investment settings, that have a significant impact on its growth.</p> <p>A lack of joint long-term planning and commitment between central and local government reduces momentum and confidence, and unfunded mandates distract focus.</p>	<p>Tools to plan, fund, and share the benefits of growth</p>	<p>Empowering Auckland to resolve its challenges, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach</p>	<p>Tools to plan, fund, and share the benefits of growth</p>	<p>Auckland lacks the tools to plan, fund, share the benefits and address the downsides of growth.</p>	<p>Auckland bears the cost of growth, but tax benefits flow to the government, and it lacks effective tools to plan, fund and share the benefits of growth.</p>
<p>By resolving these challenges, Auckland could plan to grow by another one million people in a way that lifts productivity and living standards for Auckland and NZ.</p>	<p>High living standards depend on resilient, connected and affordable infrastructure supporting growth – and that infrastructure needs to be planned for and funded.</p>	<p>High living standards depend on resilient, connected and affordable infrastructure supporting growth – and that infrastructure needs to be planned for and funded.</p>	<p>High living standards depend on resilient, connected and affordable infrastructure supporting growth – and that infrastructure needs to be planned for and funded.</p>	<p>High living standards depend on resilient, connected and affordable infrastructure supporting growth – and that infrastructure needs to be planned for and funded.</p>	<p>High living standards depend on resilient, connected and affordable infrastructure supporting growth – and that infrastructure needs to be planned for and funded.</p>

How the Auckland Deal should work

Based on lessons from other deals, the Auckland Deal needs to be about a long-term partnership and securing long-term, sustainable growth.			
Aligned objectives with government	Integrated long-term planning	Empowering Auckland to achieve its objectives and plans	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set clear, measurable objectives and be accountable through regular citizen reporting. Grow Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita (% increase). Reduce house price-to-income ratio. Deliver infrastructure that will increase transport network efficiency. 	<p>Develop joint long-term plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Spatial Plan Auckland Integrated Transport Plan <p>and make these plans strong and not subject to constant re-litigation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simple regulatory and legislative fixes to enable local rule-setting new funding and financing tools, including sharing benefits of growth influence over key policies that impact the development of Auckland (e.g., immigration, regulation) place-based partnerships to support priority development jointly review Auckland's legislation to ensure it's working. 	
Better coordination	Faster decisions – enable Auckland-specific over national solutions	Iwi and private sector partnerships	Better value projects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align efforts on high-impact priorities. Work on better coordination of services, reduce duplication and streamline decision-making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow Auckland and the government to create quick, specific solutions to Auckland's problems, cut out layers of advice, and develop bespoke solutions instead of a one-size-fits-all approach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unlock private and iwi investment by removing barriers, working to open investment opportunities, and being open to unsolicited bids and private capital (that could include public-private partnerships (PPPs)) to accelerate projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific workstream on improving the value council and government receive from capital projects – initiatives to deliver better, faster, and cheaper. Commitment to positive benefit-cost-ratios.
			Greater accountability and shared benefits
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular meetings and reporting to track progress – quarterly monitor If Auckland is empowered, it can be accountable for delivering on objectives. Mechanisms to share benefits.

Focus on priorities

Focusing on the areas that will have the **greatest impact** on growth and productivity.

Priority	Why it's a priority	What's under way, what Auckland can do, what it needs	Proposed priority initiatives
<p>Housing Abundant quality housing alongside transport, business and industry.</p>	<p>Critical to economic growth and productivity, it enables people to locate closer to more productive areas and generate agglomeration benefits. Reducing housing supply constraints in Auckland could increase NZ's GDP by 0.9% - 1.8%.</p>	<p>Already under way: Significant Growth Enabled: Future Development Strategy (FDS), Auckland Unitary Plan, Long-term Plan Auckland Housing Programme: large-scale projects enabling ~ 20,000 homes in next 10 years (Tāmaki Regeneration, Hobsonville Point, Mt Roskill, Mangere) Supporting Growth Alliance (NZTA/AT): plans for transport projects needed to support growth in Auckland for next 30 years Major development planned at Drury Regeneration of town centres.</p> <p>Auckland can unlock growth by: Accelerating delivery of infrastructure that supports housing alongside business and industry Making use of new, innovative funding tools and regeneration powers Lifting land-use restrictions where appropriate to enable intensification, including as required by National Policy Statement – Urban Development (NPS-UD) Working better with private sector developers Developing a new Regional Spatial Plan with Government that prepares Auckland to accommodate another 1 million residents.</p> <p>To enable this, Government needs to: Provide Auckland with the tools to plan for, fund and finance growth infrastructure required to support Aucklanders' quality of life as the city grows Targeted legislative change enabling Auckland to implement NPS-UD, address flooding hazards and remove the blank application of Medium Density Residential Standards Enable a stronger Regional Spatial Plan that is not subject to constant re-litigation Support stronger coordination of council and Government infrastructure to support growth, for example investment in schools by Ministry of Education could be better coordinated with council growth priorities and infrastructure such as playing fields Sensible building regulations (including seismic).</p>	<p>Auckland Development Initiative – boosting Auckland's ability to support quality growth and development in priority places.</p> <p>Council plans to establish and resource a new function to carry out urban development activities in partnership with government, private developers and iwi - the Auckland Development Office (working title and subject to consultation as to structure). The proposed Auckland Development Initiative is a partnership with Government that would see:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auckland Council with powers under the Urban Development Act and funding tools, which could be deployed by the new function place-based partnership to facilitate the planning, funding and delivery of Crown, council and private infrastructure in priority places (e.g. in Drury), including a refreshed partnership on large-scale projects on Crown/Kāinga Ora land a specific focus on realising opportunities from transit-oriented development, including taking action to realise opportunities around City Rail Link stations.

Focus on priorities (continued)

Focusing on the areas that will have the **greatest impact** on growth and productivity.

Priority	Why it's a priority	What's under way, what Auckland can do, what it needs	Proposed priority initiatives
<p>Transport Enable people and good to get around faster, cheaper, with lower emissions</p>	<p>Transport supports growth and productivity and provides access to opportunity. Improving Auckland's transport system is important to the nation's productivity. Decongestion in Auckland could be worth \$1.4 – \$1.9 billion per year or 1.5% - 2% of Auckland's GDP.</p>	<p>Already under way: Auckland Integrated Transport Plan and Transport Reform Time of Use Charging legislation Major Projects – City Rail Link (CRL), Eastern Busway and Penlink Major investment in more efficient, optimised network. Auckland can unlock growth by: Improving efficiency of system by maintaining network, tactical interventions (such as dynamic lanes and smart intersections), making use of new pricing tools Effective public transport system Joint planning with Government on problems. From the Government: Legal tools to make tactical interventions – like Time of Use Charging, parking fines and TTM charging Long-term integrated transport planning and funding. Simplifying NLTF funding Commitment to important large projects –Botany to Airport and Northwest rapid transport.</p>	<p>Getting Auckland moving - accelerated level crossing removal programme and time-of-use charging A prioritised initiative to remove dangerous and congested level crossings across Auckland over 10 to 30 years – enabling more-frequent trains and traffic to flow freely and safely, and maximising benefits from the CRL investment. The benefits of the level-crossing removal initiative are assessed as more than \$20 billion, with a benefit-cost ratio of 1:1. A time-of-use-charging regime will further enhance efficiencies by working on the demand side of the transport system.</p>
<p>Innovation Thriving innovation and technology sector that attracts international investment and talent.</p>	<p>Knowledge intensive economies support high productivity and rely on large cities due to agglomeration. Auckland has a concentration of research, startups, large firms, institutions and capital, including our highest ranked university. 60% of the nation's technology industry, and 116 of the top 200 tech firms, are based in Auckland. Auckland's technology sector contributes \$16.5 billion in GDP.</p>	<p>Already under way : Innovation precincts at Wynyard Quarter; Convening of the tech ecosystem group Significant innovation clusters exist around Newmarket Innovation Precinct and other areas. Auckland can unlock growth by: Leadership to bring sector together to: promote city internationally as innovation centre; identify and remove regulatory barriers; help broker deals with private sector and other entities; foster creation of cluster; facilitation roles (as a focus of economic development) Continue to support development of targeted innovation precincts Council may also be prepared to consider direct R&D incentives or regulatory concessions, if matched by Government. From the Government: Commitment to the sector based on an understanding that Auckland is where there is concentration of research, firms and capital to drive commercialisation to provide confidence Removing barriers to immigration and investment Strong investment in research institutions and R&D incentives.</p>	<p>A thriving technology sector - anchored by establishing the core of the new Advanced Technology Institute based in Auckland. Through the Auckland Deal, Auckland Council proposes to exercise a greater leadership role in facilitating the growth and development of the technology and innovation sector, including promoting the city and identifying and removing regulatory constraints. To support this the Government should locate the core of the new advanced technology public research organisation in Auckland to deliver research, capability, and commercial outreach. This will provide the greatest benefits to the new organisation and nation, including strongest possibilities in terms of commercialisation.</p>

Focus on priorities (continued)

Priority	Why it's a priority	What's under way, what Auckland can do, what it needs	Proposed priority initiatives
<p>Gateway to the world Connected and diverse city that drives international trade, investment, immigration and tourism.</p>	<p>International connections underpin Auckland and NZ's prosperity. Auckland's diverse population is internationally connected. Auckland is the Capital of the Pacific and has strong links to the world's two largest countries. Auckland Airport and the Port of Auckland are major facilitators of trade and tourism. \$26.6 billion per annum worth of goods are moved through Auckland Airport (91% of the nation's international air freight by value) – and this is forecast to grow to \$41.1 billion by FY32. Tourism contributed \$4.5bn to Auckland's GDP in the year to March 2023.</p>	<p>Already under way: Major upgrades of Auckland Airport and the Port of Auckland: in the case of the Port of Auckland this is supported by council through its endorsed Plan to Make the Most of the Waterfront and Port Destination Auckland and major events strategies are in place to attract international visitors, and celebrate Auckland's cultures and connection to the world. Auckland can unlock growth by: Enabling Port of Auckland Improving connectivity to the Airport Investing in a long-term destination and major events strategy to enhance the economic contribution from tourism Maintain strong international relationships to promote and cooperate to grow trade and investment Optimising investment in stadium network and major venues to enhance their contribution to Auckland's economic and cultural vibrancy. From the government, Auckland needs: Better immigration and overseas investment settings to support business, education, and tourism, including changes to visa settings to enable visitors to more easily transit through Auckland Funding tools Commitment to projects to support Airport and Port connectivity (Botany to Airport, Southeastern Access, Landing Intersection) Assisting with securing direct flights to India and South America, including regulatory and visa improvements to enable trade and transit between South-East Asia and South America via Auckland.</p>	<p>Unlocking Auckland as a premier destination for iconic events and high-value tourism – funded by a bed-night visitor levy. A long-term commitment to destination and major events funding, underpinned by a strategy that will attract and retain large-scale major events (international and domestic), attract visitors, business delegates and students, and position Auckland as a premier destination for tourism, major events, business events, and international education. More planes carrying visitors to Auckland will increase NZ's connectivity to the world – boosting trade and international investment opportunities – and making direct flights to India and South America more viable. This strategy needs a sustainable funding mechanism and will not be achieved through rates funding. The bed night visitor levy is the best mechanism and will have major benefits for the nation. If we want Auckland want to host major events that will boost the country – whether it be the America's Cup, Taylor Swift or a State of Origin game – then the Government needs to enable a bed night visitor levy.</p>

Focus on priorities (continued)

Priority	Why it's a priority	What's under way, what Auckland can do, what it needs	Proposed priority initiatives
<p>Environment and harbours Stunning natural environment – including its harbours and parks – that contribute to a thriving city and economy.</p>	<p>The stunning natural environment – including its harbours and parks – contributes to a thriving city and economy. Auckland's stunning natural environment is a key feature that makes it an attractive place to live. The ecosystem services associated with the Hauraki Gulf have an estimated total economic value of \$5.14 billion per year.</p>	<p>Already under way: Environmental initiatives focused on restoring the Hauraki Gulf, improving water quality, and enhancing coastal resilience Stormwater and wastewater infrastructure projects are in progress to reduce pollution, while community and iwi-led biodiversity restoration projects are actively regenerating key ecosystems Coastal adaptation strategies are being developed to address the impacts of climate change, including rising sea levels and erosion risks. Auckland can do unlock growth by: Expanding efforts to restore the Hauraki Gulf, accelerate water quality improvements through sustainable urban design and stricter pollution controls, and strengthen resilience by implementing long-term coastal management strategies. From the government, Auckland needs: Co-investment in stormwater and wastewater infrastructure, and fund large-scale marine and biodiversity restoration initiatives. Legislative support is required for iwi-led conservation and climate adaptation projects, ensuring that Māori perspectives are embedded in environmental management. Work together on climate adaptation and mitigation efforts.</p>	<p>An essential initiative to protect and restore the health of the Hauraki Gulf – implement the marine biosecurity and clean-hull vessel plan. This initiative would implement a regional policy to prevent the spread of invasive marine species, strengthen biosecurity measures for boats and shipping, and support iwi-led marine conservation efforts. Auckland would work in partnership with government agencies, iwi, and the private sector to ensure the long-term health of the Hauraki Gulf and surrounding coastal ecosystems.</p>

2. Alignment with the Strategic Framework

The proposed Auckland Deal is designed to align closely with the Regional Deals Strategic Framework, ensuring that Auckland’s economic and infrastructure priorities contribute to national growth, productivity and resilience. It is proposed that, as part of the Auckland Deal, Auckland and the Government would agree to clear, measurable objectives that align with the framework and would be accountable against government would agree to clear, measurable objectives that align with the framework and would be accountable for these objectives through regular reporting to citizens in a simple scorecard. This will provide focus to negotiations. For example:

	Economic growth	Housing affordability	Connected infrastructure
Key proposed measure	GDP per capita growth (% increase)	Median house price-to-income ratio (% reduction)	Reduced congestion (reduction in the % of economic output lost to congestion)

Each of these measures would contain supporting measures. The following table illustrates how the proposed Auckland Deal could align with the key objectives of the Regional Deals framework, detailing measurable targets and supporting indicators that will guide implementation, track progress, and ensure the deal delivers tangible benefits for both Auckland and Aotearoa.

Primary objectives	Key measures	Supporting measures
Building economic growth	GDP per capita growth – 3-7% increase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land-use reform to enable flexible business and residential location decisions, reducing economic inefficiencies and unlocking agglomeration benefits (urban productivity premium of 25-33% seen in comparable cities) improved transport access to employment hubs, ensuring 80% of Auckland’s workforce can reach jobs within 45 minutes, lifting productivity. labour productivity growth foreign direct investment contribution of technology, innovation and research to regional GDP.
Delivering connected and resilient infrastructure	Reduction in lost economic output from congestion (current impact: 1.4-1.9% of Auckland’s GDP per year)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansion of rapid transit (Northwest, Botany-to-Airport) and integration of land-use and transport investment, increasing accessibility and reducing congestion-related economic losses of 1.4-1.9% of Auckland’s GDP per year level crossing removal programme, unlocking the full benefits of City Rail Link (CRL) by improving rail network efficiency and reducing economic costs of road-rail delays (GDP impact estimated at 0.9-1.8%) expansion of time-of-use congestion charging and dynamic lane management, reducing wasted travel time and increasing economic productivity (GDP impact estimated at 0.4%).
Improving the supply of affordable and quality housing	Median house price-to-income ratio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total housing capacity creation of an Auckland Urban Development Office (AUDO) to lead regeneration and coordinate public-private investment, unlocking large-scale housing and commercial precincts that align with national productivity goals expanded Infrastructure Funding and Financing (IFF) tools, ensuring major urban growth areas (e.g., Drury, Tāmaki) are supported by timely infrastructure investment, avoiding delays that constrain economic expansion streamlined consenting and fast-track approvals, removing regulatory bottlenecks that slow housing development and increase costs.

Alignment with the Strategic Framework (continued)

Item 7

Secondary objectives	Supporting measures
Greater regional and private sector collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased direct investment (which may include public-private partnerships (PPPs)) to deliver housing, transport, and infrastructure enhanced iwi-led urban development initiatives through governance participation and strategic co-investment.
Improved local government decision-making and funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislative reform to enable value capture tools and visitor levies expansion of co-investment frameworks to fund large-scale transport and housing projects.
Promoting innovative and collaborative ways of working between central and local government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint planning through the Auckland Integrated Transport Plan and Regional Spatial Plan with central government strengthening of place-based partnerships for housing, climate adaptation, and transport reforms.
Ensuring resilient and sustainable cities and regions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the Clean Vessel Plan and regional marine biosecurity protections expansion of stormwater and wastewater infrastructure investment to improve resilience.

Attachment A



Te Whakaaetanga o Tāmaki Makaurau: **Auckland Deal** | 12

3. What drives growth in your region?

Auckland is New Zealand’s leading economic region, home to one-third of the population, and contributing **up to 40% of gross domestic product (GDP)**.

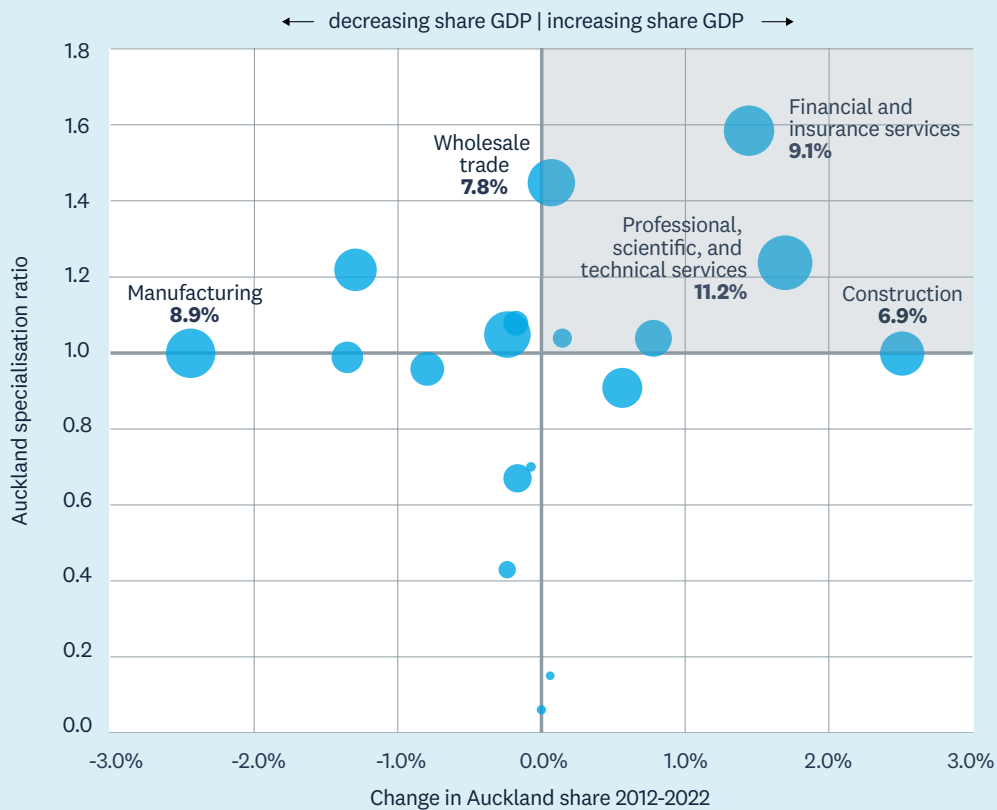
Auckland exercises a vital role by providing specialised goods and services and is the main gateway for imports, visitors and migrants. Auckland’s strong international connections makes it a preferred location for multinational companies operating in New Zealand.

Auckland is growing faster than the rest of the country in terms of population, economic activity, and urban expansion. As a dense urban area, it benefits from improved accessibility, enhanced knowledge

sharing, business specialisation, and economies of scale in infrastructure. Its youthful population contributes to a higher labour force compared to the national average.

The region’s five largest industries – professional services, banking and insurance, manufacturing, wholesale trade, and construction – account for 35% of Auckland’s regional GDP. In several of these industries, Auckland’s specialisation, with its contribution to the region’s economy, significantly exceeds its share of the national GDP. These industries are highlighted in the chart below (top right quadrant).

Auckland’s growth industries with specialisation by share of regional GDP



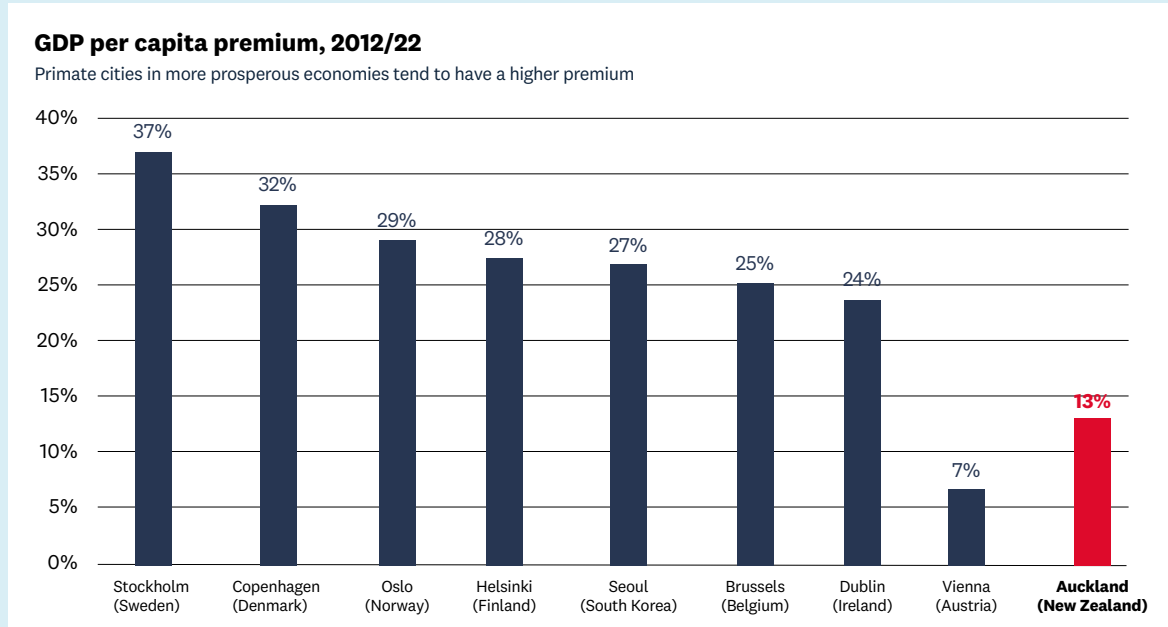
Sources: Stats NZ regional GDP data to March 2023; Auckland Council Chief Economist Unit.

What drives growth in your region? (Continued)

Auckland generally has higher labour productivity, with research indicating firms in the region tend to be more productive. However, like the rest of New Zealand, productivity growth has remained low. **While Auckland’s GDP per capita is 15% higher than the national average**, this premium has not

increased since the early 2000s. In contrast, **primary cities in small prosperous economies typically have a higher GDP per capita, which is 25-33% higher than their national average**, raising the question of **whether Auckland’s economic performance could be stronger.**

Productivity premium in primary cities



Sources: Eurostat; Seoul Metropolitan Government; Stats NZ; Auckland Council Chief Economist Unit.

Barriers and actions

While the government is responsible for key policies on human capability, the business environment, and international connections, Auckland Council’s policy settings also influence productivity by shaping where households and businesses can be located and how people and goods can move around. The most significant levers within Auckland Council’s legislative responsibility are **land use regulation** and **infrastructure planning, financing, and funding** – both critical to higher productivity.

Auckland’s relatively poor housing affordability makes it harder to retain skilled workers, contributing to high international outflows and a net loss to other regions. A smaller skilled workforce slows the adoption and spread of innovation, with business surveys consistently identifying human capability as a key constraint.

Rising house prices also diverts capital towards housing at the expense of more productive investments.

Auckland Council recognises that land use and infrastructure policies can help address these challenges and has identified three key actions to enable a more productive urban economy:

- **enabling more flexible use of urban land**, particularly in high-demand areas
- **pricing public infrastructure more effectively** to reflect the costs and ensure those who benefit contribute. For example, funding new roads and pipes through targeted charges and implementing congestion pricing to optimise the road network
- **prioritising limited public funds for the highest value-use**, ensuring decisions are guided by cost-benefit analysis to maximise public benefit.

What drives growth in your region? (Continued)

The economic potential of a more productive Auckland

The opportunity to enhance Auckland’s economic performance is significant. Research suggests that restrictive urban land use policies in Auckland have reduced national GDP by **0.9% to 1.8%**, while congestion costs—estimated at **\$1.1 billion annually**— are equivalent to **1% of Auckland’s regional GDP**¹. These examples show there is scope to improve Auckland’s **productivity** through land use and transport settings.

If Auckland’s **GDP per capita premium** could be lifted from **10–15% to 25–35%**, in line with comparable international cities, the economic benefits would be substantial. For a rough sense of scale, that would imply, in today’s money, national GDP being \$13 to \$26 billion higher, or 3-7% higher than otherwise (holding all else equal).

A more productive Auckland would drive **higher wages, increased business investment, and stronger regional economic spillovers**, boosting innovation and specialisation across New Zealand. Additionally, a more prosperous Auckland would generate **higher tax revenues**, providing greater resources for national infrastructure and public services, improving economic resilience and living standards nationwide.

¹ Nunns (2019); NZIER (2017)



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4. Central and local government partnership

Auckland Council is a mature, capable and trustworthy partner of Central Government across a wide variety of matters. Since its establishment in 2010, Auckland Council has developed significant and deep partnerships with central government agencies, Crown entities, and departments to advance its growth objectives. Its scale, financial strength, unified governance, and organisational capability and experience put Auckland in a strong position to partner with Government on regional priorities. This reflects the original intent of the amalgamation.

Examples of Auckland Council's experience and track record in partnership with Government include:

Transport

- **Major projects:** Joint funding and specialised governance structures have been established to deliver major transport projects, including:
 - **City Rail Link (CRL)** – a company-led delivery model managing the construction of New Zealand's largest public transport infrastructure project.
 - **Northwest Rapid Transit** – a government-backed initiative to progress the business case for rapid transit solutions in Auckland's fast-growing northwest corridor.
 - **Supporting Growth Alliance** – a partnership tasked with identifying future growth areas and securing planning designations for transport corridors.
- **Auckland Transport Alignment Project (ATAP).**

Until 2021, the Auckland Transport Alignment Project (ATAP) played a critical role in aligning central and local government transport priorities. ATAP established a jointly agreed 10-year investment plan, ensuring coordinated decision-making on major transport infrastructure.

- **New transport reform – Integrated Transport Plan and the Auckland Regional Transport Committee.**

Recently announced transport reform will see the establishment of a new Auckland Regional Transport Committee, which would:

 - provide **long-term, integrated transport planning**, ensuring alignment between central and local government priorities

- act as a **joint governance group** overseeing the **Auckland Integrated Transport Plan**, facilitating better decision-making on infrastructure investment.
- This reform reflects the **maturing partnership between central government and Auckland Council**. It creates a **more structured and enduring partnership**, reflecting the mutual interest the parties have in planning Auckland's transport infrastructure.

Water

- **Local Water Done Well** – Auckland Council and the Government worked closely together to agree to a joint solution for water reform in Auckland in line with the government's framework and council's priorities. The water reform enables Watercare to raise sufficient capital for investment in Auckland's water infrastructure while maintaining public ownership and avoiding steep spikes in prices. Auckland Council has been a **trusted and reliable partner with the Government on these reforms**, including in adopting higher regulatory standards.
- **Storm resilience and recovery** – Auckland Council and Government reached a cost-sharing agreement for key recovery efforts following the Auckland Anniversary Floods and Cyclone Gabrielle. This saw the council agreeing to undertake property categorisation and buy-out efforts requested by the Government, while the Government contributing to recovery and flood-protection. A strong partnership continues to coordinate on major water resilience and infrastructure projects, such as **Making Space for Water**.

Urban development and housing

- **Auckland Housing and Urban Growth Partnership** . Established in 2019, the Auckland Partnership Joint Work Programme provided a structured approach to spatial and policy planning between Auckland Council and central government. The agreed work programme included collaboration on spatial planning and development in priority locations.
 - **Large-Scale Projects:** Māngere, Mount Roskill, and Tāmaki – comprehensive urban regeneration initiatives delivering thousands of new homes and supporting infrastructure.

Central and local government partnership (continued)

Urban development and housing (continued)

- **Greenfield developments:** Whenuapai, Red Hills, and Westgate (Inner Northwest), as well as Drury – ensuring new growth areas are supported by transport and utility infrastructure.
- **Tāmaki Regeneration Company (TRC):** Established in 2012, the Tāmaki Regeneration Company (TRC) is a housing-led, place-based regeneration organisation jointly owned by the Crown (51%) and Auckland Council (49%). TRC leads large-scale urban redevelopment in Tāmaki, working alongside mana whenua, the local community, and key partners. TRC's regeneration programme aims to **transform 2,550 existing social homes into 10,500 new homes**, creating a mix of social housing, affordable rentals, shared ownership, and market housing. This programme is **aligned with Auckland's priority growth areas** and supports broader economic and social outcomes, including improved housing affordability and better community infrastructure.
- **Going for Housing Growth, Better Infrastructure Funding and Financing and RMA reform –** Auckland Council is a crucial contributor to these important government work programmes, and commits staff and resources to assisting officials in the development and implementation of the initiatives. For example, Auckland Council is represented at an executive level on the Local Government Steering Group for resource management reform.

Economic development and social investment

Auckland Council, alongside Tātaki Auckland Unlimited and MBIE, has fostered relationships that promote economic growth and social inclusion and strengthen Auckland's position as New Zealand's international business and innovation hub. These partnerships have delivered major outcomes, including:

- **Project Ikuna** – An MBIE-funded initiative that has supported more than **3,500 Pacific workers** in Auckland to develop skills, adapt to workforce changes, and increase employment opportunities.
- **Major events investment** – Partnerships between central government, Auckland Council, and the private sector have successfully delivered international events, including the **36th America's Cup** and the **FIFA Women's World Cup** (with a net benefit to Auckland of \$48.9m and a benefit cost ratio of 1.32), enhancing Auckland's international profile and economic activity.

5. Commitment to regional spatial priorities

Auckland has an established approach to regional spatial planning, ensuring long-term development is strategic, integrated, and responsive to growth. This commitment has been reinforced over time, particularly through the evolution of spatial prioritisation since the introduction of the 2012 Auckland Plan. Many of the original priorities set out in the plan remain in place today, reflecting both the scale and long-term nature of development in these areas.

By maintaining a focus on regional spatial priorities, Auckland Council has demonstrated the importance of committing to long-term projects and ensuring that growth is planned in a way that maximises economic, social, and environmental benefits. Integrated planning is essential to delivering coordinated infrastructure investment, sustainable urban expansion, and resilient communities.

The evolution of spatial priorities.

Auckland's spatial priorities have evolved over time to reflect:

- **implementation progress** – As large-scale projects advance, priorities are refined to align with changing infrastructure needs
- **new initiatives** – Emerging urban growth areas and investment opportunities have been incorporated
- **improved data and insights** – Enhanced information on population growth, economic trends, and infrastructure demand has helped refine spatial planning priorities.

Since 2019, the Auckland Partnership Joint Work Programme has strengthened the alignment of central and local government spatial priorities. Auckland Council's regional spatial planning and investment decisions have reflected these shared priorities, as seen in the following:

- 2018 Development Strategy
- 2023 Future Development Strategy
- Long-Term Plans (LTP) since 2018.

By integrating spatial planning with long-term investment strategies, Auckland Council ensures that housing, transport, and infrastructure projects are coordinated, well-funded, and future-proofed to support sustainable regional growth.

How regional spatial priorities support the Auckland Deal

Identifying regional spatial priorities is central to Auckland's approach to regional planning, ensuring that development aligns with local needs, economic opportunities, and infrastructure investment. Spatial prioritisation helps direct growth, shape urban expansion, and optimise investment in key areas, ensuring funding is allocated efficiently to achieve the greatest benefits across multiple outcomes.

Auckland Council and central government **must balance competing demands for infrastructure** funding and urban development. The joint prioritisation model ensures that limited resources are directed towards areas where they can deliver the most significant economic, social, and environmental impact.

How the Auckland Deal can improve regional spatial planning.

A regional deal offers an opportunity to further develop and strengthen Auckland's Regional Spatial Plan by:

- **embedding long-term certainty** – Ensuring that spatial priorities remain consistent over time, avoiding short-term policy changes that disrupt investment and planning
- **aligning central and local government priorities** – Creating a shared vision for urban development, supported by a joint governance model that ensures strategic alignment between government agencies and Auckland Council
- **securing investment for critical infrastructure** – Formalising the integration of transport, housing, and economic development priorities into a single framework, enabling targeted funding and financing solutions
- **strengthening decision-making** – Giving Auckland greater control over regional spatial planning and land-use decisions, ensuring that planning and investment decisions are aligned with Auckland's long-term growth strategy.

Through a strong Auckland Deal, we could set out a plan for **Auckland to accommodate its next 1 million residents in a way that enhances the quality of life in Auckland and New Zealand.**

Commitment to regional spatial priorities (continued)

What Auckland has and what is needed for the deal

Auckland already has key frameworks in place to support the Auckland Deal, including an intention to develop an Auckland Integrated Transport Plan, that will align transport investment with urban growth and spatial priorities. However, to fully leverage the benefits of a regional deal, additional tools and commitments from central government are required, including:

- stronger legislative backing for joint spatial planning
- flexible funding models that support infrastructure delivery

- clear governance structures to oversee the implementation of shared priorities.

By developing an enduring Regional Spatial Plan, the Auckland Deal can help Auckland unlock long-term, sustainable growth, ensuring that infrastructure, housing, and transport investments are coordinated, strategic, and future proofed.



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6. Capability, capacity and readiness to implement and deliver

Auckland is well-positioned to implement and deliver the Regional Deal, backed by a strong track record of successful partnerships, effective governance, and the capability to deliver infrastructure projects.

Evidence of Auckland’s readiness capability includes:

- **Financial strength and fiscal discipline.**
Auckland Council has the strongest balance sheet in the local government sector, underpinned by its scale, robust financial management and disciplined infrastructure investment. The council holds an AA credit rating from S&P (Australia) and an Aa2 by Moody’s Investor Services, reflecting its low-risk profile, strong liquidity, and prudent financial management. Auckland Council has an asset base of over \$70 billion, with a debit-to-revenue ratio that remains within prudent limits set by credit agencies and the Local Government Funding Agency (LGFA).
- **Strong experience partnering with Government.**
As recorded above, Auckland has experience partnering with government on major projects (such as City Rail Link), large-scale urban development (such as Kāinga Ora’s large-scale projects or the Tāmaki Regeneration), joint planning (such as with ATAP) and with joint programmes and complex reforms (such as water and transport reform).
- **Track record of delivering infrastructure projects.**
The Auckland Council Group has successfully led and co-funded infrastructure delivery through Auckland, including large projects such as the Central Interceptor wastewater tunnel, the Eastern Busway, the Quay Street upgrade, and the redevelopment of

Wynyard Quarter. The region has also demonstrated event delivery capability through its role in hosting the 36th America’s Cup and the FIFA Women’s World Cup 2023.

- **Public-private collaboration in infrastructure delivery, and use of funding and financing tools.**
Auckland Council has successful experience using innovative funding and financing tools, including the Infrastructure Funding and Financing Act levies, to enable urban development and is aware of the potential benefits and constraints. The Milldale infrastructure funding model, a collaboration with Crown Infrastructure Partners (now NIFFCO), enabled large-scale housing development. A similar approach is now being explored in Franklin, with a focus on optimised infrastructure investment in Drury.
- **Strong and enduring partnership with iwi and hapū.**
The mana whenua landscape in Tāmaki Makaurau is rich, with 19 iwi and hapū calling the Auckland Regional home. Auckland Council has a Treaty-based relationship with mana whenua and engages with them to give effect to their aspirations. Engagement spans planning, infrastructure, economic development, environmental protection, and social outcomes, ensuring mana whenua voices are at the centre of policies and investments that impact their communities and whenua.

These partnerships, alongside iwi, universities and research institutions, and private sector leaders and institutions, provide a strong foundation for an Auckland Deal.



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7. Regional Deal priority projects/initiatives

Priority 1: Housing.
Abundant quality housing alongside transport, business and industry.

Why this is a priority for growth, productivity and higher living standards.

An abundant, well-functioning housing system will have a positive impact on economic growth and productivity.

Housing is critical to Auckland’s economic growth and productivity, enabling people to live closer to jobs, reducing commuting times, and generating agglomeration benefits. Auckland’s housing supply constraints reduce New Zealand’s GDP by an estimated 0.9%–1.8% annually, impacting business growth, labour market flexibility, and long-term economic competitiveness.

Addressing these challenges requires a coordinated approach to urban growth, infrastructure investment, and regulatory reform. Auckland Council’s priorities include:

- **accelerating delivery of infrastructure to support** housing alongside business and industry, ensuring that land is development-ready
- using new, **innovative funding tools and regeneration powers** to finance large-scale urban development
- **lifting land-use restrictions** where appropriate to enable intensification, as required by the National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD)
- **enhancing partnerships with the private sector** to enable more efficient housing delivery
- **developing a Regional Spatial Plan** with central government to prepare for Auckland’s expected population growth of one million people.

What is underway	What Auckland will do to unlock growth	What Auckland needs from government	How can private and iwi sectors leverage opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant growth enabled through the Future Development Strategy (FDS), Auckland Unitary Plan and Long-term Plan • Auckland Housing Programme is enabling ~20,000 homes over the next 10 years, including major projects in Tāmaki, Hobsonville Point, Mt Roskill, Māngere, and Drury • Supporting Growth Alliance (NZTA/AT) is identifying long-term transport investments to support Auckland’s housing and urban expansion • major development planned at Drury leveraging major investment by the Crown • regeneration of town centres and brownfield intensification initiatives are under way • council notified an intensification instrument (plan change 78), but needs to vary the plan to account for storm effects and to the inappropriate blanket application of density standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerate infrastructure delivery for housing and business precincts to ensure development-ready land supply • make changes to the Auckland Unitary Plan to enable greater intensification in the right places • streamline planning and consenting processes to reduce delays and costs for new developments • use council-owned land for housing and mixed-use development, supporting the creation of well-connected, high-density precincts • develop a Regional Spatial Plan with central government to align long-term infrastructure investment with Auckland’s growth strategy - and set out a credible path for Auckland to grow by another 1 million residents in a way that enhances living standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislative change to ensure zoning and Auckland Unitary Plan amendments are locked in post-agreement and not subject to repeated challenges • stronger regional spatial planning framework to provide long-term certainty for developers and investors • infrastructure funding and financial tools to enable Auckland to pay for infrastructure and share the benefits of growth • reform of the Medium Density Residential Standards (MDRS) to ensure intensification is targeted in the most appropriate locations • fast-tracked planning and consenting for agreed priority urban development projects to speed up housing delivery, while protecting environmental standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater certainty on planning and infrastructure delivery will allow developers and investors to bring forward investment with reduced risk • greater opportunities for private capital (which may include Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in housing and urban renewal projects • increased housing supply and affordability will enable more people and businesses to locate in Auckland – enhancing the agglomeration benefits and productivity • more options for Māori-led housing developments.

Regional Deal priority projects/initiatives (continued)

Item 7

Attachment A

Priority initiative: Auckland Development Initiative – boosting Auckland’s ability to support quality growth and development in priority places.	
Purpose	<p>The Auckland Development Initiative would be a joint central-local government initiative designed to accelerate large-scale housing development and urban regeneration alongside business and industry.</p> <p>Auckland Council plans to establish and resource a new function to carry out urban development activities in partnership with government, private developers and iwi - the Auckland Development Office (working title). This demonstrates council’s commitment and could be a vehicle for partnership.</p> <p>The Auckland Development Initiative would supercharge this new function through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing council with powers under the Urban Development Act 2020 to enable faster consenting, infrastructure planning, and land development • place-based partnership to facilitate the planning, funding and delivery of Crown, council and private infrastructure in priority places (e.g. in Drury and in large-scale projects on Crown/Kāinga Ora land) • a specific focus on realising opportunities from transit-oriented development, including taking action to realise opportunities around City Rail Link stations • leveraging private capital (which could include public-private partnerships (PPPs)) to maximise investment from council, government, iwi, and private developers • while other initiatives focus on planning better – such as the Regional Spatial Plan – this initiative is about doing, and delivering better development in priority locations through strong coordination and infrastructure.
Summary of economic benefits and costs	<p>Higher-density, transit-oriented development is more cost-effective than greenfield expansion, reducing infrastructure costs and supporting economic productivity. A 2019 Ministry for the Environment report found that greenfield developments require entirely new infrastructure networks, making them more expensive to service, whereas brownfield and infill development can leverage existing infrastructure, lowering costs. Higher-density areas also benefit from economies of scale, with less water and sewer piping required per dwelling.</p> <p>A 2024 New Zealand Infrastructure Commission report reinforced that Auckland’s compact urban form reduces per capita infrastructure costs compared to lower-density regional areas. However, the cost of new projects is higher in Auckland due to land prices and stricter mitigation requirements, making smarter urban planning and funding tools essential.</p> <p>Auckland Council’s quality compact approach focuses on development in well-connected areas near public transport, walking, and cycling networks, reducing car dependency and ensuring people can live closer to jobs and services. Increasing housing density around rapid transit stations supports economic growth by improving labour market access, reducing congestion, and enabling agglomeration benefits.</p> <p>Aligning housing development with infrastructure investment will improve affordability, increase productivity, and reduce costs for both ratepayers and government. A well-planned urban form balances economic growth, climate resilience, and environmental protection, ensuring Auckland’s long-term sustainability.</p>
How it will unlock economic growth or contribute to region	<p>A shortage of affordable housing constrains labour mobility, limiting the ability of workers to relocate closer to high-productivity areas. Transport and infrastructure bottlenecks further reduce efficiency, increasing commuting times and business costs. Addressing these constraints will allow Auckland to function as a globally competitive city, maximising its contribution to national economic growth.</p> <p>Research shows that reducing housing supply constraints in Auckland could increase New Zealand’s GDP by 0.9%–1.8% and boost productivity (output per worker) by 0.4%–0.5%. Expanding housing supply, particularly in areas with strong transport connections and employment hubs, will generate long-term economic benefits, including higher workforce participation, improved business competitiveness, and stronger investment confidence.</p>
Alignment with central government priorities	<p>The Auckland Development Initiative aligns with central government’s urban growth, infrastructure, and housing objectives, including the Going for Housing Growth policy. It could also align with recent Kāinga Ora Reforms, providing an opportunity to refresh the nature of the partnership with Kāinga Ora.</p>

Regional Deal priority projects/initiatives (continued)

Priority 2: Transport.
Enable people and good to get ground faster, cheaper, with lower emissions.

Why this is a priority for growth, productivity and higher living standards.

Auckland’s transport system is critical to economic growth, productivity, and quality of life. Efficient movement of people and goods supports business activity, reduces costs, and enables Auckland’s workforce to access employment hubs. While significant investments in rapid transit are under way, without further coordinated investment, these benefits will not be fully realised, and congestion will worsen.

Due to economies of scale, rapid transit is the most efficient way to move people across Auckland, reducing reliance on private vehicles and making better use of existing networks. Strategic investment in network optimisation, mode shift, and transport infrastructure coordination will be required to maximise these benefits.

Congestion remains a major economic drag, with weekday delays costing between \$1.4 and \$1.9 billion annually—equivalent to 1.5%–2% of Auckland’s GDP. These losses impact productivity, increasing costs for businesses and reducing workforce efficiency. Given Auckland’s productivity premium, investing in an integrated transport system will have the biggest economic impact for the country.

What is underway	What Auckland will do to unlock growth	What Auckland needs from government	How can private and iwi sectors leverage opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport reforms – legislative and structural changes to improve transport governance, funding, and delivery, including the basis for an Integrated Transport Plan major projects – City Rail Link (CRL) Eastern Busway Penlink significant joint investment in more efficient, optimised network through the RLTP Northwest Rapid Transit and Botany-to-Airport Corridor – planning and investment in mass transit to better connect high-growth areas with employment centres preparation of time-of-use-charging scheme options. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to optimise the local transport network – Implement dynamic lanes, bus priority improvements, and intersection upgrades to improve reliability and capacity integrate transport and land-use planning – Ensure future housing and employment growth aligns with rapid transit investment leverage CRL and rail electrification – ensuring seamless network integration and maximising system-wide benefits advance Port of Auckland investment strategy – supporting efficient freight movement, reducing road congestion, and unlocking economic productivity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalise transport governance reform and establish the Auckland Regional Transport Committee, ensuring more coordinated investment and decision-making and work on the Integrated Transport Plan update fines and charges legislation – Reform Traffic and Transport Management (TTM) and parking regulations to enable Auckland to set regulations which support more effective enforcement and network management complete the rapid transit network – advance Northwest Rapid Transit and Botany-to-Airport corridor to support housing growth and economic productivity. Process planning on Māngere to the City. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment in transit-oriented development (TOD) – opportunities for private sector and iwi-led developments around rapid transit stations Reduced congestion and increased transport options will make it easier to move people and goods around Auckland. This will encourage further economic activity and growth. freight and logistics optimisation – Private sector partnerships to improve supply chain efficiency and reduce congestion impacts.

Regional Deal priority projects/initiatives (continued)

Priority initiative: Getting Auckland moving – accelerated level crossing removal programme and time-of-use charging.

Purpose

This initiative combines two high-impact transport solutions to ensure traffic and public transport can move more freely through Auckland:

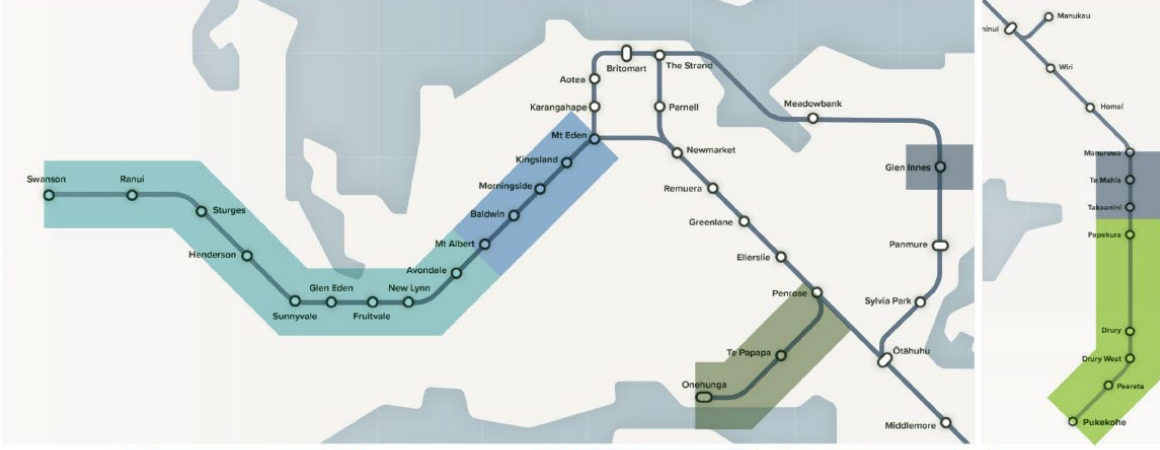
1. A prioritised programme to remove level crossings, unlocking the full benefits of the City Rail Link (CRL), improving road network efficiency, and increasing rail service frequency and safety.
2. Time-of-use congestion charging, a proven tool to reduce peak-hour traffic, improve travel times, and reinvest revenue into Auckland’s transport system.

The level-crossing removal programme.

The opening of CRL in 2026 will transform Auckland’s rail network by increasing train capacity and frequency. However, 42 level crossings remain across the network, and as train services increase, these crossings will become major congestion points and safety risks. We acknowledge Minister Bishop’s announcement on 21 February for a funding share for the immediate grade separation of 7 level crossings in Glen Innes and Takaanini.

A 10–30-year prioritised programme will:

- progress high-priority sites (Glen Innes and Takaanini) into pre-implementation and implementation phases
- fast-track minor safety and traffic management improvements at key crossings
- support the future four-tracking of the North Island Main Trunk (NIMT) by ensuring southern line crossings are removed.
- ensure the Onehunga line crossings align with the proposed Avondale to Southdown rail corridor.



Prioritised Order: 1 Takaanini and Glen Innes 2 Inner West 3 Outer West 4 Outer South 5 Onehunga

Time-of-use charging

Time-of-use charging (also known as congestion pricing) is a proven solution to reduce peak-hour traffic and improve network efficiency. Progressing the implementation of time-of-use charging will help the region and nation to realise the economic benefits.

This initiative seeks government support to:

- finalise legislation for time-of-use charging, ensuring Auckland has the legal tools to implement demand-based pricing
- work in partnership with NZTA on the scheme for Auckland
- enable revenue reinvestment in public transport, ensuring commuters have viable alternatives to private vehicle travel
- ensure a well-managed transition, including targeted exemptions for low-income households and key industries.

Regional Deal priority projects/initiatives (continued)

Summary of economic benefits and costs	<p>Level-crossing removals will unlock more than \$20 billion in benefits, with a benefit-cost ratio of 1.1. These interventions will reduce congestion, improve transport efficiency, and maximise the benefits of existing and planned investments.</p> <p>With CRL completion in 2026, rail capacity will double, increasing train services from 16 to 32 per hour on the Southern Line and 12 to 24 per hour on the Eastern and Western Lines. However, 42 level crossings remain, creating traffic bottlenecks and increasing safety risks. Without removals, peak delays could increase by nine minutes per vehicle, disrupting freight routes, frequent bus services, and local access. Over the past decade, 643 near misses and collisions have occurred at level crossings, often resulting in network-wide disruptions of up to five hours. Removing level crossings will improve rail reliability, road efficiency, and community safety.</p> <p>Time-of-use charging (congestion pricing) will further reduce traffic delays, lower business costs, and improve freight efficiency. Global evidence shows that congestion pricing reduces peak traffic volumes by 10-30%, ensuring faster, more reliable travel. Revenue from charging will reinvest into public transport and road improvements, ensuring more sustainable long-term funding for Auckland's transport network.</p>	
Anticipated economic costs and benefits (monetised and not monetised)	<p>Further analysis of individual level crossings has revealed higher-than-expected road user benefits, particularly as the impact of congestion is more accurately modelled. This has been demonstrated in the Takaanini Detailed Business Case, which shows a more than 50% increase in road user benefits compared to earlier regional programme assessments.</p> <p>The draft programme economics below are still being confirmed, but early analysis suggests that decongestion and improved safety benefits are significantly higher when assessed at a corridor level rather than as isolated projects. As work progresses, refining these assessments will ensure an accurate understanding of total programme benefits, maximising the economic and transport gains from level-crossing removals and time-of-use charging.</p>	
Discounted benefits (\$2023)		
With level crossing preferred programme		
Updated metro benefits	Public transport user benefits	\$7,508m
	Public transport reliability benefits	\$1,214m
	Road user travel time benefits	\$996m
	Road user reliability benefits	\$149m
	Resilience benefits	\$41m
	Subtotal benefits	\$9,909m
	Other metro benefits (estimated by ARPBC)	\$1,995m
	Total metro benefits	\$11,905m
Total benefits including metro, freight and inter-regional services		\$20,363m

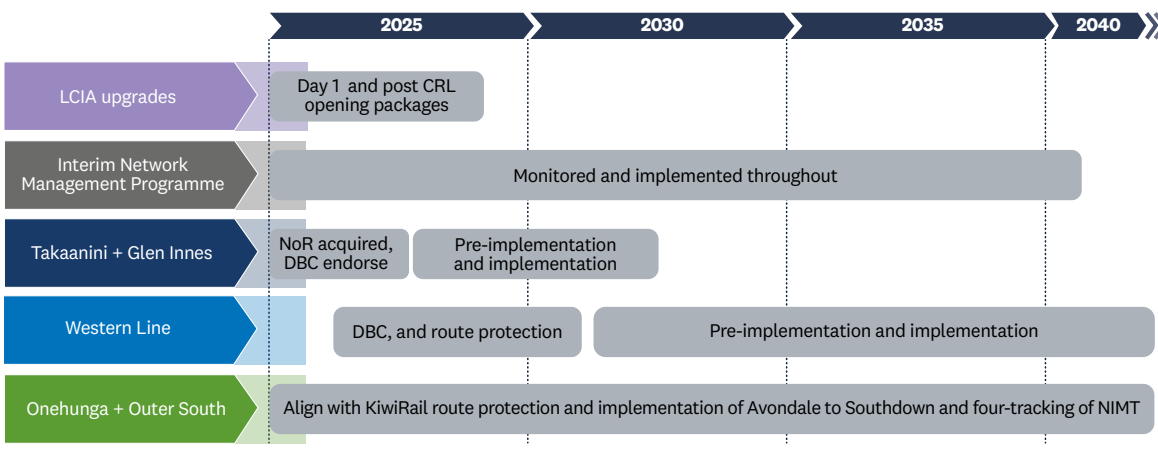
Approximately **50% of the benefits of the programme are derived from the regional transport model,** with approximately **90% of these from public transport users and 10% from road users.**

Discounted costs		With level crossing preferred programme	
Capital costs – LXR component only		\$1,962m	
Capital costs – wider rail programme		\$10,766m	
Renewals and maintenance costs – updated		\$5,619m	
Total project costs		\$18,370m	
Metro benefits – updated		\$11,905m	
Freight benefits – same as Auckland Rail PBC		\$6,117m	
Inter-regional services benefits – same as Auckland Rail PBC		\$1,732m	
Residual value benefits		\$609m	
Total project benefits (excluding WEB)		\$20,363m	
Benefits and cost ratio		1.1	

Regional Deal priority projects/initiatives (continued)

Item 7

Attachment A

<p>Anticipated costs, any revenues, and summary of funding</p>	<p>The Level-Crossing Removal Programme was included in the Auckland Rail Programme Business Case, approved by the Auckland Transport and KiwiRail Boards in 2023 and noted by the Auckland Council Transport Committee and NZTA Board in 2024. Further analysis has estimated the P50 programme cost at \$2.9 billion (excluding the Onehunga Line), spread over 30 years. These cost estimates have been developed at varying levels of detail, reflecting the certainty surrounding the preferred solutions at each crossing.</p> <p>The programme is currently unfunded.</p>
<p>How it will unlock economic growth or contribute to region</p>	<p>Auckland’s rail network is a critical multi-use corridor, serving metro passengers, inter-regional travellers, and national freight operations. As Auckland’s population grows by 47% to 2.3 million by 2051, travel demand will increase substantially, with annual heavy rail boardings projected to grow by over 300% to 76 million. Freight volumes are also expected to rise to over 18 million tonnes annually, requiring a significant increase in train services to support economic growth.</p> <p>Removing level crossings and optimising network capacity will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enable higher-frequency passenger rail services, supporting Auckland’s growing population and urban intensification • improve freight efficiency, reducing delays and enhancing national supply chain resilience • maximise the benefits of CRL and future transport investments, ensuring Auckland’s rail and road networks operate efficiently.
<p>Estimated timeframes to commence and complete</p>	<p>We have already started to remove some level crossings and make minor safety improvements. Before the CRL opens we will have removed seven pedestrian-only level crossings across Auckland, one road level crossing at Church Street East, Penrose and installed a range of interim safety upgrades at other road level crossings across Auckland. Total cost is \$62.9 million.</p> <p>After the CRL is open to the public, there will be 42 remaining level crossings across the Auckland rail network. A prioritised programme of works over the next 10 - 30 years to remove level crossings in Auckland.</p>
 <p>The timeline chart displays the following project phases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LCIA upgrades: Day 1 and post CRL opening packages (2025-2026) Interim Network Management Programme: Monitored and implemented throughout (2025-2040) Takaanini + Glen Innes: NoR acquired, DBC endorse (2025-2026); Pre-implementation and implementation (2027-2030) Western Line: DBC, and route protection (2025-2027); Pre-implementation and implementation (2028-2035) Onehunga + Outer South: Align with KiwiRail route protection and implementation of Avondale to Southdown and four-tracking of NIMT (2025-2040) 	
<p>Alignment with central government priorities</p>	<p>Delivering the level-crossing removal programme will unlock the full benefits of the Crown’s investment in CRL, ensuring that Auckland’s rail network operates at full capacity and that increased train services do not create major road congestion issues.</p> <p>The programme aligns with the Government Policy Statement (GPS) on Land Transport, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • economic growth and productivity – Removing level crossings will reduce delays for vehicles and trains, improving connectivity for people, freight, and goods while supporting Auckland’s economic growth and national productivity • safety addressing significant safety risks, reducing incidents between vehicles, pedestrians, and trains, and improving network reliability • maintenance and resilience – removing interdependencies between road and rail will enhance network resilience, reducing the risk of shutdowns or major disruptions that currently impact freight and passenger services • value for money – with a benefit-cost-ratio of over 1.0, this programme represents a high-return investment, delivering long-term benefits in congestion reduction, safety improvements, and increased journey reliability. <p>Time-of-use charging (congestion pricing) is also aligned closely with the Government Policy Statement and other work programmed. The GPS notes that time-of-use charging will improve travel times and network performance, reducing overall costs for freight businesses and their customers and making better use of existing assets by managing demand.</p>

Regional Deal priority projects/initiatives (continued)

Priority 3: Innovation.
Thriving innovation and technology sector that attracts international investment and talent.

Why this is a priority for growth, productivity and higher living standards.

Auckland is New Zealand’s innovation and technology hub, with the highest concentration of research institutions, start-ups, large firms, and venture capital. A strong innovation economy drives high productivity, job creation, and international investment, supporting both regional and national economic growth.

Auckland’s technology sector contributes \$16.5 billion to GDP, with tech firms growing three times faster than general employment and generating \$250,000 in revenue per employee. These firms are globally competitive, with 80% of revenue generated from offshore markets. The 2024 TIN Report shows that 110 of New Zealand’s top 200 technology firms are based in Auckland, with a combined revenue of \$9.4 billion.

The case for supporting this industry in Auckland includes:

- **agglomeration effects in cities** drive productivity, as businesses, research institutions, and talent are concentrated in high-density innovation hubs
- Auckland’s innovation ecosystem will grow these firms, expand exports, and **increase national productivity**
- the Science System Advisory Group confirms that **research and science investment is essential to long-term productivity growth**, and that ongoing underinvestment will compromise New Zealand’s economic future.

New advanced technologies—including AI, quantum computing, and biotechnology—will transform industries and drive global competitiveness. The government’s proposed Advanced Technologies Institute must be deeply connected to industry to succeed, and Auckland is the logical home for this centre as 60% of New Zealand’s tech industry is located in the region.

What is underway	What Auckland will do to unlock growth	What Auckland needs from government	How can private and iwi sectors leverage opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation precincts and identity building, fostering industry clusters in Wynyard Quarter, Te Puna Creative Innovation Precinct, and MedTech hubs. • Industry convening and leadership, such as Tech Tāmaki Makaurau, the MedTech industry group, and the development of a ‘Tech Council’ to drive strategic direction and advocacy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue investing in targeted innovation precincts that attract talent, research, and capital. • Provide leadership to bring the sector together, and act as a broker between research institutions, businesses, and government, ensuring private capital (including public-private partnerships (PPPs)) support commercialisation of R&D. • Strengthen land use and rates policy settings to support high-growth industries and clusters. • Develop a coordinated identity for Auckland as New Zealand’s innovation capital, strengthening global investment attraction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to supporting Auckland’s ambition as a technology city, boosting industry confidence and supporting leadership efforts to coordinate the sector . • Locate the Advanced Technology Institute in Auckland, leveraging the region’s existing ecosystem of universities, startups, finance, and global connections. • Improve national settings for innovation, addressing key barriers such as R&D investment, foreign direct investment (FDI) settings, migration policy, and management capability development. • Make New Zealand more attractive to venture capital, improving incentives for local institutional investors to invest in high-growth sectors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage startups and scale-ups to stay and grow in New Zealand, ensuring tax revenue and employment benefits remain onshore. • Invest in research, development and technology leveraging Auckland’s existing ecosystem of universities, startups, finance, and global connections. • Expand pathways for rangatahi into high-quality jobs, addressing youth unemployment among Māori and Pacific peoples by connecting education, training, and industry needs.

Tira Hautū Committee Forward Work Programme 2025														
The Governing Body deals with strategy and policy decision-making that relates to the environmental, social, economic and cultural activities of Auckland as well as matters that are not the responsibility of another committee. The full terms of reference can be found here: Auckland Council Governing Body Terms of Reference														
Area of work and Lead Department	Pūnga / Reason for work	Committee role (whakatau / decision and/or tika / direction)	Expected timeframes Highlight the month(s) this is expected to come to committee in 2025											
			Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Statutory and Governance														
Chief Executive's Performance Objectives CE Office / Mayoral office	The Performance and Appointments Committee has the delegation to recommend performance objectives. The Governing Body must then consider the recommendations and make a decisions.	Decision to whakaae / approve revised performance objectives that reflect the new political term's priorities Progress to date: Report on performance objectives FY25-FY27 referred from the Performance and Appointments Committee 27 June 2024 Link to restatement												
Chief Executive Remuneration Review Mayoral office	The chief executive's remuneration will be reviewed annually.	Decision to whakaae / approve a remuneration change. First review is a year from the appointment of the new CE. Progress to date: Report on Chief Executives Annual Review 27 February 2025 Link to restatement												
Committee Forward Work Programmes CE Office / Mayoral office	Responsibility for oversight of work programmes of all committee of the Governing Body.	Decision to tuhi ā-taipitopito / note that all committee have adopted a forward work programme. Reporting in April and October. Progress to date: Note: All forward work programmes will be current through to the end of the 2022-2025 political term.												

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			Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec		
<p>Terms of Reference</p> <p>Governance</p>	<p>The Terms of Reference enables the governing Body to delegate to committees those power necessary for them to carry out their responsibilities to the most efficient and effective levels.</p> <p>Any changes to the Terms of Reference must be done by the Governing Body.</p>	<p>Decision to whai / adopt the Terms of Reference</p> <p>Decision to whai / adopt changes to Terms of Reference</p> <p>Progress to date:</p> <p>Terms of Reference for Committees 17 November 2022 Link to decision</p> <p>Provision for decision-making continuity by Governing Body in periods of emergency 10 February 2023 Link to decision</p> <p>Amendment to the Governing Body Terms of Reference and to the Constitution of Ports of Auckland Limited 23 February 2023 Link to decision</p> <p>Amendments for Committees – new committee and membership changes 27 July 2023 Link to decision</p> <p>Amendment to membership for the Joint Governance Working Party 23 November 2023 Link to decision</p> <p>Amendment due to Committee changes 29 August 2024 Link to decision</p>	As and when required													
<p>Standing Orders</p> <p>Governance</p>	<p>Statutory requirement under the Local Government Act 2002, Schedule 7, clause 27</p> <p>Originally adopted 16/12/2010</p>	<p>Decision to tapi / amend standing orders</p>	As and when required													
<p>Code of Conduct</p> <p>Governance</p>	<p>The Terms of Reference enables the governing body to adopt or amend the Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Any changes must be done by the Governing Body</p>	<p>Decision to whai / adopt the Code of Conduct</p> <p>Decision to whai / adopt changes to the Code of Conduct</p>	As and when required													
<p>Health, Safety and Wellbeing</p> <p>Auckland Council</p>	<p>The Auckland Council organisation is a person or organisation conducting a business or undertaking pursuant to the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.</p> <p>All elected members are officers pursuant to the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, and have legislated obligations in relation to their duties as officers.</p> <p>The Audit and Risk Committee will refer the health, safety and wellbeing report to the Governing Body.</p>	<p>Decision to whiwhi / receive quarterly Health, Safety and Wellbeing report, and refer it to Local Boards.</p> <p>Progress to date:</p> <p>Q1 FY25 Update 12 December 2024 Q4 FY24 Update 12 December 2024 Link to decision</p>														

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Auckland Council Enterprise Risk Report Governance	The Audit and Risk Committee will refer the enterprise risk report to the Governing Body every quarter.	Decision to tuhi ā-taipitopito / note the enterprise risk report and risk heat map Decision to whiwhi / receive quarterly reports Progress to date:													
Te Tiriti o Waitangi / Treaty of Waitangi Governance	The Crown negotiates settlements with iwi on a confidential basis and from time to time invites Council to express its views. The Te Tiriti o Waitangi / Treaty of Waitangi Settlement Working party is accountable to the Governing Body and reports its findings to the Governing Body.	Decision to whakaae / approve submissions to the Crown as and when required Decision to whakaae / approve establishment and on-going implementation of co-management and other governance arrangements	As and when required												
Recovery Governance	Recovery performance reporting and risks	Receive progress reports and make decisions that feed into other programmes like annual plan and LTP. Progress to date: December 2024 Update (Open and Confidential) 12 December 2024 Link to decision Link to restatement for confidential													
Governance Framework Review Customer and Community Services	Provide update on the Governance Framework Review	Receive an update on the development of Governance Framework Review workstreams, including the proposed funding equity model for local boards.													
Finance and Performance															
CE and Group Financial Report CE Office / Finance	Chief Executive and Group Chief Financial Officer Report	Receive monthly performance and financial updates Progress to date: Update Report December 2024 12 December 2024 Link to decision Update Report February 2025 27 February 2025 Link to decision													

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Performance reporting quarterly - parent Finance	Financial management	<p>Monitor council parent financial and non-financial performance results on a quarterly basis, including Māori outcomes expenditure. Q2 (March), Q3 (May), Q4 (September), Q1 (November) Note: Reporting in September must be considered as a confidential report until results are sent to NZX at the end of September</p> <p>Progress to date: For the quarter ended 31 December 2024 27 February 2025 Link to decision</p>												
Performance reporting quarterly – group Finance	Financial management	<p>Monitor Auckland Council group financial requirements on a quarterly basis. Q2 (March), Q3 (May), Q4 (September), Q1 (November) Note: Reporting in September must be considered as a confidential report until results are sent to NZX at the end of September.</p> <p>Progress to date: For the quarter ended 31 December 2024 27 February 2025 Link to decision</p>												
Annual Budget Finance	Statutory requirement	<p>Decision to whai / adopt Annual Budget</p> <p>Progress to date:</p>						Approve	Adopt					
Tūpuna Maunga Operational Plan	Statutory requirement	<p>Decision to whakaae / agree operation plan and summary for inclusion in consultation documents and supporting information for the 10-year Budget (Long-term Plan)</p> <p>Progress to date: Report on inclusion of Operational Plan in Annual Plan consultation Link to decision</p>												

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Half yearly and annual reporting Governance	Statutory requirement and NZX listing requirement	<p>Receive and approve half year (February) NZX release (delegation to deputy mayor)</p> <p>Decision to adopt annual report (September)</p> <p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NZX announcements are presented to the Audit and Risk Committee There is a delegation from the Governing Body to the deputy mayor to approve the release of the interim and full year Auckland Council group financial results to the NZX for each reporting period through to 30 June 2026. Formal adoption of annual report is by the Governing Body <p>Progress to date:</p>									Adoption			
Houkura - Independent Māori Statutory Board – Funding Agreement Governance	Statutory requirement	<p>Decision to whakaae / approve funding agreement 2025/2026</p> <p>Progress to date:</p>												
Financial Policy Finance	Statutory requirement	<p>Development Contributions Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision to adopt draft policy for consultation including proposed changes arising from decisions on the Long-term Plan 2024-2034 and changes reflecting decisions to extend policy to cover investments beyond 2034 in Drury, the Inner Northwest (Redhills, Whenuapai, and Westgate), and the Auckland Housing Program areas (Mangere, Tamaki, and Mt Roskill) (August) Decision to adopt new policy (December) <p>Progress to date:</p> <p>Report on 2025 consultation 26 September 2024 Link to report</p>												

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Levy funding for Auckland Museum, MOTAT and ARAFA Governance	Statutory process	Decision to approve the levy for ARAFA as an input to the annual plan. Progress to date:														
Eden Park Trust Board six monthly update Finance	Funding requirement	Receive an update on the Eden Park loan facility (six-monthly) Progress to date:														
Bylaws																
# public notification is required for bylaw reviews even if no change to the bylaw is recommended.																
Cemeteries and Crematoria Bylaw Control Community and Social Policy	To review the rules to manage activities at council cemeteries and crematoria relating to burial, cremation, disinterment, built structures and record-keeping under the Cemeteries and Crematoria Bylaw 2014.	Decision on form of updated bylaw control and whether formal public consultation is required. Decision to auaha/tapi/whakakore / Make/Amend/Revoke the bylaw Decision late 2024 / early 2025 Progress to date: Statement of Proposal 12 December 2024 Link to decision														
Bylaw on Dogs Community and Social Policy	To review the Auckland Council Policy on dogs 2019 and Dog Management Bylaw 2019	Decision on form of updated bylaw control and whether formal public consultation is required. Decision to auaha/tapi/whakakore / Make/Amend/Revoke the bylaw Decision late 2024 / early 2025 Progress to date: Statement of Proposal 12 December 2024 Link to decision														

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Health and Hygiene Bylaw Control Community and Social Policy	To review minimum standards to protect public health associated with commercial services that pierce, risk breaking or risk burning the skin or tissue, therapeutic massage, colon hydrotherapy, swimming pools, water play parks and splash pads under the Health and Hygiene Bylaw 2013.	Decision on form of updated bylaw control and whether formal public consultation is required. Decision to auaha/tapi/whakakore / Make/Amend/Revoke the bylaw Decision late 2024 / early 2025													
Traffic Bylaw Review Community and Social Policy	Legislative requirement to review the bylaw and policy after five years.	Decision to whakaae / approve statement of proposal # Decision to auaha/tapi/whakakore / Make/Amend/Revoke the bylaw Decision late 2024 / early 2025													
Government Reforms and Programmes															
Three Waters Local Water Done Well Chief Planning Office	Water Services Legislation Bill and Water Services Efficiency and Consumer Protection Bill	Decision to approve Auckland Council's submission Progress to date:													
Three Waters Local Water Done Well Chief Planning Office	Update of Government positions and consideration of Auckland Council positions	Decision to approve council's submission on the Water Services Legislation Bill and Water Services Economic Efficiency and Consumer Protection Bill was made on 23 February 2023. Report back from Select Committee to Parliament by 25 May 2023 and eventual passing of legislation. GB consideration to be confirmed. Minister for Local Government's confirmation of any amendments to the Three Waters Reform expected in April 2023. Progress to date: Confidential report 2 May 2024 Link to restatement													
General Work Programme															
Making Space for Water I and ES	Making Space for Water	Decisions in regards to the Making Space for Water Programme.													

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Heritage Policy, Planning and Governance	St James Theatre Restoration	Decision in regards to restoration budget and improving Queen Street frontage Progress to date: Open report 27 February 2025 Link to decision													

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