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(The reports and recommendations contained in all agendas are reports and recommendations only and are not to be construed, in any way, as Council policy until adopted.)

AGENDA FOR A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL (STRATEGIC REVIEW (ECO CITY + 10)) TO BE HELD IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, 6 WAIPAREIRA AVENUE, LINCOLN, WAITAKERE CITY, ON TUESDAY, 16 APRIL 2002 COMMENCING AT 9.00 AM.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>ITEM</u>		<u>PAGE NO.</u>
1	APOLOGIES	1
2	OVERVIEW AND SCOPE OF THIS MEETING	1
3	URBAN CONSOLIDATION AND INTENSIFICATION	3
4	TRANSPORT	7
5	NORTHERN STRATEGIC GROWTH AREA PLANNING	13
6	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	19

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1 APOLOGIES



2 OVERVIEW AND SCOPE OF THIS MEETING

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report sets out the structure for this meeting.

BACKGROUND

This is the first of seven topic based meetings held as part of the Council's Strategic Review (eco city + 10). The following schedule for these meetings was adopted at the Special Council Strategic Review 19 February 2002 meeting:

16 April 2002	-	Urban and Economic Development 1
6 May 2002	-	Civic Issues
21 May 2002	-	Environment and Community
1 July 2002	-	Wellbeing
25 July 2002	-	Water, Waste and Funding
20 August 2002	-	Major Partnerships
17 September 2002	-	Urban and Economic Development 2

The purpose of each of these meetings is to review what the Council does in each area and to determine priorities for the next ten years to advance the Council's strategic direction.

In parallel with these meetings, the Council is consulting with the community to develop community outcomes and priorities. These two processes combine in October 2002 when the Council considers the community's outcomes and priorities and gives instructions for the preparation of ten year budgets for the period 2003/2004 to 2013/2014.

This meeting considers Urban and Economic issues, including Transport. It is the first of two meetings on this topic. Due to the complex nature of the issues the Council may wish to give early direction at this meeting to guide work which can be reported back to Council at its September meeting for decision making.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

These meetings need to chart a way forward for Council in terms of its eco city strategic direction.

The framework set out in Agenda 21 is one of environmental, social and economic sustainability through community involvement. This City's biggest environmental and social problem is the economy; there are not enough jobs for the people who live here. Good urban planning, transport and communications links, and sustainable business growth are key to the future of the City.

STRUCTURE OF THIS MEETING

This meeting is structured in four parts:

1. Strategic Overview

A brief overview will be given of the key strategies in the areas of urban development, transport and economic development highlighting how these strategies support each other.

2. Reports

These agenda items contain a range of issues that are difficult to consider in isolation from each other. Economic development, urban quality, transport, growth areas and Council services are closely related and each set of issues needs to be considered in the Council's decisions. A brief presentation will be given on each item. It is suggested that the specific recommendations be left to lie on the table until the meeting reconvenes after the workshop.

3. Workshop - the ten year vision

Following the presentations it is suggested that Council move to a workshop to provide an opportunity to consider the overall urban issues for the Strategic Review. It is suggested that the workshop begin with an overview of current state, trends and achievements in the city over the last ten years. The workshop would then consider the key questions in each area covered in this agenda i.e. transport, economic development, urban development and the northern strategic growth area.

4. Resolutions

After the workshop the Council can re-convene the meeting and consider the detailed recommendations from each agenda report.

CONCLUSION

The Council is invited to use this meeting to set out its priorities for the next ten years in the areas of transport, and urban and economic development.

RECOMMENDATION

That the information be received.

Report prepared by: Anna Percy, Strategic Planning and Monitoring Manager.



3 URBAN CONSOLIDATION AND INTENSIFICATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to highlight implementation issues for a compact city and implications for future directions to be addressed through the Strategic Review process.

BACKGROUND

The urban area of Waitakere City is narrow and linear. It takes up much of the area between the Waitakere Ranges and foothills in the west, and the shores of the Upper Waitemata Harbour in the east. This urban area is roughly 22% of the City's total land area, and contains 91% of the total population of the City.

Much of Waitakere City has been built in the last 20 years, with urban growth expanding outwards from Henderson, Glen Eden and New Lynn and occurring at the urban fringe. In the early 1990's, Council commenced work on the preparation of an Urban Development Strategy to provide for and manage the effects of urban expansion. Nine options to accommodate anticipated future urban growth associated with population increase, demographic and lifestyle changes (age and household composition characteristics, housing preferences, e-business etc) were developed and evaluated (1992/1993).

The selected option – an urban village concept offering a compact and connected city form and housing choice - was summarised in *"City Futures - Strategic Directions; December 1993"*. It promotes:

- urban containment with development to be focused primarily within current urban boundaries;
- expansion into greenfield areas where strict environmental criteria can be met;
- maximum protection to the Waitakere ranges and preservation of the rural character of the foothills of the Waitakere ranges;
- a range of residential densities, with intensification at selected nodes and corridors and opportunities for rural residential development;
- flexibility for mixed use development to provide for local employment opportunities and reduce commuting to work;
- affordable infrastructure development to determine the rate, type and direction of growth;
- energy efficiency, affordability, accessibility, and high amenity values;

In spatial terms, Waitakere City's urban development strategy components are as follows:

- promoting larger city centres at New Lynn, Henderson and Massey North with lots of shops, businesses, apartments and terrace housing;
- investing in town centres and providing local services and more housing at places like Glen Eden, Ranui, and Te Atatu Peninsula;
- keeping the character of traditional suburban areas like Te Atatu South, Kelston, and Glen Eden;
- strengthening traditional employment areas at Central Park Drive, Henderson Valley, new Lynn and Swanson Road;
- developing Lincoln Road and Hobsonville Road as mixed-use transit-oriented corridors;
- promoting more housing around train stations at Fruitvale, Sunnyside/Parrs Park and Sturges Road;
- expanding the urban area into the Redhills/Hobsonville area, promoting a mix of densities, and with a focus on employment activities.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Council's commitment to a compact city form is consistent with, and predates the Auckland Regional Growth Strategy growth concept of encouraging intensification of development within the existing (1999) Metropolitan Urban Limits (MUL), especially in town centres and on transport routes; and promoting quality, compact urban environments with a variety of housing, jobs, services, recreational and other activities.

The Waitakere City Proposed District Plan contains policies which complement the Regional Growth Strategy by providing housing choice through promoting medium density housing and mixed use development at town centres, transport nodes and along major transport corridors, and enhancing the character of residential suburbs and rural areas. The District Plan policies are further reinforced by Council's Urban Village and Town Centre Revitalisation programmes.

ISSUES

Compact City - Development Capacity

Over the next 20 years, the population for Waitakere City is expected to increase by around 62,000. Assuming three persons per household, this equates with an additional 20,670 households. Within the context of a compact city development scenario, around 74% of this increase is to be accommodated within the existing urban area.

Broad estimates of land requirements to accommodate this growth are shown below.

Estimated population growth 2001/2021	62,000 people, or around 20,670 dwellings (assume three persons per household, and 1 household per dwelling)
74% in existing urban area	15,300 dwellings
Assume average 400m ² per dwelling	612ha land required ¹
Assume 60% at 300m ² and 40% at 400m ²	519ha land required ¹
Vacant land Living Environments (survey February 2002)	287ha land vacant
Potentially vacant land Living Environments (survey February 2002)	194ha land potentially vacant
Vacant and potentially vacant land in the Living Environments	481ha

¹ - additional land will be required for open space, community facilities, roading/transport infrastructure.

There is significant development capacity available within the existing Metropolitan Urban Limits to provide for future growth, but this capacity needs careful assessment and planning to optimise development opportunities and achieve quality environmental outcomes consistent with compact city objectives. Future work needs to focus on the following:

- monitoring take up rate of vacant and potentially vacant land;
- evaluating design/desirable development capacities within existing urban areas;
- planning for intensification - preparation of integrated development plans to take into account land development capacities, appropriate land use mix/economic development opportunities, infrastructure capacities and levels of service, open space and community facilities requirements, urban design/amenity values, levels of financial contributions and possible sequencing of development;

- developing and evaluating mechanisms to trigger and optimise (re)development potential of land - understanding market conditions/land values and intensification, site amalgamation, and role of Council to influence rate of intensification, e.g. land purchase of key sites, joint-venture/advocacy to promote site amalgamation, regulatory and non-regulatory approaches, use of development concept plans and planning briefs.

Further material will be provided at the meeting to brief Councillors on development capacities and linkages to infrastructure planning which are key components of planning for intensification.

Intensification and District Plan Policies

Current District Plan policies provide for medium density housing development and mixed use development within the Community and Working Environments to promote intensification around town centres. A range of residential densities, including medium density housing, is provided for within the Living Environments in the residential suburbs to encourage infill development.

A comprehensive review of all medium density housing development and of examples of mixed use development was undertaken recently. The study found that 50.7% of all medium density housing units applied for are located in the Living Environments, while 32.9% are located in the Working Environment. The study results also indicate that intensification is happening in both centres and suburbs : 54% of all units are located within town centres or railway station walking catchment, and 44% of all units are located in the residential suburbs. Highest densities (dwellings per hectare) are found in the Working Environment.

There are very few mixed use developments, and the ones that have occurred are essentially residential development (medium density housing) in the Working or Community Environment, with provision for a “home office”.

A presentation of the key findings of the recent studies will be made to Councillors at the meeting.

These studies suggest the need to fine-tune and strengthen District Plan policy provisions, particularly to promote good urban design outcomes. More sophisticated District Plan policies, supported by non-regulatory approaches will need to be developed to manage intensification and infill development. Attention will also need to be focussed on development in the suburbs and approaches to enhance local character and identity. Currently, there are no guidelines or evaluation criteria in terms of location, land use mix, or layout and design against which to assess applications for mixed use development.

With intensification of development, management of public space becomes an important consideration. Within town centres, mall development effectively puts public circulation space under private ownership and management. “Streetscape” becomes internalised and privatised and pedestrian circulation and public use of the space are controlled, and restricted by private management. Similarly, “gated” residential developments could restrict public access and circulation, limiting connectivity between areas. “Governance” issues for the public domain, and linkages to public policies to address urban design issues in town centres will need to be considered.

On the positive side, Body Corporates perform important functions within medium density developments, ensuring that the external parts of building assets and common areas are well maintained. Council is currently participating in regional research into Body Corporates. Results are expected mid year, and any issues raised will be reported to Council at the September review meeting.

Town Centres

Council has been investing in town centres since 1993, with a budget funded entirely from general rates. The programme is aimed at upgrading the centres of New Lynn, Henderson, Titirangi, Glen Eden and Te Atatu Peninsula, with other centres to follow. More recently, the town centres programme has had a stronger economic development focus, aimed at creating vibrant town centres, providing more jobs, and attracting private sector investment in town centres. In addition to physical works, the programme also fosters liaison with the business community to promote investment in and development of strategic sites.

There is a need to evaluate the outcomes of the town centres investments against policy objectives, and assess whether or not Council's initiatives have been optimised. A contract is being negotiated with Brian Haratsis (Macroplan Australia) to assist with developing a quantitative and qualitative evaluation methodology, using a case study approach, to carry out the assessment. Findings from the study will contribute to a review of the town centre strategy and development of a new 10 year work programme for town centres. This work will be carried out over the coming months, and early results are expected to be available for reporting to the September strategic review meeting.

RESOURCES

Current resources are inadequate if all the areas of work identified above are to be implemented. Additional resources, or redirection of current resources and work programme will be required.

CONCLUSION

Council's development policies and programmes focus on intensification of development within the existing Metropolitan Urban Limits to create a compact city with vibrant town centres. There is development capacity within the existing Metropolitan Urban Limits for further intensification. Integrated planning and mechanisms to trigger (re)development of sites are required to optimise the development potential of land, both in the town centres and suburbs, and achieve quality environmental and design outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the information be received.
2. That Council re-confirm the compact city option for the future development of Waitakere City.
3. That officers investigate and report on the following matters to Council in September 2002:
 - a) the scope, content and resource implications for the preparation of integrated development plans for urban intensification;
 - b) evaluation of town centres programme;
 - c) the need for District Plan and/or other policy changes to provide for urban intensification; and
 - d) mechanisms to trigger (re)development of sites to optimise development potential and good urban design outcomes.

Report prepared by: Anne Cheng, Senior Analyst: Urban Policy.



4 TRANSPORT

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to review the strategic issues facing Council with regard to transport and which need Council direction through the Strategic Review.

BACKGROUND

Transport is a major factor in the development of Waitakere City. The city is currently very dependent upon private vehicles for travel while other modes play a minor part in the city's travel patterns. While recognising that private vehicles contribute a great deal to the development of the city and well being of its residents, Council has sought to significantly increase the use of other travel modes and to reduce travel demand to try and address the significant negative effects of transport.

Essentially Council's strategy, as it relates to transport, has been to build up land use patterns that support greater use of passenger transport, walking and cycling, and which make it easier to travel less or work from home. Key elements of this approach have been to:

- promote urban intensification in places where passenger transport, walking and cycling can be advantaged, such as adjacent to the rail corridor;
- reduce travel demand by making it easier for people to work from home or live near where they work, the District Plan is the key tool to facilitate this;
- promote regional, public control of rail assets and significantly improve rail services;
- promote walking and cycling in urban areas.

Alongside this approach Council has sought to make adequate provision for private vehicle use. This has included supporting the development of state highways to the north (SH16 / 18) and east (SH20) of the city.

To date this strategy has met with limited success. There has been a significant increase in urban intensification around town centres and this appears to be influencing travel patterns. For example, a survey of Ambrico Place showed that 54% of residents use passenger transport compared to the citywide average of 37%. Surveys done in the Sturges area also support the premise that good road and path networks increase pedestrian activity. However, this has not been significant enough to affect the overall travel patterns across the city.

Residents of the region are making more trips per person than ever before, and a bigger (and increasing) proportion of these trips are being made in cars. Travel to school activity, nearly half of the morning travel trips on the road, are also a significant factor in increased road use, which also reflects international trends. Within Waitakere City the average distance travelled each year per resident appears to be rising. Furthermore, the region has a high and increasing level of car ownership. Car availability has increased from 1.38 per household in 1986 to 1.55 in 1996 (based on provisional 2001 Census figures). There are now some 630,000 cars and 95,000 heavy motor vehicles registered in the region. At approximately one car for every second Aucklanders, the region has one of the highest car ownership rates in the world, comparable to the United States, Canada and Australia.

Based on current regional trends, the use of cars could be expected to double in the next 20 years. The implications of these trends are exacerbated by low car occupancy, with only 1.2 people per car on average at peak periods.

These trends translate into increased congestion and vehicle pollution - the fastest growing source of CO2 emissions in the country.

However, consideration of the reasons for this limited success give reason to expect that patterns will change and that Council's strategy will become increasingly successful.

- the Council's strategy to increase urban intensification at key centres is working but remains a small proportion of the total urban area. Where the intensification has occurred there is reason to believe, as the Ambrico Place study indicates, that people are relying less on their cars. As urban centres develop it can be expected that an increasing number of trips will be made by walking and cycling, so long as safe routes are provided;
- for over six years Council has participated in the regional group seeking to gain control of the rail services. During this time there has been no improvement in rail services but peak hour trains have generally been full. Therefore, part of the reason for the limited results with passenger transport is that there has been no rail capacity to take more patronage. Patronage projections for rail once new services are in place indicate a significant growth in the early years to take up latent demand.
- Council has only made limited investments in bus priority measures because our focus has been on the rail corridor. Where other Councils have invested in bus priorities that give travellers genuine time advantages there have been significant patronage increases. Therefore, when this Council turns its attention to bus priority measures we can expect to achieve success with this mode also;
- there are no ferry facilities in Waitakere. However, it is likely that Hobsonville will have a ferry service in future and this will help with some commuter trips.

Beyond these factors however, Council has not actively promoted a travel management tool that can be expected to significantly reduce reliance on travel by car. This tool is generally referred to as Road Pricing. It is suggested that Council look closely in this strategic review at whether it could better advocate for the adoption of this tool.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Waitakere City Council has committed to developing a transport system that supports a strong local economy which provides jobs for most of the work force, adequate services to meet the social, health, education and recreation needs of residents, and protection and enhancement of the environment of the city.

In terms of transport, Council's key strategies for achieving these goals are to promote the intensification of key urban centres and reducing reliance on motor vehicles in favour of higher usage of public transport, walking and cycling. Part of the intention of this strategy is to reduce pressure for growth within the rural areas and ranges and to reduce the pollution from vehicles. It will also help to develop communities that meet many of the needs of their residents with local services such as health, education and recreation.

The City Development Committee has recently adopted the following principles to help guide transport decision-making:

- development of a sustainable, efficient and safe transport system that minimises environmental effects;
- transport and land use developments that support each other;
- equitable transport choices for most urban trips, including passenger transport, cycling and walking;
- development of a holistic and integrated transport system and to promote travel demand management;

- high quality reliable public passenger transport, particularly rail, complementary to an adequate road network;
- maintaining a strong local role in decision-making;
- recognising in decision making that many people do not have access to private cars;
- transport sustainability to achieve equity between social, economic, and environmental outcomes; in particular advocacy for health, community safety, and green house gas reduction;
- taking into account the true costs of travel choices, and to support in principle pricing options that reflect the true costs of congestion;
- security of funding, including an appropriate regional share.

In pursuing its transport goals over the last decade Council has not generally had a supportive national policy framework. Central government has been focused on facilitating road-based travel and has not put a lot of resource into other modes. There are now significant changes in the central government approach. Government is setting money aside specifically for passenger transport, walking and cycling as well as targeting money towards strategically important road investments. Council is positioned to take advantage of this change in focus, particularly with regard to rail.

ISSUES

There are a number of key factors that Council needs to consider as part of the Strategic Review.

Land Use and Transport

This Council has been a national leader in the promotion of integrated land use and transport planning. This work is beginning to pay dividends in terms of altering people's travel patterns. However, the real gains will only be realised over a period of decades. It is strongly suggested that Council continue with its approach to integrated planning.

Governance

The region is continuing to investigate transport governance options. This has been reported regularly to Council. Council will need to continue to participate in regional forums on this issue. However, it is suggested that Council focus on the development of governance mechanisms for passenger transport infrastructure as this is an area where significant new investment is being made and no regionally integrated governance arrangements exist. Therefore it is suggested that passenger transport is an area where governance improvements are necessary. Budget is proposed in the next financial year to contribute to the evolution of ARTNL if this goes ahead. However, there is not budget provided for a major review of road transport governance.

Funding

The funding of transport projects is a very significant issue. Work is currently underway at a regional level to identify when major projects are likely to come on stream and what they are likely to cost. Once this is known we will be able to see where, if any, funding 'log jams' are likely to arise. It appears that there will be years where there are more regionally significant projects than money and so it will be necessary to look at funding options, such as delaying projects or seeking alternative sources of funds. Funding options include rates, Transfund, Infrastructure Auckland plus new options recently announced by Government - tolls and public / private funding partnerships.

The Government's recent decision to allocate Transfund funding by mode will have a significant effect on enabling passenger transport projects to proceed. Once the total money available has been allocated to the respective categories passenger transport projects will no longer be assessed in the same way as road projects. This will enable the best passenger transport projects to proceed within the budget available.

Transfund funding has also been allocated to walking and cycling modes for the first time. Cycle funding will need to be in accordance with a Council strategy for cycling. This Council is in the process of developing such a strategy.

Passenger Transport

This Council made a strategic decision to promote rail service improvements as a priority rather than bus service improvements. This was because the rail line served many of our centres and was able to support our strategic goal of developing those centres. Unfortunately it has taken far longer than expected to gain control of the lines to enable the service upgrade to begin. Therefore, to date we have not seen any benefit from the years of work put into that project. However, we are now about to get the control necessary to develop services and the benefits of the project will begin to roll out from the next financial year. The costs and benefits of the rail deal and associated first stage upgrade will need to be assessed during April when Council is asked to accept or reject the rail deal (i.e. prior to Council's final decisions for its long term strategy).

Council has made some investments in station area improvements alongside significant investments in centres adjacent to the rail line. As patronage grows this Council will be expected to invest in supporting infrastructure such as park and ride facilities, footpaths and safety. We will also be expected to continue our focus on supporting growth around stations. One element of the Strategic Review should be to identify more clearly the costs that will fall to Council from this work.

Council has intended to turn its attention to bus service improvements once the rail investments were more certain. All going well it is expected that the region will own the rail assets by the middle of this year. Therefore, Council should now look at its role in developing bus services in the city. The regional council will be reviewing services next financial year and budget is provided for Council to participate in this.

The key elements in developing bus services are:

- bus reliability;
- bus quality;
- better relative travel times than cars; and
- increased frequencies of services.

Council is largely responsible for the third element as it controls local roads and has a key role in lobbying Transit New Zealand for bus priority on motorways. We also have an important role in assisting reliability by helping buses through traffic via such means as bus priority lanes. Council has provided budget in the draft Annual Plan to identify and protect a passenger transport corridor between Henderson and the North Shore.

Road Transport

Council has a policy of undertaking its land use and transport planning together. There are planning programmes in place or proposed for the strategically important centres in the City and transport plans are generally developed in conjunction with these. The Transport Assets team are in the process of developing transport plans for the Titirangi area, New Lynn area, and Henderson/Lincoln Road area. Transport Assets also propose to undertake another major strategic study in the Massey area next year. It is suggested that these studies be reported back as part of the Strategic Review in September 2002.

Budget is proposed for Council to participate next financial year in the planning of State Highway 20. This will be linked to further consideration of options for another bridge crossing of the Whau River.

Walking and Cycling

Officers are currently working on a pedestrian and cycle strategy. It is suggested that Council's approach to walking and cycling be developed via this strategy and confirmed in the Strategic Review.

Travel Demand Management

Council has sought to reduce travel demand by such means as enabling people to live closer to where they work. However there are other methods that Council could pursue also.

Currently travel is subsidised in a variety of ways. For example, because petrol tax payment is roughly equivalent to distance travelled a person travelling on a 'cheap' road for 10km pays about the same as a person travelling on a high cost road for 10km. This subsidy encourages people to 'over consume' travel. A system of charging for road use that more accurately reflects the cost of that use and differentiates between time of use is likely to alter people's travel behaviour. Increasing the cost of travel is likely to reduce its consumption and where reasonable public transport options exist it is more likely to be used. Work associated with preparing the 1999 Regional Land Transport Strategy indicated that road pricing would be a very influential method of reducing vehicle travel and transport emissions. It is suggested that this be investigated further as part of the Strategic Review, within the budget allocated for Climate Change given the emissions reduction potential of such work.

Another method of reducing travel demand is to assist people to take up practices that reduce their need to travel. Council is currently actively promoting this through its District Plan provisions for urban intensification. Other methods of reducing travel demand are to promote teleworking. Teleworking involves people working from home or near their home, making use of email and fax etc to access work documents or colleagues. Rideshare is another type of travel demand management. Council officers are currently looking into a programme to enable rideshare to be used by Council staff. There is no budget provided in next years Annual Plan to promote travel demand management.

Safety

Council officers are actively involved in Road Safety programmes in the Community. This work receives funding from Council, the Land Transport Safety Authority, Accident Compensation and sponsors.

Key Road Safety programmes delivered citywide include:

- safety belts/child restraints;
- pedestrian safety;
- cycle safety;
- alcohol safety;
- crash reduction;
- driver licensing;
- resident concerns;
- bus safety.

Emissions and Health

As noted above emissions from vehicles are one of the main sources of air and water pollution in the country. Council is participating in a study to help identify the extent of vehicle pollutants reaching waterways. The State of the City report notes from a NIWA and ARC study that Lincoln Road has concerningly high level of diesel particulates present in the air. Council has also voted budget to assist the measurement of vehicle pollutants to air. Participating in these studies is part of Council's wider intention to seek to reduce the production of greenhouse gas emissions in the city. This work will be reported back to Council once an emissions inventory has been developed.

The Ministry of Transport has published work identifying the significant extent to which vehicle emissions affect public health.

RESOURCES

Budget and staff time has been identified in the draft Annual Plan to undertake some of the work identified above. Travel Demand Management is an area where budget is lacking.

CONCLUSION

Council is involved in a wide range of transport activities, and most of the strategic approach in this area has been endorsed over past months. However, there are issues and opportunities that we do not have a clear position on, such as road pricing, that are potentially very influential in helping to achieve our strategic goals. It is also likely that new methods of funding transport investment will become available, such as toll roads. These may be needed if some projects are to be funded.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the information be received.
2. That Council officers report back on work currently underway in the areas of strategic road studies, walking and cycling, and emissions and health as this work becomes available.
3. That Council officers investigate policy options for Council with regard to Road Pricing and report back on this as part of the Strategic Review for decision in September 2002.
4. That Council officers investigate future costs of the rail project and station area improvements for consideration in the Strategic Review.

Report prepared by: Jeff Murray, Manager Transport Strategy.



5 NORTHERN STRATEGIC GROWTH AREA PLANNING

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This paper looks at the Northern Strategic Growth Area (NOSGA) of the city, which stretches from Massey North to Hobsonville Peninsula and includes the Waiarohia Catchment, the Totara Stream area, Redhills and the new motorways. It considers the strategic issues in this area facing Council, which need direction through the Strategic Review process. Key decisions influencing much of this new growth area will need to be made this year, to allow sufficient lead time to enable new growth areas to be released for development.

BACKGROUND

Waitakere has pursued a compact city strategy for some years, which however also recognises the need for new growth areas to provide for urban expansion, particularly for employment.

Through the Sector Agreement process, there is in principle agreement for a staged expansion of the Metropolitan Urban Limits in this part of Waitakere City. The timing of these statutory changes will be staged to reflect the big picture planning outcomes and the sequencing outlined in the Sector Agreement. A programme will be discussed and agreed with the Auckland Regional Council to co-ordinate and streamline the statutory processes to avoid duplication of work and re-litigation of issues by potential submitters.

Only very broad land use assumptions for the residential and business uses and indicative population capacities have been applied to the future urban areas as part of the Northern and Western Sectors Agreement work.

This is a large area of the city, and current understandings are that:

- the area contains Waitakere City's third main town centre, currently indicated in the Proposed District Plan as at Massey North/Westgate area;
- that it provide a major part of our future employment capacity, while continuing to provide community, leisure and residential opportunities;
- that the motorway be the dividing line between urban on the West Harbour side and rural on the Whenuapai airport side (Waiarohia Structure Plan);
- that the Peninsula provide a range of living, working and leisure opportunities.

Currently staff in various parts of Council are engaged in planning exercises for the areas of their responsibility in the northern region e.g.:

- Transport Assets looking at roads and motorways;
- Ecowater looking at the water catchment areas;
- Strategic Projects looking at Hobsonville Peninsula, Massey North, cycleways and the corridor;
- Landscape Development looking at parks and open space requirements;
- Resource Management doing the Waiarohia Structure Plan;
- Strategic Group working on regional agreements;
- Enterprise Waitakere and Waitakere Properties Limited looking at development options etc.

Regional relationships are another key area of activity and Council maintains a range of relationships at staff, community and political levels, far too many to list here. However, key political forums are the Regional Growth Forum, and the Regional Land Transport Committee. There are direct linkages with Rodney and North Shore through the Northern and Western Sector Agreement. Staff are working closely with the Auckland Regional Council regarding key issues such as the Upper Harbour study, Open Space Strategy. Participation in preparing documents such as the Ministry for the Environment's People plus Places plus Spaces also contributes to achieving good urban design on the ground. Council has had a Mayoral Task Force working on the conceptual aspects of the Hobsonville Peninsula development plans. Work with key parties such as Transit is also ongoing.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

It is estimated that 80% of the world's population will be living in cities by mid twenty-first century. Successful cities will be the lifeblood of the economies of the 21st century, and city planning in both northern and southern hemispheres is re-examining the planning concepts which have driven post war city design. For 50 years, Western cities (in the main) have been designed around the assumption that everyone will own a car, and that cities will import all their food and material requirements and export all their waste. For 80% of the world's population to live in this way is clearly unsustainable. 21st century cities will need to be self-sustaining - this means being able to manage water and waste internally, to employ their citizens, generate energy, manage transport, manage the distribution of activities and contribute to the food supply.

Waitakere has been acknowledged as a leader in the movement towards building sustainable cities, particularly in the areas of land use, water and transport, but as this northern area of the city is the only major greenfields opportunity the city will have in the next 20 to 50 years under the current Regional Growth Strategy, Council needs to be considering what more it can do in order to continue the city's progress towards sustainability.

Developing an overall agreed conceptual framework ('big picture') for the whole area is necessary to ensure that:

- the best strategic land use and development options are chosen through integrated planning;
- a consistent response is given to all the external parties also engaged in planning such as Transit, Watercare, Central Government, the Auckland Regional Council and our sector partners;
- community and landowner expectations are managed and confidence in future options is gained.

Staff are working towards developing a 'big picture' plan, which will bring together staff, Councillors and the public at various points of the project, and will produce an agreed framework within 18 months. This is not ideal but is the best achievable timeframe possible. The big picture planning will be concurrent with, and will integrate in one document, these more area-specific planning exercises already in progress.

ISSUE - SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Councils role in development

Council needs to consider what development mechanisms and options would best enable sustainable development to be supported. Council's role in this area will range from land purchase, planning, advocacy for preferred options for land use, planning for transport, heritage, parks provision etc. Infrastructure costs to Council are likely to be high, despite financial contributions, and the agenda item on economic development (also on this agenda), suggests that options for funding for growth across the city should be investigated and a package brought back in September 2002 for Councillor consideration.

Transport

Providing for public and alternative transports modes, and for local networked roads, are the two key transport issues facing this area. Designing for sustainable transport in the area will need to be an ongoing programme over the next few years. Key regional connections and capacity constraints can be addressed through the Regional Land Transport planning processes and other issues will be coming to the appropriate Council committees as necessary. Planning is underway for cycleways, and transport interchanges at strategic sites, which will contribute to city growth. The Northern and Western Sector Agreement has an action to 'investigate the preparation of a Joint Northern and Western Sectors Transportation Plan', and it is suggested that this become part of the Long Term Council Community Plan.

Wastewater

This is the critical issue for planning for this area, as this could be a major constraint on development. A strategy for wastewater management is required for the new growth areas from Redhills to Hobsonville Peninsula, and the rural settlements in Rodney at Kumeu/Huapai and Riverhead. The fundamental issue is the capacity of the Western Interceptor, which also serves Auckland City, and the need for Project West or other options.

Waitakere has conducted some investigations into alternative wastewater options, which are basically assessments of the big pipe solution i.e. Project West, or local treatment solutions. Both have considerable costs and benefits, and finalisation of this issue is critical to the future planning, form and capacity of the area. It is suggested that this issue be discussed in the workshop scheduled for this meeting, as well as in the Water issues Strategic Review paper in July, and that this work come back to the September Urban issues meeting for decision.

Stormwater and Upper Harbour

While protection of the Upper Harbour could be a major constraint on future development, Waitakere's work to date indicates that this could be managed by setting high standards for stormwater and wastewater management. The issues of carrying capacity and impact of future development on water quality of the Upper Waitemata Harbour are complex, and resolution of these issues is not expected in the short term. This is currently under discussion with the Auckland Regional Council.

Waitakere City's Urban Stormwater Strategy promotes sustainable stormwater management approaches, supporting on-site stormwater detention and treatment methods and riparian planting for runoff attenuation and improved water quality. A number of catchment management plans are being prepared or have been programmed for completion in the 2001/2002 year.

Council has also prepared a code of practice for stormwater management based on the principle of hydrological neutrality to guide rural subdivision in the Foothills and Countryside Living Environments. The control on permitted levels of impermeable surfaces is most probably going to be considerably more stringent than the rest of the city. For instance in our current working environment we allow up to 90% impermeable surfaces: a working estimate of what the Northern Strategic Growth Area area can sustain overall may be in the region of 30%.

Structure Plans

Stormwater management for rural areas is addressed through rural structure plans. The Waiarohia Structure Plan is nearly completed. However private structure plans are also underway, in the Totara and Riverlea catchments. This could be an issue for Council to manage as this process can affect landowner expectations for the future.

Water Supply, Management Options

Overall the system is well served by Watercare Services bulk water supply systems and capacity is sufficient or can be readily generated as required. Upgrading of some bulk supply points and pipe work will be required for future growth in this area.

Environmentally Sustainable Communities

As noted in the introduction, this green fields area offers the city a major opportunity to pursue the sustainable development programme. Council could be looking to develop environmentally sensitive communities, and look at all aspects of development including planting, and local food production. Below are some, but not all, options that Council could consider for the future.

Energy Conservation and Supply

Energy conservation and efficiency will become more of a key activity for local government over the next five years, under the National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy 2001. Under this agreed action plan are some key actions for local government. They include a Local Government Energy Efficiency Leadership programme which seeks voluntary 15% efficiency improvements in the next five years.

We will be expected to participate in regional energy accounting initiatives, as well as sustainable urban form initiatives:

- the Energy Conservation and Efficiency Authority (EECA) action plan also seeks to ensure that energy efficiency and renewable energy issues are 'effectively addressed' in Resource Management Act processes;
- Energy Conservation and Efficiency Authority will be looking to support model plan provisions, best practice examples, non-statutory guidelines etc being developed by Local Government.

As the country seeks to develop alternative energy sources, this may be an opportunity for Waitakere City to encourage developing energy supply and distribution companies to engage in pilot projects, particularly but not exclusively for both new growth areas in the city. This would:

- support Kyoto CO2 reduction targets;
- continue the work on sustainable urban form;
- support innovation and ecocity initiatives;
- contribute to Local Government energy efficiency targets;
- develop a new industry cluster;
- support the knowledge economy growth by 'energising' a nascent energy cluster in the city.

After 2013, current legislation provisions for distribution by line companies could change. While there is debate over what changes are likely after that date, this may be an opportunity to investigate alternative sources of power in the city and rural areas as they come up for renewals and new installations. Even if the old lines continue, new technologies can increase the capacity and reliability of supply.

Currently there is no Waitakere City funding for initial feasibility studies for alternative energy systems in outlying and new urban areas. Council may wish to consider whether a preliminary feasibility study for Northern Strategic Growth Area is an option they wish to support as part of a package of sustainable development options in future budgets.

Greenhouse Gas reduction

The issue of greenhouse gas emissions and any initiatives aimed at their reduction are closely related to energy efficiency initiatives described above. This new urban area could be used to investigate the opportunities open to Council in encouraging a model community in which environmental impacts, including green house gas emissions are minimised. Council is currently establishing a greenhouse gas emissions inventory which will allow us to identify the best opportunities for greenhouse gas emissions reductions in a new urban area.

Options that could be investigated could include:

- urban form that reduces car travel;
- layout of residential developments to maximise solar access to homes;
- residential developments that are energy self-sufficient;
- encouraging or advocating for legislative change to prescribe for the construction of homes that are energy efficient;
- encouraging Cleaner Production in the commercial sector;
- attracting industries that develop energy efficient or alternative energy products;
- offsetting greenhouse gas emissions locally through planting projects, i.e. creating a carbon neutral community.

Built form

Similarly to the opportunities described for energy and water issues, there are opportunities to create a built form that is more environmentally sensitive than traditional developments. This could involve encouraging certain building materials, colours, shapes and the like. Community acceptance would probably be lower than for energy and water issues and often the environmental impact is indirect i.e. not local. However, a development that uses sustainable materials and visually reflects this choice may encourage the community to make environmentally responsible choices. Demonstration houses can be a powerful tool to showcase both the practical changes possible and new technologies available.

Industrial development

One method Councils can use to encourage best practice in existing businesses, and to attract businesses with a proactive environmental policy, is to establish areas whereby environmental standards are higher than the surrounding areas. This attracts in businesses whose business is environmentally sensitive (they know they won't be polluted by their neighbours), those businesses that are working in the sustainable development area (they know there will be similar industries around to source and sell products to) and benefits the image of both the city and the business.

This is not something common in New Zealand, but has been used successfully in new growth areas overseas. Councils usually contribute some incentive such as lower rates in recognition of the higher standards in place in the industry. This is similar in principle to reduced financial contributions in cases where developers have installed water use reduction mechanisms. While we have staff working on Cleaner Production and Climate Change initiatives, no resources are in place in Council to investigate models such as this for sustainable development.

RESOURCES

Considerable resources are currently being targeted to this key development area of the city. However, these are mostly focussed on site specific planning exercises, or investigating some alternative supply technologies such as wastewater management. There is little staff resource targeted towards continuing the search for, and investigating the application in New Zealand of, a wider range of alternative supply technologies such as energy.

Consultation with the local community is a critical factor in sustainable development options being understood and supported by local interests. Council has done some preliminary work in developing a communications plan for this big picture planning work, and each project (Transit, Massey North, Hobsonville etc) has its own communications plan. It is proposed that, as part of developing the 'big picture' plan, consultation and communication with local interests would be an integral part of reaching an agreed understanding of future development options. This would be co-ordinated with the more project specific work to avoid over consultation. This is necessary but time consuming work, and will increase in the future.

Iwi have expressed interest in being involved in planning for this area, and staff are talking with iwi representatives and Te Taumata Runanga about each facet of this complex process, for example in developing planning work programmes for work related to the Sector Agreement, engagement in the motorway impacts and arts programmes, and consultation for each site specific plan such as the Massey North and Hobsonville Corridor scenario development workshops.

CONCLUSION

The northern area of the city is considered critical to Waitakere meeting the residential, employment, leisure and social needs of its future residents and workers, and considerable resources are committed to this end. However, there are constraints in the form of management of wastewater, stormwater and possible impacts on the Upper Harbour, which will need to be managed carefully to enable development to progress. The area represents a considerable opportunity to develop innovative urban sustainability options.

This report recommends a workshop for Councillors to consider these key strategic decisions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the information be received.
2. That options for the provision of wastewater management continue to be investigated and brought back to the 17 September 2002 Special Council Strategic Review (eco city + 10) meeting for final decision.
3. That staff continue investigations into urban sustainable development options as outlined in the paper for consideration at the September meeting.

4. That stormwater management options be investigated in July (Water, Wastewater) Strategic Review paper and if necessary brought back to September Urban issues meeting.

Report prepared by: Cathy Kenkel, Strategic Leader.



6 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report considers the economic development issues facing the city as a whole, and presents those matters which need consideration and direction through the Strategic Review process.

BACKGROUND

Over the last ten years, Waitakere's economy has echoed the economic trends in the region as a whole. During this time, Council has established Enterprise Waitakere, used a cluster development strategy, promoted and supported various kinds of economic and social partnerships, supported a Cleaner Production programme internally, promoted facility development such as schools, railway stations, leisure, library and hospital facilities, and opened up new areas of the city for commercial, retail and residential development (Central Park Drive, Town Centres).

Using development mechanisms such as Waitakere Properties Limited has enabled Council to invest in successful residential housing projects, which have contributed to local rejuvenation. Projects such as Harbourview contribute not only to land value increases, but also increase local shopping, and act as demonstrations of sustainable development ideas e.g. narrow streets, terrace house designs and urban water management techniques.

Enterprise Waitakere has been the primary economic development arm of Council and has pursued policies and projects in accordance with the negotiated contract each year. The main emphases to date have been on training, tourism, and cluster development. This programme has seen the high profile industries of film and marine expand in the city. While a review is planned, 2002/2003 budget planning is moving funding away from tourism activities to more cluster development support.

Private investment in both new buildings and development of existing buildings has increased significantly over the past ten years. The level of investment in commercial and industrial buildings has increased to an average of \$70 million per annum, up from \$21 million in 1991 to \$77 million in 2001. Residential investments in the city have been over \$200 million annually for the last four years. As an example of comparative figures, in New Lynn Council has invested around five million since 1997, and the private sector has invested 123 million.

The top five industries by FTE's in Waitakere are: (: (These figures are from Statistics NZ's Business Frame).

Manufacturing	8700 FTE's
Retail Trade	6600 FTE's
Construction	5200 FTE's
Property and Bus Services	4100 FTE's
Education	3000 FTE's

The top five by number of businesses in Waitakere are:

Property and Bus Services	2800 units
Construction	2300 units
Retail Trade	1500 units
Manufacturing	1000 units
Wholesale Trade	680 units

Waitakere is in a regional position, situated as a growing edge city to some major partners, and will never be independent of regional, national, or international trends. We have an historical role as smaller, poorer cousin to larger central cities e.g. North Shore, (pop 185K) Auckland (pop 368K) Manukau (pop 283K), Waitakere (pop 169K). Regionally, Waitakere businesses have echoed national and international trends, with large businesses being sold or relocating overseas.

Locally, those in decline in Waitakere in numbers are manufacturing (worldwide trend) and wine growing (national trend of relocation to more suitable climates and soils). The fastest growing sector is business services, in which we are under-represented but fast catching up. Marine and film are high profile but are not present in large numbers at this stage. Economic development initiatives currently underway support cluster development, e-access initiatives, incubator support and support for small and medium enterprises (SMEs). This work is largely focussed on removing current 'roadblocks' to development, and is being developed in close conjunction with Enterprise Waitakere.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Many commentators now advocate that there is a rationale for government involvement in economic development - roles such as facilitation, advocacy, information sharing, networking, support for public good initiatives, support through the required administrative processes, and support to foster innovation. Provision of local well-paid employment, a critical factor in raising living standards, needs supportive policies from all levels of government.

For consideration by the Council, economic development has been taken to mean the range of economic activity of the private and public sector in Waitakere City, and seeks to place this activity in the context of sustainable development issues.

If we think of development as the level of human intervention compared with the capacity of the resources, sustainable economic development requires the weighing up of many factors of human intervention:

- what land is used i.e. Ranges or countryside;
- what the land is used for i.e. farming, urban, commercial, roads, open space;
- how the building is built i.e. what kind of materials, resource systems such as water and energy;
- what goes on inside the building e.g. toxic or benign;
- and finally who uses the building e.g. skilled input or low value production activity.

In developing a sustainable system, these issues need to be managed alongside the supply and carrying capacity of the resources available:

- water supply, distribution, and disposal;
- supply of materials, energy sources;
- waste disposal, air and water quality;
- and management of unused materials.

Many of these issues are outside direct Council control but some factors have been identified for Council consideration below.

ISSUES

Strategic planning issues

For economic planning, Council needs to be thinking where gains can be made in the short term, the medium term and the long term:

- long term, the northern areas of the city are critical for future provision of desirable commercial and industrial land;
- medium term, areas such as Great North Road and Span Farm which are also very low density in terms of land use and FTE's, could benefit from a process of land use/roading pattern/green space redesign which could have a reasonably quick pay back in terms of fostering existing local businesses and increasing the level of attractiveness of the area for new businesses;
- short term, rapidly developing areas such as Lincoln Road and Central Park Drive will need careful management of what land is left, to gain the full remaining benefits these key arterial routes could provide.

Infrastructure issues

Key strategic transport issues are covered in the Transport paper in this agenda.

Major transport infrastructure assets such as airports, rail, arterial roads, bus access, and motorways are key to providing the desired level of accessibility to attract business. However, a new kind of infrastructure is becoming important for local Councils to address. 'E-access' is a generic term used to indicate the ability of anyone, anywhere in the city, to tap into an IT capacity that meets their needs. This is an area with which Councils have not traditionally been associated, but fast and effective action in this area could well be the critical factor in location decision making for some industries.

"Soft" infrastructure is also recognised as an attractor of businesses. The location of medium sized businesses is strongly influenced by the desirability of the location for the management of those businesses. The quality of local schools and the availability of top class sporting facilities are key factors in this complex area of perception. Currently, the schools in City have a lower decile rating than the income levels of the City's parents. This is caused by the large number of children (estimated at 28%) who leave the City each day for their schooling, which is evidence of the perception of schools that are not "desirable".

Local employment issues

Employment patterns are changing, and employment is not necessarily confined to specific areas - evidence for this is the fact that 40% of local employment is in residential areas e.g. schools, doctors, local shops and services.

Waitakere has a goal of increasing the proportion of the work force which is employed locally from around 40% in 1994 to 60% by 2011. Waitakere's land use and transport policies (home based work options, more intensive residential and business use around Town Centres and in our transport corridors, growing local industries) would appear to be having some influence on employment patterns, as local employment is increasing. However, while the goal of increasing local employment is obviously subject to a range of external factors, overall the requirement of 1400 new jobs per annum to meet this target has seldom been met, and unless we reshape our work programme in this area, is unlikely to be met in the future.

Also, there are indications that the kinds of jobs that are becoming available are not of high quality. The BERL report 2002 figures indicate a growth in the number of businesses and number employed in the city between 1996 and 2001, but also notes that the quality and productivity of the jobs provided is not high. The main growth has been in the service sector, which is not highly paid, does not contribute to 'export' earnings, and does not attract dollars into the city from elsewhere in the region.

To provide an adaptable, responsive, attractive work force, which can respond and adapt to market changes, a well-educated community is needed. Nearly one quarter of Waitakere's working age population and 17.4% of school leavers have no educational qualification. Only 6% of the labour force has a university qualification. Participation in early childhood education (which is an important indicator of learning readiness, academic achievement and labour force productivity) is significantly lower than the national average at 50%. The availability of tertiary education is very limited within the City leading to travel and cost barriers for local students. Research conducted into the Waitakere City labour market in 1999 concluded that the most critical factor in increasing chances of paid employment is education.

Desirable Waitakere issues

Waitakere has lots of very small businesses - typical of most of NZ, 88% less than six people. (85% in Auckland region). Lately there has been considerable publicity about compliance costs for small businesses, and while many of those issues are central government matters, Council may wish to consider what avenues it could pursue to make Waitakere a great place to do business. Isolation from peers, access to information about legislative changes, networking and information about innovation, research and development in their area of interest are all difficult for small firms to keep up with.

In the regular business survey Council does every two years, the latest survey (2001) indicated a trend downwards in the perception of Waitakere as a good place to do business. These figures are outside the margin of error, and are consistent with other measures indicating a reduction in the level of local networking, reduction in satisfaction with Council and a reduction in those who think Council is supportive. It may sound obvious, but those businesses with a positive service level experience with Council rate us more highly than those who did not. While 26% of businesses rate Waitakere City Council higher than neighbouring Councils, the overall levels of approval are not outstanding.

In the survey, businesses were asked to indicate what made Waitakere a good place to do business - these were listed (in ranked order):

- proximity to staff;
- current business premises;
- access to motorway and/or main road;
- proximity to where manager lives;
- closeness to bus stop (82%).

The things that made Waitakere City a poor place to do business were:

- low foot traffic (this mainly from the retail sector);
- low visibility (meaning street design, street scapes, signage issues, not on arterials etc);
- low access to rail (35%).

The same survey also asked businesses what services they would like available through Councils website. Most comments indicated services such as paying fees on line, getting information about plans etc. and some of these services are already available to owners and applicants through the call centre. While the survey rated accessibility of Council quite high, response times and follow-up satisfaction rates were consistently lower. Regulatory services are currently engaged in training, support for non-regulatory incentives schemes, and a publicity campaign to improve this aspect of Council services. (Environmental Management Committee, 12 March 2002).

On average rates are a very minor component of total business costs, although significant for some of the city's small and medium enterprises. The methodology in the Funding Policy calculates the cost to Council of providing services to businesses, which is higher on average than services to residential ratepayers. The Council sets its business differential each year, following adoption of the draft Annual Plan. In 2001/2002 businesses contributed 21% of the rates. If no differential were in place, business sector rates would have contributed around 7%.

Working environment quality issues

A major attractor is our natural environment - access to clean air, clean water, variety of landscapes, proximity to Central Business District, and access to deep water, are all important to businesses. This is a pre-existing condition that needs protecting, particularly if we wish to attract and retain the clean green industries.

Many cities work proactively to support those businesses which actively undertake an accredited environmental management programme. Support can come in a range of formats e.g. Council:

- uses them as preferred suppliers;
- implements a rates reduction programme;
- provides free Cleaner Production advice;
- supports targeted research projects;
- uses them as preferred partners for joint ventures;
- commits as a guaranteed future buyer of products in development etc.

Council currently supports a Cleaner Production programme which assists companies to begin looking at their environmental performance and it is envisaged that some businesses will go onto develop formal Environmental Management System (EMS) or join an accreditation programme. Council could provide more expertise to work with businesses to develop an Environmental Management System of a type that is appropriate to their business. Cleaner Production already does this to some extent as a chargeable service.

Funding for growth issues

Council is currently facing a situation where finding the necessary funding to provide sufficient infrastructure (roads, parks, facilities) is a major financial issue as the city grows rapidly. Strategic use of land already owned, financial contributions, a development company, advocacy and planning, loans and rates support are the current funding mechanisms.

Growth in residential numbers will help to fuel the local economy. While residential growth does carry costs in the immediate term, options to either not grow, or mitigate immediate costs through continued sprawl, have been rejected as options by this Council since 1994, and rejected regionally with the adoption of the Growth Strategy in 1999.

Town Centres are considered to be key economic drivers hence the reason for and value of public investment (Mike Cullen, Town Centre report, January 2002). Most studies indicate that public investment in public areas such as Town Centre design has a range of benefits across social, environmental and economic factors. This growth offers the chance to facilitate sustainable development options as we retrofit older areas, and develop our greenfields areas.

STRATEGIC OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION:

Strategic Planning

For development to take place inside our city, rather than relocating to greenfields elsewhere, Waitakere must plan for and allocate its future growth areas and current residential and business land very intelligently. While the location of future development areas is being done through current programmes, Council also needs to consider how to increase the density of industrial and commercial land use. Land availability for the working environment is now very restricted, and what we have is limited to unattractive areas and small sites. Some of this land has had an increased level of **residential** activity - Council needs to put in place measures which would see higher density **industrial and commercial** land use as well. This work needs to be put in the framework of short to long term economic planning for the city.

Infrastructure

Developing sufficient e-access capacity in Waitakere is currently underway in various departments but is not a major focus of the work programme. We are looking at access (e.g. through libraries), infrastructure (e.g. cable installation on all new and repaired roads), and skills (e.g. training). We are supporting some work to develop community networks, and Enterprise Waitakere is working with business networks and UNITEC. However, from a business perspective, these are not sufficient to put Waitakere at the forefront of IT availability and thus will not act as a major attractor for IT intensive industries.

Other Councils are working energetically to ensure that they can provide the businesses they are targeting with the infrastructure that those businesses need. In order to separate ourselves from the rest of the pack, Council may wish to consider an enabling policy, which acts as a major attractor for high density, knowledge intensive, low environmental impact commercial activities. This could be included in the 'desirable Waitakere' package'.

Council could reaffirm its support for its current approach to integrated planning for local schools and its partnership with the education sector through WEST. Initial investigation of measures that might be taken to promote a positive perception of local schools could also be included in the "desirable Waitakere" package.

Local employment and innovation

The Business Survey 2000 recorded a decline in the level of business networking and linkages. If innovation comes from the exchange of ideas this is a concern for our city.

The role of research centres may be critical to supporting quality and innovative jobs - most overseas experience indicates that jointly supported research centres provide the much-needed first step for small and local businesses to take ideas into commercial reality. Council itself has considerable intellectual capital in the area of sustainable design, community engagement processes, and urban water management and this could be utilised to support initial research and development projects. These needs and ideas offer an opportunity to establish partnerships with local tertiary initiatives.

A study in August 2001 indicated the need for local courses to be targeted to developing clusters e.g. film, marine, possibly organics. Areas identified for training include language, health workers, arts (film, video, scriptwriting etc), financial and business management, and IT technologies. Much of the work of developing targeted courses is underway through Enterprise Waitakere and the Local Employment Committee. This is also consistent with regional economic planning initiatives such as Competitive Auckland and the Regional Economic Development Strategy.

One of the most important roles Council can play in relation to the provision of training and education (to support local employment and innovation) is to ensure that this City gets a fair share of the funding. Rapidly growing areas are often disadvantaged as any population based funding distribution relies on census information that lags behind the reality. Council should investigate options for advocacy to support local institutions including local tertiary initiatives. Options to support developing a skilled local workforce could be incorporated into a proactive programme of actions to support innovation for consideration in September.

Desirable Waitakere

Waitakere City Council needs to continually evaluate and upgrade its services to the private sector. Increasing responsiveness e.g. through key account capacity, continual streamlining of systems and procedures, staff training in a range of skills, one stop shop approaches, support for front counter and public facing staff are all part of developing the image of Waitakere as a desirable place to live and do business.

Our huge database of information on GIS could be used to provide on line support to businesses such as information about properties e.g. size, rates etc, property availability, business trends and land availability. Steps towards this are being implemented through the Economic Development Strategy initiatives.

Council may not wish to consider incentives, but could look at some of our own 'disincentives' inherent in our own structures and systems such as method of payment of financial contributions (could be spread over time), or rates in business areas (in some areas of Henderson main street, rates are higher than the rents). Current disincentives and the rating issue could be explored as part of the 'desirable Waitakere' package of options.

Working environment quality

This means improving the urban environment as well as protecting the Waitakere Ranges, ensuring the quality of urban working environments, and planning for and maintaining green spaces in commercial and industrial areas etc.

There could be special development areas for the city which set environmental guidelines for the businesses that invest in that area. Managing and minimising potential pollution from neighbours is a major issue for commercial enterprises seeking to maintain clean green certifications. Industrial covenants which are basically mutual agreements regarding issues like emission levels, management of waste and use of chemicals for example, are acting as major attractors overseas and are seen as a commercial advantage for the businesses who become part of the agreement. This issue has been discussed in the agenda item on the Northern Strategic Growth Area, which is part of this agenda, but could also be explored as part of the 'desirable Waitakere' package.

As part of the Strategic Review, Council may wish to add measures which track a range of working environment indicators such as working environment quality and density of employment, level of environmental management programmes undertaken by local businesses etc. It is unlikely that these would be headline indicators but would be useful to ensure Council has the information it needs for future planning and policy initiatives.

Funding for growth

Strategic land purchase is potentially a key tool in fostering Waitakere's economic growth by providing support for the Town Centre programme and investment attraction. Council is already preparing in the 2002/2003 Annual Plan to enter into major land purchases in key sites in the city, but a comprehensive policy to guide these and future decisions has not been developed.

One option to enable future economic growth to be funded without increasing the rates burden, is to explore alternative multiple funding mechanisms - e.g. the way we manage financial contributions, specifying special rating areas, investing in key sites, a policy for strategic land purchase and sale where and when required, using a variety of development mechanisms and structures such as partnerships or community corporations for town centres. This is applicable to green fields areas which Council wants to advance, as well as our existing urban hubs.

Council could consider a growth package for business development which could also offer a range of development options, such as development areas supplied with e-access and with negotiated covenants, removal of disincentives, how to be part of the preferred buyer network, initiatives to support desirable Waitakere etc. While some of this work is underway in some degree, investigations to further these options could be brought back as the 'desirable Waitakere' package in September 2002.

RESOURCES

Most resources for this work are included in the allocation for the Strategic Review. However, staff time to investigate a full range of development structures such as Town Centre corporations has not been included in the work programme.

CONCLUSION

Sustainable economic development has many facets to consider, and this report has put before Council for consideration those in some measure of Council influence or control, i.e. strategic planning, infrastructure, local employment, working environment quality, desirable Waitakere initiatives and funding options to support growth and innovation.

It is suggested that a 'funding for growth package' and a 'desirable Waitakere package' be developed with key stakeholders and partners as part of the ongoing Strategic Review work and brought back to Council for consideration in September 2002.

Overall, Waitakere is pursuing business development options that are consistent with current thinking. The challenge is that everyone else will be following similar strategies, and the particular challenge for Waitakere will be to differentiate itself from the pack with targeted, imaginative, and innovative actions consistent with Ecocity principles.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the information be received.
2. That Council endorse the current direction to support sustainable economic development in the city.
3. That Council consider a prioritised 'funding for growth package' with a range of options to facilitate funding of development at the 17 September 2002, Special Council Strategic Review (eco city + 10) meeting.

4. That Council consider a 'desirable Waitakere' package focussed on business needs for consideration at the 17 September 2002, Special Council Strategic Review (eco city + 10) meeting.
5. That Council consider what roles it wishes to play in supporting innovation and knowledge development in the city.

Report prepared by: Cathy Kenkel, Strategic Leader.

