



*Sustaining the Auckland Region Together*  
Sustaining the Auckland Region Together

## A Workshop to Design the Auckland Region's Future Aotea Centre, 23 – 25 August, 2006

### Summary of Proceedings

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*This report has been prepared as a record of discussions held as part of the START – Sustaining the Auckland Region Together project. It reflects a range of views and does not necessarily represent official positions of the organisations involved.*

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The Auckland region faces substantial challenges and choices in the coming decades, around issues as diverse as infrastructure provision, social cohesion, international competitiveness and our underlying environmental stability. New technologies, climate change, population growth, and the increasing demand on the planet's natural systems are generating new and unpredictable situations, and will bring further challenges and opportunities that we can't yet foresee.

The START (Sustaining the Auckland Region Together) programme is the region's first comprehensive response to the challenges and choices that face us. The programme is designed to build a clearer understanding of what is necessary to secure a more sustainable future for the Auckland region. It will develop an overarching framework for regional planning and decision-making, a framework that will promote coordinated strategies and prioritised decisions for the long-term sustainability and resilience of the region. START is a collective effort between the eight local authorities in the region and central government agencies. It is drawing on considerable expertise from the business, community and research sectors.

The START *Workshop to Design the Auckland Region's Future* was a significant milestone in the START programme and a key input to developing the long-term framework. The aim of the workshop was to bring together a wide range of expertise for three days of focussed work on integrating the range of factors that must combine to build a sustainable region. The issues and opportunities raised in the workshop will inform the framework and associated package of regional responses.

Around 140 people participated in the workshop, including Ministers, Mayors and Councillors, senior officials from local and central government, academics, community representatives, business sector leaders and urban planning professionals. It built on extensive work already undertaken as part of START, including papers identifying the potential impact of six 'forces of change' and examining seven 'themes' or critical issues for the region.

The following report is a synopsis of the workshop's activities and the messages, issues and opportunities that emerged. Key messages that came out of the workshop include:

- The central importance of people in any move towards a more sustainable region.
- The need for a collective, powerfully articulated vision, and a 'common language', particularly around how we define the challenges of sustainability.
- The effect of applying different time scales in decision-making. Generally concern for the individual elicits a short-term response while responding to ecological health demands a much longer-term view. Both scales should be taken into account.
- The need to work at different spatial scales, from site to neighbourhood to region, and to understand the interdependencies between the scales. Some activities are better undertaken locally, whilst others benefit from the efficiencies of a regional scale. This was reflected in participants' ideas such as 'a single region of unique identities', and 'regional governance frameworks for local action'.
- The value of continuing the regional conversation about long-term sustainability, and the need to take the conversation deeper into organisations and wider into the community.

Participants strongly endorsed the idea of a sustainability framework for the region and identified a range of strategic directions and potential catalyst actions to move the region forward. The workshop put a particular emphasis on people and the social landscape, resilient infrastructure, urban form, ecological networks, and applying new tools for planning and decision-making.

**In the context of START, sustainable development means creating a prosperous and liveable world-class city region that respects the ecology that supports us, and has resilient infrastructure and systems which are able to adapt to change over the long-term.**

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## Background

The Auckland region faces substantial challenges and choices in the coming decades, around issues as diverse as infrastructure provision, social cohesion, and our underlying environmental stability. New technologies, climate change, population growth, and the increasing demand on the planet's natural systems are generating new and unpredictable situations, and will bring further challenges and opportunities that we can't yet foresee.

If the Auckland region is to have a sustainable future, we need to strike a balance between our environmental, economic, social and cultural needs, and find smarter, more efficient ways of meeting those needs. We need to build the resilience of our systems, and our capacity to plan in the face of an uncertain future. Yet sometimes it can be hard to find the momentum to make change – especially where the challenges are complex, and demand that we find new ways of working.

The START programme is working to develop an agreed understanding of what is necessary to secure a more sustainable future for the Auckland region, and identify practical steps towards that objective. It is a collective effort between the eight local authorities in the region and central government agencies. The programme is drawing on considerable expertise from the business, community and research sectors.

START's purpose is to develop an overarching framework for regional planning and decision-making. The framework will provide a vision and high-level goals to stretch planning horizons and provide clear direction for achieving a long-term sustainable Auckland region. It will also provide principles to guide regional decision-making and identify priority directions for the region to take. Collectively the framework will promote a holistic approach in which social, economic and environmental aspects are considered in decision-making, while at the same time coordinating and aligning local and central government effort. It is envisaged that the framework will become a sounding board to engage decision-makers within the civic and business sectors.

The START project is not a comprehensive long-term plan for the region. Whilst it may identify catalyst actions for achieving its goals, its primary function is to develop a unifying framework within which regional strategies and plans can be developed and reviewed. The framework will be presented to the eight councils and the Regional Growth Forum for endorsement from November 2006. Subject to endorsement, a series of action plans and strategy alignments will follow.

### **Box 1: Sustainable Development**

The NZ Sustainable Development Programme of Action<sup>1</sup> defines sustainable development as:

*development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Achieving sustainable development involves a different way of thinking and working. It requires:*

- looking after people
- taking the long-term view
- taking account of the social, economic, environmental and cultural effects of our decisions
- encouraging participation and partnerships.<sup>7</sup>

In the context of START, sustainable development means creating a prosperous and liveable world class city region that respects the ecology that supports us, and has resilient infrastructure and systems which are able to adapt to change over the long-term.

<sup>1</sup> Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (2003). *Sustainable Development for New Zealand: Programme of Action*. Wellington: DPMC.

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## The purpose of the START Workshop

The *START Workshop to Design the Auckland Region's Future*, held 23-25 August, 2006, was a key input into developing a sustainability framework for the Auckland region.

The aim of the workshop was to bring together a range of expertise and perspectives to work together on exploring the many elements that might contribute to a sustainable region and how these elements interact. The issues and opportunities raised in the workshop will inform the framework and associated package of regional responses. The workshop was intended to be just one of many inputs to the START process.

The START workshop deliberately used some of the concepts and techniques of design charrettes. A design charrette is an interactive planning process that harnesses the talents of a range of parties to resolve planning challenges. Design workshops are an effective way for addressing complex problems as they bring different perspectives to the table and integrate strategic elements and ideas together. However, unlike a typical design charrette the intended output of the START workshop was material to be further worked up for inclusion in the START framework under development, rather than a set of detailed drawings and plans for a specific built or spatial development.

Sebastian Moffatt, a consultant who has led the development of similar sustainable infrastructure exercises for cities in North America and Asia and pioneered innovative ecological approaches to urban planning, facilitated the content of the workshop.

## What we did

The START workshop was held over three days, from the 23 – 25<sup>th</sup> August, 2006. The timing of the workshop was arranged to coincide with the Digital Earth Summit on Sustainability so that the international experts and the Youth Visioning work associated with the Summit could be incorporated.

The workshop was made up of a series of presentations, interactive activities and report backs. Around 140 people participated in various ways over the three days, including Ministers, Mayors and Councillors, senior officials from local and central government, academics, community representatives, business sector leaders and urban planning professionals. The following is a synopsis of the workshop's activities and the subsequent themes, issues and opportunities that emerged.



## Initial inputs into the design workshop and framework

A prototype of the framework, papers on six forces of change, and seven theme papers were developed prior to the workshop and the prototype and theme papers were sent to all workshop participants. This work formed the foundation content of the workshop.

### The START Prototype

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A prototype of the Sustainability Framework was developed based on the Vancouver Cities<sup>PLUS</sup> model (figure 1). It builds on an Adaptive Management Framework to develop a regional planning system that will be responsive and resilient to change over time. This has provided a starting point or prototype for what will eventually become a distinctive and original framework tailored to the specific needs and context of the Auckland region.

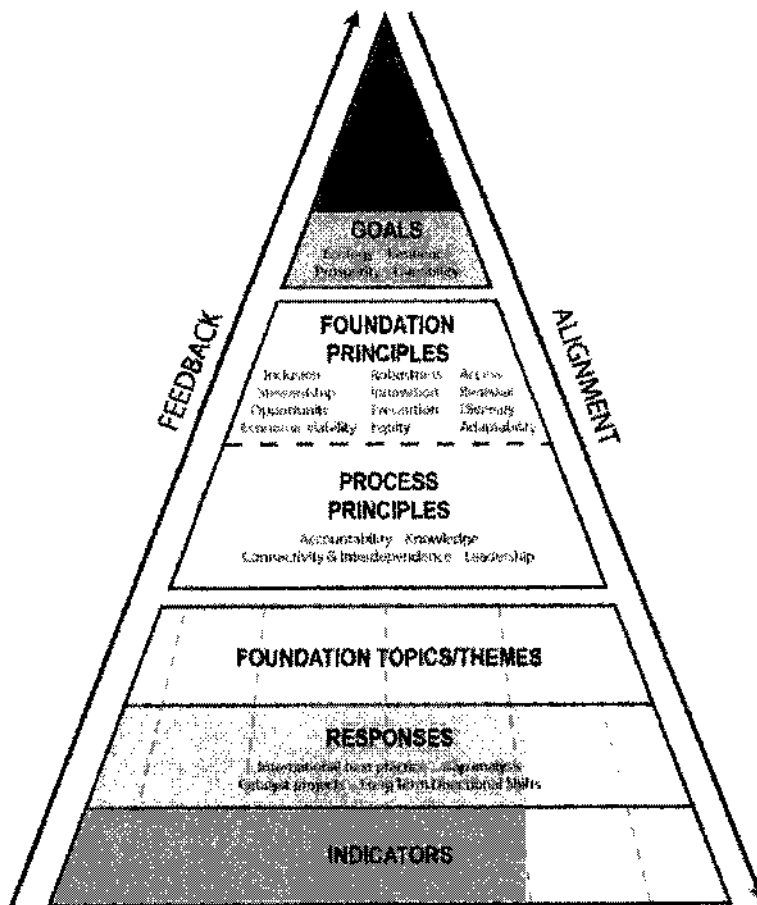
**The Forces of Change papers**

A range of forces will inevitably shape cities over the next 100 years. While it is impossible to say exactly how these forces will transform society, understanding these forces, and their potential impact on the Auckland region is an important precursor to developing a sustainability framework. Papers were developed on the following forces: Technological Transformations, Demographics, Climate Change/ Natural Hazards, Resource Availability, Globalisation and Worldviews.

**The Theme papers**

Seven 'theme papers' were prepared by expert groups, including academics and experts from the business and community sectors. The papers consider a range of critical issues for the region, namely: The built environment, urban form and infrastructure, energy, economic transformation, social development, cultural diversity and community cohesion, environmental quality.

The theme and forces papers are important contributions towards the final framework, providing draft end state goals, issues and opportunities and catalyst actions for each theme. The full papers on the forces and the themes can be accessed from [www.arc.govt.nz/arc/auckland-region/start/](http://www.arc.govt.nz/arc/auckland-region/start/)



**Figure 1. Draft Framework**

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## Day One: Taking the long term view – legacies and leadership

The aim of day one was to reflect on the findings of the forces and theme papers, and then identify elements of a regional vision and strategic directions the region should take.

Sebastian Moffatt introduced the day with three themes: thinking long-term, regional urban design and an introduction to time tools. He argued that the impacts of our decisions are getting longer, while the time horizons available to decision makers are shrinking (see fig. 2).

The presentation then turned to the opportunity for the region to mirror successful ecosystems by understanding how the relationships between the short and long-lived elements of an ecosystem are key determinants of overall resilience. The short-lived elements can respond quickly to changes in the environment, while the long-lived elements provide overall stability and collective memory (see figure 3).

Participants were encouraged to think of how our planning time scales change depending on whether plans are concerned with the wellbeing of individuals, communities or whole ecologies. Generally concern for the individual elicits a short-term response while responding to ecological health demands a much longer-term view. We need to remain cognisant of all these times scales for regional planning (see figure 4).

The opening session also explored two different approaches to decision-making: the technical top down approach which begins with goals and then works out strategies and actions, and the political approach which responds to issues as they arise and then shapes up into actions and strategies. Successful long-term planning needs to marry rational planning with political reality. The political sphere brings to the surface topical issues, while the rational method providing the bigger picture and the logic of "where are we going and how do we get there" (see figures 5 and 6 below).

Figure 2:

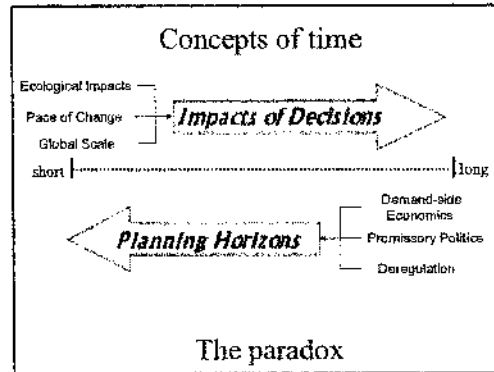


Figure 3:

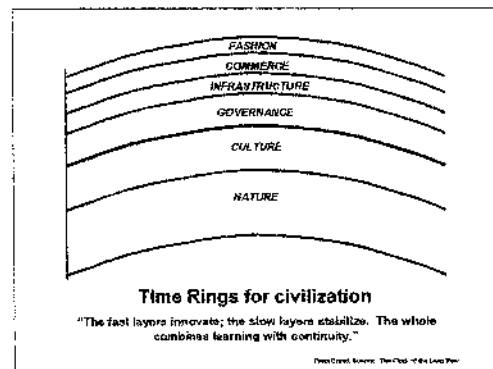
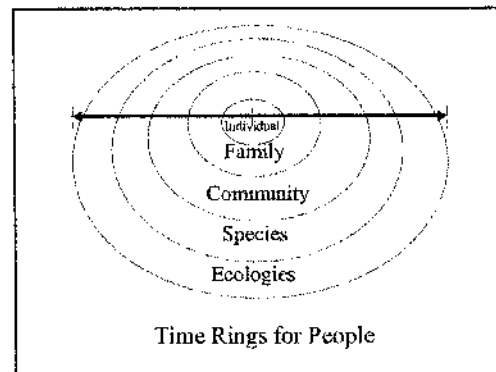
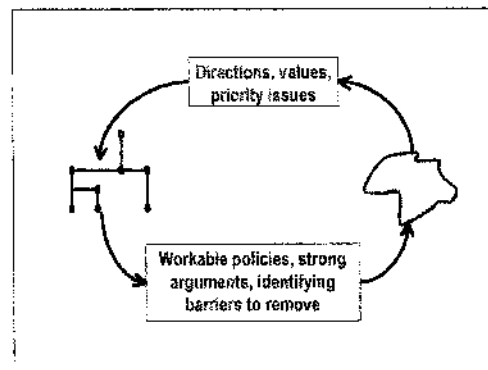
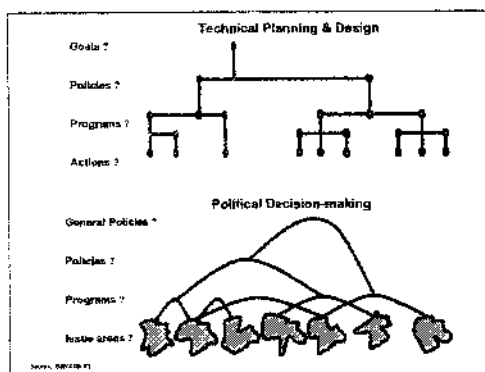


Figure 4:



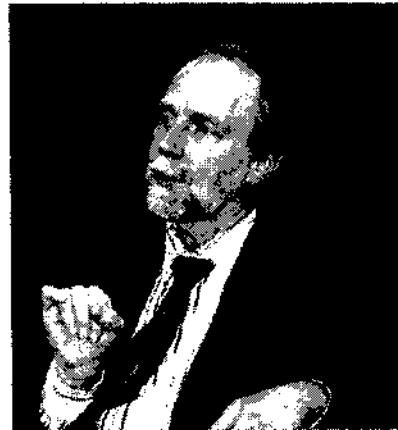
Figures 5 and 6:



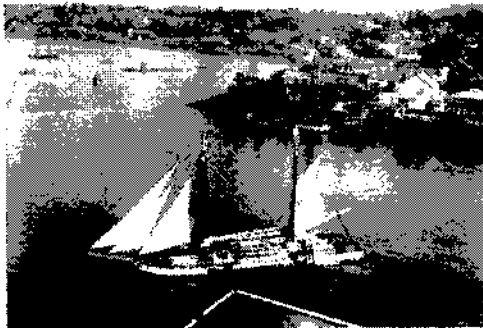
The introduction then turned to the subject of regional urban design and two ways of looking at regions:

1. As a spatial system – a morphological two dimensional system (the planners' view)
2. As an organism - an urban metabolism that requires continual feeding through flows of energy and goods into the city (the engineers' view).

For cities to be successful, both planning approaches need to be brought together and that it is imperative that specialists from all fields are able to speak across their areas of speciality and build the components of regional planning collectively.



Sebastian Moffatt



### **Looking back to look forwards**

Historian Graeme Murdoch provided a snapshot of the last 120 years of the region. His reflections highlighted that while the region we live in today was shaped by our forbears' decisions, those same people could not have imagined the exponential change our region has since experienced or the society we live in today. This holds true for the future.

### **Envisioning the future**

The conversation on future thinking and regional planning led into an exercise envisioning the future and the importance of having a collective powerfully articulated vision. Visions should be inspirational tools, which use provocative and imaginative language to set new directions, provide clarity and reflect paradigm shifts.

Participants identified what they valued about the region (Box 2) and then went on to individually describe their vision for the future. These were collated and developed into a draft vision (below).

#### **Box 2: What we value in Auckland**

Auckland's natural assets including the volcanoes, the three Harbours, the bush clad ranges, coastlines and beaches are a point of distinction for the region and a critical contribution to Aucklanders quality of life.

The diversity of Auckland's people is considered a strength and source of ideas, perspectives and innovation. The large numbers of different ethnic groups in Auckland make an important contribution by building community and identity, and are recognised as adding vibrancy and a point of difference to the region. Recognition of the importance of Maori is seen as central to Auckland's identity.

Aucklanders are identified as being tolerant and inclusive, however, more effort is necessary to ensure that people are connected to their own neighbourhoods, and that there is strong community cohesion. Aucklanders are involved in a range of community activities and increasingly communities are developing their own programmes and initiatives, and want more localised decision-making.

Auckland is seen as being a vibrant, energetic cosmopolitan city, while still retaining the strengths of a smaller city including access to a great natural environment. The vibrancy is demonstrated by the huge variety of events, festivals and celebrations, the acceptance of other cultures, the innovation and arts sectors, as well as our unique cultural heritage. Much of New Zealand's uniqueness is reflected in Auckland.

## Day one draft vision

**Auckland is our home. With its diversity of cultures, lifestyles and landscapes, it is the most attractive city in the world**

- 1 Welcoming: Auckland is a welcoming place for newcomers and visitors.
- 2 Prosperous and generous: Auckland has a strong and innovative economy that provides opportunity and a good living for everyone.
- 3 Respectful: Aucklanders are connected to their past and respect the traditions and history of tangata whenua and other cultures.
- 4 Safe: Auckland is renowned as being a safe place to live and grow up.
- 5 Smart: Aucklanders are well educated, well informed, and never stop learning.
- 6 Caring: Aucklanders are compassionate and caring.
- 7 Identity: Aucklanders have diverse identities, and are proud to live in Auckland.
- 8 Engagement: Aucklanders are engaged in decisions around the future of Auckland.
- 9 Families: Auckland is a place where families of all sorts are valued and nurtured.
- 10 Conscious: Aucklanders are conscious of the impact of their lifestyles on society and the environment, and live these values out.
- 11 Connectedness: Aucklanders are well connected to each other and the rest of the world.
- 12 Interesting, fun, and exciting: Auckland is a place with lots to do and plenty of action to attract people.
- 13 Accessibility: Auckland is barrier free and Aucklanders can get around without a car. Local communities are walkable and worth walking around.
- 14 Blue and green: Auckland is renowned for the cleanest water and best green spaces in the world.
- 15 Centres: Urban Auckland is a city of strong local centres and small towns.

The key concept that emerged for workshop participants was the importance of creating a sense that Auckland is our "home". The need for the regional community, the majority of whom were born outside of Auckland, to be connected to this place and committed to its long-term future, was seen as being essential to the future wellbeing of the city/region.

Comments on the draft vision were wide-ranging: some people liked it, and some found it too long with too much jargon. In general there was a call for something universal that would connect with people of all ages including the ability to appeal to younger generations. The feedback will be incorporated into a refined vision for the sustainability framework.



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## The challenges of getting there

The six forces of change and the seven theme papers were presented highlighting the challenges and opportunities ahead of us. Some of the insights that emerged from the papers and presentations are as follows:

1. That to achieve great things we will need inspiration, collaboration and attitude. This would translate into a shared vision, joined up thinking and systems planning and a culture that is high in expectations, and strives for efficiency, effectiveness and accountability.
2. It will not be enough to just maintain our current status. Auckland will need to enhance environmental, social and economic wellbeing to ensure resilience. This will require bold action.
3. Planning isn't about a particular future, it's about maintaining options. We need to build in resilience. It is also important to remain optimistic and to view our challenges as opportunities.
4. We have often ignored the hard parts of the picture especially its complexity and linkages. These include: social polarization, housing affordability, dependency on oil and lack of a unique Auckland identity. The way forward is through a collaborative joined up approach.
5. The Auckland region's struggle to make complex and integrated decisions has been posed as a serious weakness in our present governance structure. An alternative governance framework may be one that provides for strategic and large-scale decisions at a regional level with greater scope for localised decision-making for small scale and service delivery functions.
6. A shift to a sustainable future for Auckland will challenge us to examine our expectations and change the way we think about costs and investment . This will require significant effort in refocusing hearts and minds from individual and short-term interest to ones based on legacy and community.
7. We are reaching infrastructure investment thresholds that have long-term implications. This raises issues of the scale at which we make investments and how we make them in a joined up way. There are significant funding challenges and we have to choose what we don't or can't do.
8. One of the biggest sustainability challenges we face is the future of suburbs – old and new. This challenge not only involves the re-development and re-engineering of existing suburbs but also the re-connection of marginalised suburbs to the urban core.
9. Emphasis on equity particularly for marginalised people and communities will need to be made through a clear focus on building strong social institutions in a physical place.

Theme presenters were asked to comment on the key challenges their groups faced in developing the papers. A selection of some responses is summarised in Box 3 below. Each theme presentation was opened to the floor for critique and discussion. This stimulated interesting debate. One participant commented that the social development group had not defined success – was it about materialistic wealth or something broader. There was also a suggestion that changing language can be an important element in empowering people. For example, the term “vulnerable groups” creates specific connotations that are often unhelpful.

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### Box 3: Key Challenges for the Expert Groups

"We have to take bold actions and forget all those little actions we have been taking. The economic transformation group's challenge was around whether to have a top down or bottom up approach - should we focus on deprivation or focus on making Auckland a place people want to invest?"

*Arthur Grimes presenting on the Economic Transformation paper*

"A key challenge the energy group faced was while there was consensus that renewables was the way of the future there was disagreement within the theme group on the way to get there - whether we penalise the bad, subsidise the good or do both."

*Robert Kirkpatrick presenting on the Energy paper*

"The first challenge was whether we should focus on anthropocentric values or intrinsic values for the environment. The other challenge was the tension between separating things out so we can look at each part separately, while still seeing the integrated system."

*Maggie Lawton presenting the Environmental Quality paper*



### Setting strategic directions

The forces and theme papers threw up many possibilities. The workshop's role was to begin to narrow these down into an achievable package of responses. The first step was to identify a first cut of strategic directions. Strategic directions are neither outcomes nor actions; rather they are directional pathways to secure our vision. They needed to be imagined as headlines – compelling statements that are specific enough to talk to people and create momentum. These "headline directions" (box 4) were developed in groups and then synthesised into an initial first cut by the workshop team.

### Box 4: Draft Headline Directions

- The environment is integral to our decision-making
- People & places are resilient
- A single region of unique identities
- Quality spaces & special places
- Safe & secure communities
- Smart connectivity happens @ every turn
- Timeless buildings fit for our environment
- Learning is our middle name – excellence & inclusion.
- Housing works for working families
- Local business makes sustainability Auckland's competitive edge
- Regional governance frameworks for local action

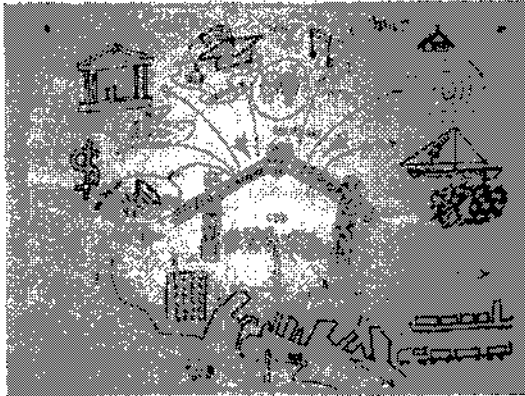
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## Day Two: Testing the concepts

### Exercise one - place based developments

The purpose of the place-based exercises was to ground and test the draft headline directions and the learnings to date on practical examples of localized development. Each of the 10 groups chose one of four locations, New Lynn town centre, Takanini, Oratia and the Auckland CBD. Their tasks were to set a vision for that location, test whether the draft headline directions helped determine actions, and consider the appropriate scales for decision-making.

#### Summaries for each case study



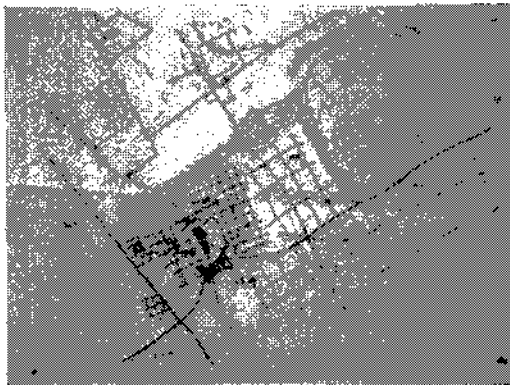
#### New Lynn

New Lynn town centre is a significant business and community centre in Waitakere City. Previous planning charrettes and visioning processes in the 90's set in train a vision of a mixed-use centre with creative development of some large manufacturing sites such as Crown Lynn ceramics.

Two teams addressed New Lynn's future development, the first team adopting a multi-layered approach building up from existing landscape features to identifying rail and bus hubs, to an activity plan (shown left)

establishing precincts, together creating a key self-sufficient and sustainable business centre.

The second team developed a future plan building over the rail line, centralising shopping and walking areas, developing parks around creeks and streams, and improving accessibility.



#### Takanini

Takanini in Papakura District is a place in transition, with some large residential development sites adjoining the main trunk rail line and southern motorway. Light industrial business areas are scattered along Great South Road, the land is flat with a peaty soil posing drainage problems. Because of the rail station the area is amenable to transit related medium density housing adjoining the station and modest town centre.

The first of two teams incorporated 8 of the headline directions into a plan for Takanini shown left, introducing a major green link and water features from an active recreation park across to the Manukau inlet, realignment of the rail line for a new station and over-bridge, higher density living around the station and new schools as hubs for local areas beyond (shown left).

The second group addressed all headlines in a comprehensive plan with a new centre to the east of a new station, new medium density housing around regenerated wetlands.



#### Oratia

This area in Waitakere City is an example of a metropolitan urban edge alongside rural farmland with the Waitakere Ranges beyond. With a history of agricultural and horticultural innovation, the area is under pressure from peri-urban development, which is affecting identity, landscape, economy and community. Questions arise about how to retain character and landscape values, and the protection and function of rural communities and ecosystems.

All

Two teams addressed a vision for Oratia. One team utilised seven headline directions, drawing on a theme of 'mandala' or a place of meditation and mediation and a community meeting place (shown left).

The other group drew on all 11 directions, identifying connectivity as the main function of the area, for instance through transit links, encouragement of conservation, importance of local business and economy, and the establishment of 'eco-villages' and rural lifestyle.

### **Auckland CBD**

Four groups, who utilised most of the directions in ways that highlighted some common key themes, addressed the future of the CBD. The CBD was a place to live as well as to do business; with a number of distinct functional precincts being identified e.g. learning, commerce, leisure, residential, cultural. There would be housing at many scales, identifying neighbourhoods that were distinctive (shown left).



The barriers of the encircling motorways would be tackled and the first ring of suburbs beyond better connected to the 'heart' of the centre. The port and tank storage functions were generally scaled back or removed and the port land used for city parks and beaches to return the city to the people for leisure. Ferry transport would provide water-based connectivity and link to a significantly extended public transport network.



### **Conclusions on headline directions**

Generally the headline directions were found to be useful for providing a foundation for location strategies and for framing responses. Participants found the range of headlines helped broaden the lens within which they were considering their planning exercise, with the cross cutting direction "Smart Connectivity" being particularly useful.

Feedback on improving headlines included the desire to strengthen the focus on social issues particularly with regards to creating an inclusive society and addressing poverty. It was felt that the headline directions required more stretch, that they needed to speak to the longer term while at the same time provide clearer definition. It was felt that housing should address everyone not just working families and there should be more direction on the built environment & urban design. It was also suggested that the headlines should include a paradigm shift to understanding and living within our environment, and that learning and education are different concepts and need to be unbundled.

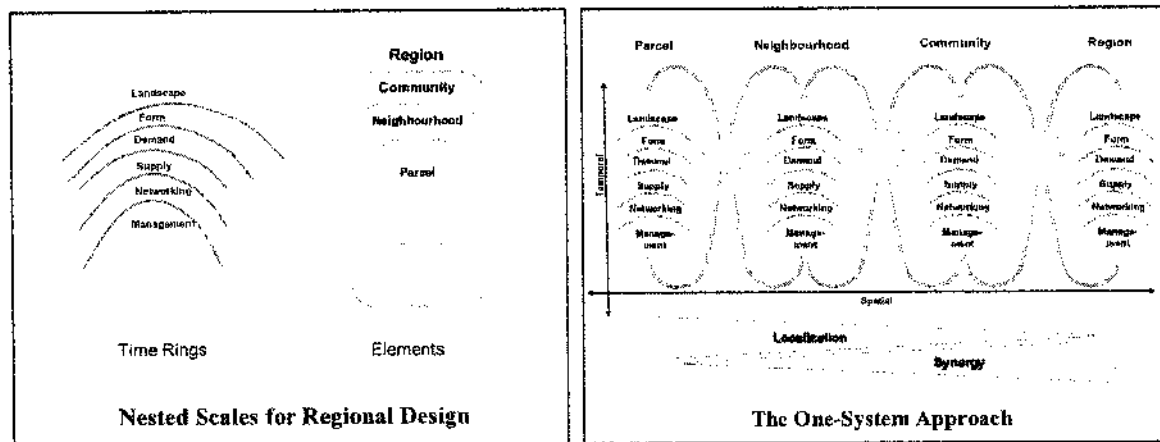
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## Exercise two - Concepts of scale

Responses to the challenges set by the headline directions can be addressed at different levels or scales within the region i.e. at the broad regional scale, at the scale of the community or neighbourhood, and at the individual parcel (or site) level. In many cases actions may be required at all three levels. Responses can also be considered within different time scales (see figures 7 and 8).

The scale exercise began with three large groups of participants exploring one of three relevant regional resource topics – energy, water, and resources (including waste). Each group was to identify the issues around their topic relevant to the region, then break into three smaller groups, each of whom constructed an argument around which scale was best suited to address the particular resource issue within the region: parcel/site, neighbourhood/community, or region.

Figures 7 and 8:



Some key principles and ideas that came out of the exercise were:

- A recognition that there is a lot that can be achieved at the parcel and neighbourhood level – more than might at first be expected.
- A regional level response is also essential and that there is a need for larger scale response.
- How any particular problem is defined will usually determine the scale of response. When considering the scale of response it is therefore useful to consider: can the problem be redefined?
- The different scales have an interdependent relationship. The ability to respond more locally can be improved or diminished depending on the regional response, and regional responses similarly will often depend on community and parcel level response or uptake.

Broad labels such as “waste” can also reduce the ability to respond to a problem at the appropriate scale. For example, green waste may be very effectively handled at the parcel level, but toxic waste will always need a larger scale response. The choice of scale changed depending on the specific type of waste being addressed. Similarly the term waste defines the response; a completely different solution may be sought if the word “waste” becomes “resource”.

Apart from the lively and compelling arguments and rebuttals that the debate produced, the exercise demonstrated very effectively the notion of different scales of working and intervention. It also demonstrated that many actions require the cooperation of activity across at least 2 scales in order to be delivered effectively.

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*“The scale model works well for social issues - issues affect individuals, groups, society in different ways and we have to understand this”*

*“We need local solutions which resonate with local people but are integrated to build the whole”*

## Central and Local Government Meeting

On the afternoon of day two a concurrent session was held with political representatives and senior officials from local and central government. The purpose of the meeting was to engage with senior officials and the Minister of Economic Development, with a particular focus on achieving strong alignment between the START framework and the Metro project (the high profile action plan developed from the Auckland Regional Economic Development Strategy).

The context for the discussion was the clear recognition that the Auckland region's success is critical to New Zealand's success, and this has important implications for the core planks of the Government's programme – economic transformation, national identity, and families, young and old. The discussion recognised the momentum that is underway in Auckland and highlighted that many of the building blocks for a sustainable region are already in place. The START project is an opportunity to take a long-term perspective on the range of activities already underway, and to develop a coherent, overarching long-term framework to take the region forward.

## Day Three: Integration and reporting

### Regional planning exercise

On the morning of day three ideas relating to regional planning and catalyst actions were introduced to the group.

A catalyst was defined as the addition of any substance that accelerates a change that is already occurring without modifying any of the essential elements. Within the regional context this would equate to identifying the positive trends or activities taking place within the region and asking how these can be accelerated. An analogy of 'urban acupuncture' was used – finding the pressure points where some intervention can resonate much wider.

The presentation and discussion traversed three main themes: systems thinking, cultural and social aspects of the city, and the role of the network in driving change and resilience.

#### Systems thinking

Successful systems thinking demands a recognition that built systems survive a long time, whilst other systems have much shorter timeframes. For example, transport routes generally last at least 100 years but the technology of vehicles and fuel changes every 12 years or so. Long term regional planning therefore requires attention to designing systems and interconnections that are flexible enough to accommodate differing transitions.

The city/region can be conceptualised as a system similar to a living body. A human body mainly consists of "largely independent cells that agree to work together" with differing levels of health. Similarly, within an urban planning context it is possible to identify healthy and unwell cells which are part of the wider organism of the city whole. Focussing pressure on the unwell cells can be conceptualised as urban acupuncture.

Successful systems thinking also requires the recognition that even today the majority of the city/region is in rural land-use (the Auckland region is still approximately 85% non-urban land). This land provides essential services to the city including: a choice of lifestyles, environmental and ecological functionality that the city depends upon and a buffer with tremendous diversity. How we manage the relationship between the urban and rural components of the city is a key factor in the overall health of the city/region.

#### Cultural and social aspects of the city

The city's built form reflects a society's view of the world, and as our cultural identities and world view transform, this will be reflected in our built environment. At the same time the elements of cities that have enduring relevance and quality need to be preserved. This becomes a collective memory and over time becomes an important determinant in a city's overall success.

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## The role of the network in driving change and resiliency

It was argued that the key to the future resilience of cities lies in utilising and harnessing the opportunities arising from a more networked city. The combination of intelligent networks that are able to share information and respond together, the right price signals, and flexible policies could allow cities to move away from hierarchical, centralised systems into more organised self-regulating networks.

The exercise undertaken by the groups at this stage was to take all the work and discussion from the previous two and a half days of the charrette and then design a high level plan for the region which utilised at least one catalytic action to achieve its aims. The plan was described through the use of maps and drawings. The exercise also incorporated the headline directions to test that the plan had various levels of integration. Some of the catalyst actions which emerged from this exercise are listed below.



## Reflections

Participants were asked to provide ideas on moving START forward after the workshop. These are a summary of people's responses.

**Maintain the networks and conversations.** This could be achieved through creating a communications forum and/or a platform for collaboration on catalyst projects.

**Disseminate information, ideas and insights.** Take the ideas, papers and methods back to our organisations and pass on.

**Change the thinking in organisations.** Develop a common language; provide tools e.g. systems thinking, which would include integrating sustainability concepts into decision-making.

**Begin by doing.** Agree on the framework, set clear choices and strong directions and be action-oriented with goals and KPIs. Each organisation identifies its contribution to START, begin to implement at the local level and integrate into community initiatives. Collectively identify key decisions for the region that are coming up and influence them to ensure sustainable goals are achieved.

**Provide leadership.** There was consensus that strong leadership would be needed to take START and the vision of a sustainable future for the region forward. Comments on leadership included the need for visionary leaders in the government, business and community sectors who take risks, ask tough questions, and are resilient and coordinated in decision-making whilst shifting community expectations towards the longer term. Central government buy-in was seen as critical.

## Catalyst actions to move the region forward

One of the intentions of the workshop was to generate ideas for some catalyst projects that might be helpful in galvanising energy and action towards the long term vision of the START framework. The following list emerged from the regional planning exercise and the reflections exercise. Perhaps not surprisingly given the preliminary nature of the workshop, the ideas generated are more in the way of potential pathways and directions towards longer term sustainable development. This work will be become an input into the framework along with

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the actions provided in the theme papers and other regional work-streams such as the METRO project, which has generated some specific actions for transforming Auckland's economic performance and international attractiveness.

**Focus on people first.**

Design using the concept of a social landscape. Identify and establish processes for reducing concentrations of deprived communities. Establish affordable housing policies and improve ways we can connect people and communities.

**100% renewable future with a focus on community / parcel scale infrastructure**

Covering water, energy and material this initiative would emphasise solutions at the household and community scale whilst ensuring that regional and national decisions enable and support this.

**Invest in resilient infrastructure**

Use natural systems and process in the design and renewal of infrastructure. Invest in energy infrastructure to improve security of supply and, as outlined above, have access to a higher proportion of renewable energy, local generation and demand management. Ensure infrastructure investments are designed collectively through developing one plan for the region's infrastructure.

**Increase Research and Development**

Much in line with Metro, develop world class R and D facilities with the additional focus on developing sustainable technologies both for enhancing regional infrastructure and resource management and also to create a world leading industry sector.

**Instigate new sustainability tools for planning and decision-making**

Systems thinking, demand side management.

**Changing urban form**

One suggestion was to develop the region along a rail spine stretching from Whangarei to Hamilton using the concept of a polycentric urban form. Develop rapid transit systems along and to this spine. Other suggestions were to:

- Create self contained clusters in areas where people want to live;
- Build on current areas that are well established and make them strong cores ensuring they are well networked;
- Look at energy and water opportunities and consider where new development could be located to harness these.

A continuation of wide spread urban expansion seemed to have little support – the key issues were around making what we have work better, be more robust and liveable.

**Extension of the Blue and Green Networks in the Region**

Develop a network of green and blue networks throughout the region. Increase protected areas within the region (versus without) to protect and enhance ecological systems, green spaces for people and walkable transit corridors. Develop creative public/private protection mechanisms.

**Celebrate Identity**

Development and promotion of local flavours and strengths and a regional identity. Create and enhance distinctive built and natural landscapes in every community. Protect and celebrate Auckland's natural and cultural heritage.



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### **Greater collaboration between universities and government**

Increase collaboration between local and central government, universities and CRIs. more research and development on sustainability and regional development solutions and trends. This could include: collaborative research and feasibility projects on sustainable design; research to generate ways to facilitate changes in attitudes and behaviours; and universities to engage with inner city communities to rethink the future.

### **Other catalyst actions include:**

- Alternative systems in primary schools to provide Maori world views and values alongside Western and universal knowledge;
- Tourism Auckland to focus on increasing quality of visitor experience rather than just growing numbers;
- Iwi focus on the Kaipara with a cultural renaissance based on energy – wind and tide – linked to the network.

### **Final session debrief**

In the final afternoon session, several speakers who had attended the charrette gave their interpretation of what they had taken away from the event and their overall impressions. The short presentations were made to both workshop attendees and guests including the Minister for Auckland, the Hon Judith Tizard, Auckland region Mayor's and Councillors, senior central government officers and deputy secretaries, and Digital Earth conference speakers and specialists.

Virtually all the speakers emphasised high level of enthusiasm for the workshop and a belief that it had been a unique and special opportunity. Below is a summary of a few of the presentations that were made.

Mark Farnsworth, chair of the Northland District Council, led the session by saying he believed that START could be a powerful integrating framework to guide the region's development over the coming century, but stressed the need for a cooperative mandate to move it forward. He said, "A key catalytic requirement to advance START is a governance regime that is committed to long term thinking and strategic planning, in a collaborative and cooperative manner."

Environment Waikato's Chief Executive, Bill Bayfield, endorsed Mr. Farnsworth's comments, expressing enthusiasm about the charrette process and the general direction that START appeared to be taking the Auckland region. He underscored that whatever happens in Auckland obviously has important consequences for the surrounding regions.

Phillip Patston of Diversity Works, a consultancy that provides services with respect to understanding diversity and change, spoke about how the charrette had re-inspired his commitment to "designing social landscapes", the idea that it is possible design communities people want to live in.

He also spoke about the importance of the region's leaders becoming comfortable with diversity and change, and that leadership in particular needed to be familiar with dealing with diverse groups of people who may have interests different to those people who were present at the charrette. He argued that part of the challenge for the region's leaders was becoming "comfortable with discomfort" in this regard.

Peter Sykes of the Mangere Families Centre said he represented those people at the parcel and neighbourhood level, and that he felt the workshop had been very useful in developing a common language between people working with change at different scales. By developing a common language he argued it is likely people will discover that are a number of common concerns being tackled at the different scales and that greater synergies are possible.

He said listening to the "edge" communities such as Mangere was most important, and that "diversity and synergy about the edge is one of the most important elements to the overall city as a whole".

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Being able to enter into and listen to edge neighbourhoods was required, and not just giving answers but developing local leadership structures so that there is a "space and environment to talk" between the wider region and more local communities.

The Hon Judith Tizard highlighted the importance of celebrating our successes, and the importance of Auckland to New Zealand. The Minister identified partnerships as key to making progress, and welcomed the workshop's focus on social inclusion and identity as playing an essential part in the future well-being of the region.

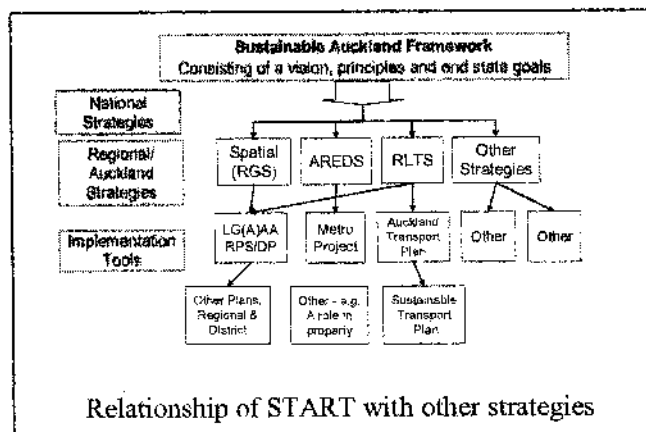
Councillor Mike Lee, Chair of the Auckland Regional Council identified the need for a common vision and common language to work towards sustainable development. In setting the scene for the review of the Auckland Regional Growth Strategy, he noted that START must consider the Auckland region's future in the global context, and as a part of New Zealand.

## START's next steps

The START project reached a major milestone with its design workshop. The workshop is one of a number of contributions (along with the START Forces papers and the work produced by the expert groups) that will shape the key directions in the proposed long-term framework that will be presented to councils in November this year.

Participants have expressed a strong desire to see a sustainability framework for the region, and to continue their involvement in the process of developing and implementing that framework. A regional report back for everyone who has been involved in the START project and design workshop will be held on the 15<sup>th</sup> of November to present the refined framework.

Figure 9



Looking further out, the framework will need to be more fully realised as the umbrella under which all other regional strategies and plans sit (see figure 9). The intention is to see the identified key directions and goals interlaced with the decision making processes related to the region's natural, economic, social and built landscapes, as well as being well integrated with its chosen governance structure. The model being developed needs to be capable of holding the many layers of process involved in regional

decision making, visually identify the interrelatedness of issues, and ultimately might provide a practical tool for comparing short, medium and long term costs and benefits of specific policy directions.

It is in this way that START hopes to instigate a practice of longer term thinking within the region, and improved integration across different sectors, strategies and activities. As the forces of change papers clearly suggest, achieving sustainability will require behavioural and systemic change at a fundamental level.

A piecemeal approach to tackling the challenges facing the region is now universally recognised as being insufficient. Recognition of the importance of getting the broader strategic direction correct was a key element to what inspired the START workshop. It is hoped that the outcomes from the workshop and the relationship building that occurred will form another important step in the process of redesigning the Auckland region to be a prosperous, confident and stunning place to live over the next century and beyond.

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## List of workshop participants

*The following participants attended all or part of the three-day workshop:*

John Allard, Ministry of Transport  
Ree Anderson, Manukau City Council  
Jacqueline Aust, Rodney District Council  
Tricia Austin, University of Auckland  
Lesley Baddon, Auckland Regional Council  
Mayor Mark Ball, Franklin District Council  
John Bassett, Ministry of Social Development  
Bill Bayfield, Environment Bay of Plenty  
Sue Bidrose, Waitakere City Council  
Kane Boardman, Tourism Auckland  
Frank Booth, Auckland District Health Board  
Walter Breustedt, Eco Management Group Ltd  
Gary Brierly, Auckland University  
Wayne Brown, Department of Internal Affairs  
Sarah Butler, Auckland Regional Council  
Cr. Bill Burrill, Auckland Regional Council  
Graeme Campbell, Waitakere City Council  
Cr. Anne Candy, Manukau City Council  
Anne Carter, Department of Internal Affairs  
Cr. Christine Caughey, Auckland City Council  
Carl Chenery, Digital Earth Youth Voice  
Love Chile, Auckland University of Technology  
Phil Chung, North Shore City Council  
Nick Collins, Beacon Pathway  
Cr. Sandra Coney, Auckland Regional Council  
Cr. Linda Cooper, Waitakere City Council  
Maureen Crombie, Franklin District Council  
Margaret Crozier, Department of Labour  
Mayor Sir Barry Curtis, Manukau City Council  
Cr. Chris Darby, North Shore City Council  
Brigitte de Ronde, Manukau City Council  
Helen Dodd, Auckland City Council  
Matthew Everett, Ministry for the Environment  
Cr. Mark Farnsworth, Chair Northern Regional Council  
Anthony Flannery, Chow Hill  
Stella Ford, Manukau City Council  
Tim Foresman, Digital Earth  
Peter Fuller, Glaister Ennor  
Celia Fullerton-Smith, State Services Commission  
Ewan Gebbie, Vector  
Cr. Dianne Glenn, Auckland Regional Council  
Cr. Peter Goldsmith, Papakura District Council  
Kate Goodfellow, Ministry of Economic Development  
Lindsay Gow, Ministry for the Environment  
Neil Gray, Strategic Projects  
Arthur Grimes, Motu Economic & Public Policy Research  
Joy Hames, Papakura District Council  
Amanda Harland, Manukau City Council  
Catherine Harland, Ministry of Transport  
Mayor Bob Harvey, Waitakere City Council  
Dilini Hevapatirana, Ministry for the Environment  
Greg Hill, Auckland Regional Council  
Lewis Holden, Ministry of Economic Development  
Leanne Holdsworth, Ministry of Economic Development  
Tony Holman, North Shore City Council  
Michael Hollingworth, Global Learning  
Rau Hoskins, UNITEC/ Design Tribe

Don Houghton, Auckland Regional Council  
Megan Howell, Auckland Regional Council  
Mayor Dick Hubbard, Auckland City Council  
Cr. Bruce Hucker, Auckland City Council  
Awa Hudson, Ngati Whatua  
Cr. Penny Hulse, Waitakere City Council  
Beat Huser, Environment Waikato  
Deborah James, Department of Internal Affairs  
Lesley Jenkins, North Shore City Council  
Alan Johnson, Auckland Regional Council  
Jeanette Johnston, Auckland Regional Council  
Ross Judge, Ministry of Social Development  
Karoana Kee, Waitakere City Council  
David Kettle  
Andrew Kibblewhite, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet  
Pauline Kingi, Ministry of Maori Development - Te Puni Kokiri  
Robert Kirkpatrick, Auckland Energy Centre (Auckland University)  
Fiona Knox, Auckland Regional Council  
Wayne Knox, Waitakere City Council  
Mike Krausse, Landcare Research  
James Kunstler, Digital Earth  
Daniel Lamborn, Synergine Consulting  
Glen Lauder, Global Learning  
Mads Larsen, Auckland Regional Council  
Mayor John Law, Rodney District Council  
Maggie Lawton, Landcare Research  
Cr. Mike Lee, Chair Auckland Regional Council  
Michael LeRoy Dyson, Ministry for the Environment  
Paul Look, Tertiary Education Commission  
Cr. Dan Lynch, Franklin District Council  
Warren MacLennan, Rodney District Council  
Ann Magee, Auckland Regional Council  
Hon Trevor Mallard, Minister of Economic Development  
Louise Marra, Ministry of Economic Development  
Louise Mason, Auckland Regional Council  
Allan McGregor, IMF New Zealand  
David Mead, Hill Young Cooper  
Ross Moffatt, North Shore City Council  
Sebastian Moffatt, Sheltair  
Kepa Morgan, University of Auckland  
Cr. Jill Morris, Franklin District Council  
Cr. Des Morrison, Franklin District Council  
Greg Mossong, Housing New Zealand  
Claire Mortimer, Auckland Regional Council  
Graeme Murdoch, Auckland Regional Council  
Shona Myers, Auckland Regional Council  
Simon North, Ministry of Economic Development  
Cr. Richard Northey, Auckland City Council  
Hugh Oliver, State Services Commission  
Harry O'Rourke, Waitakere City Council  
Graeme Osborne, Tourism Auckland  
Philip Patston, Diversity Works  
Dave Paul, Rodney District Council  
Ross Peat, Microsoft  
Tanya Perrott, Auckland Regional Council  
Henrik Petersen, Auckland Regional Council

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Manu Pihama, Te Puni Kokiri  
 Grant Power, Department of Labour  
 Michael Quinn, Ministry of Economic Development  
 Cr. Magan Ranchhod, Franklin District Council  
 Vanita Ranchhod, Waitakere City Council  
 Noel Reardon, Auckland Regional Council  
 Major Campbell Roberts, Salvation Army  
 Clyde Rogers, Auckland Plus  
 Cr. Christine Rose, Auckland Regional Council  
 Cr. Lucie Rutherford, Franklin District Council  
 Etuate Saafi, Auckland University  
 Hans Schreier, Digital Earth  
 Cr. Penny Sefuiva, Auckland City Council  
 Mervin Singham, Office of Ethnic Affairs  
 John Small, Covec Limited  
 Nancy So, Ministry of Economic Development  
 Amritha Sobrun-Maharaj, University of Auckland  
 Cr. Carolynne Stone, Waitakere City Council  
 Lesley Stone, University of Auckland  
 Raewyn Stone, Manukau City Council  
 Theresa Stratton, Papakura District Council  
 Peter Sykes, Mangere East Family Centre  
 Arapeta Taitoko, Te Puni Kokiri  
 Catherine Taylor, Auckland City Council  
 Simon Taylor, Watercare  
 Mihi Te Huia, Waitakere City Council  
 Warwick Terry, Treasury  
 Hon Judith Tizard, Minister - Auckland Issues  
 Tim Turner, Diversity Works  
 Te Miha Ua-Cookson, Auckland District Health  
 Board  
 Martin Udale, McConnell Property Limited  
 Steve Vaughan, Auckland City Council  
 Peter Vari, Rodney District Council  
 Bethli Wainwright, Ministry of Social Development  
 Brenna Waghorn, Auckland Regional Council  
 Kelsang Wangchuk, Auckland Regional Council  
 Jocelyn Watkin, Manukau City Council  
 Cr. Wayne Walker, Rodney District Council  
 Bernadine Walsh, Ministry of Transport - Te  
 Manatu Waka  
 Cr. Penny Webster, Rodney District Council  
 Anthony Williams, Ministry for the Environment  
 Jami Williams, Ministry of Economic Development  
 Gerard Willis, Enfocuss  
 Phillippa Wilson, Franklin District Council  
 Peter Winder, Auckland Regional Council  
 Mayor George Wood, North Shore City Council  
 Alistair Woodward, Auckland University  
 Chris Worth, Franklin District Council

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