



Submission of Civic Trust Auckland

Auckland Plan

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Introduction

(a) Civic Trust Auckland (CTA) is a non-profit public interest group, incorporated in 1968, with activities and interests throughout the greater Auckland region.

The aims of the Trust include:

- Protection of natural landforms
- Preservation of heritage, in all its aspects
- Encouragement of good planning, for the City and Region.

(b) Our submission addresses the questions (or parts thereof) that are relevant to the aims of the Trust, as posed throughout the discussion document "Auckland Unleashed", finishing with presenting some issues not covered within our previous answers, as our response to question 31. Quotes and numbered points from "Auckland Unleashed" are in italics.

(c) CTA supports the overall vision as expressed in the discussion document and summed up in the mantra of Auckland becoming “the world's most liveable city”. We believe that most Aucklanders would support the aspirations voiced in the document, as was apparent during the discussions around the Auckland Plan at summits and seminars attended by our members.

(d) We observe that “Auckland Unleashed” tends to be aspirational and descriptive in nature, providing substantial background information and many general statements. Alongside these, a number of “possible” or “potential actions” are listed.

(e) The Trust is of the view that the majority of the ideas and aspirations in “Auckland Unleashed” have been expressed before and many of them are common Auckland themes and, as such, have been discussed in other Auckland plans, for example, the Auckland Regional Growth Strategy. (We further the existence of other “legacy documents” in our response to Question 31.)

(f) In the Draft Auckland Plan we look forward to a clearly articulated action plan in order for the aspirations of the discussion document to be realised, and in order for consultation with the public to have been a worthwhile exercise. We note at *point 13* that, *“The Mayor and Councillors are clear that the Auckland Plan must be focussed on both aspiration and delivery”* and we support the statement at 544 which states, *“Furthermore, the Auckland Plan will contain a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These should all be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound”*.

(g) CTA particularly looks forward to the Implementation Plan referred to at 523 which *“will set out an initial range of priorities, strategic actions and projects or programmes, which are required to underpin the overall Auckland Plan”*.

(h) We also look forward in particular to the development of the proposed cultural and arts strategy at 199 *“to enable Auckland’s cultural and heritage institutions to fulfil these important functions over the next 30 to 50 years,”* these functions having been stated as *“contributing to the economy, developing people’s potential, and building connections between people”*.

(i) CTA trusts that ideas submitted by the many organisations and individuals in response to the discussion document will be included in the Draft Auckland Plan. Communities are more likely to engage will Council if their input is acknowledged.

(j) We note with concern that there have been difficulties with the heritage assessment system and we look forward to a more robust system.

(k) We note that on occasion limits such as height restrictions in District Plans are not always adhered to.

(l) CTA also considers that it would be useful for Council to consider further what are other cities have done to become more liveable, in addition to the cities that are mentioned in the discussion document. In particular, Auckland should be able to adopt transport strategies and practices that have been used successfully elsewhere. For example, Vancouver seems to be a useful comparison as this city has added an extra million people within the city limits (an extra million being the prediction for Auckland in 2040).

Q1. Do you think we have the proposed “Big Picture” ideas right?
Give us your suggestions to help Auckland lift its performance.

(a) CTA supports the nine listed goals outlined at *point 26*, which we consider to be goals that every city in the world would aspire to. The seventh goal refers to Auckland’s point of difference, i.e. *“a destination recognised world-wide for its pre-eminent rural, natural and marine setting”*. This setting, Auckland’s unique environment as our city’s point of difference - in which we would include its built heritage - should be one of the main focuses that the Auckland Plan addresses. Rules need to be put in place and adhered to in order to protect and enhance Auckland’s waterways, soils, landscapes, built heritage and biodiversity.

(b) Putting children and young people first in the Auckland Plan is inspirational as well as logical, as these are the people who will inherit Auckland. The state Auckland will be in 2040 will be the result of planning decisions made now and actions taken over the next few decades.

(c) Our suggestions to help Auckland lift its performance are given in our answers to other questions but we include the following general comments. We need to:

- learn from past planning exercises
- learn from the successes and failures of other cities
- focus on protecting our built and natural environment, recognising that our 100% pure and green is a very important brand
- define the urban limits
- improve public transport and advocate for its use by more commuters.

(d) The three areas Council has identified as the top spatial priorities: central, southern and north-western, seem a good place to start. These areas already manifest some of the outcomes sought.

(e) Urban development in the most highly valued natural areas should be avoided and these areas should be identified in the Auckland Plan.

(f) There are few specifics proposed in the discussion document and we look forward to seeing outlined the targets, costings (where possible) and timelines for delivery in the Draft Auckland Plan.

Q2. How do we make Auckland a city that young people are proud to live in?

(a) The Auckland Regional Growth Strategy (pg 41) describes a liveable community as, “One of high-quality urban and rural amenity where good design helps to create a sense of place, identity and community within an area”. It describes the characteristics of an area, including, “cultural and recreational attributes, open space, heritage, safety, accessibility, the environment (e.g. air and water), infrastructure, character, views, privacy, sunlight, traffic, noise, streetscape, lifestyles, people mix, vibrancy, identity and ‘feel’ of urban areas”, all of which, when realised in a positive manner, would seem to engender pride in young and old alike.

(b) As the mayor states in his introduction to “Auckland Unleashed” (page 1), we need to “*look after our unique environment - an aspiration for our harbours, waterways and air to be clean and protected, so future generations can enjoy them as we do*”.

(c) The Long-Term Sustainability Framework for the Auckland Region, along with changing consumer and consumption habits, expresses the desire that New Zealanders will take on a kaitiakitanga role, and we support these aspirations as enabling Auckland to become a city that young people will be proud to live in. Such a framework is consistent with the purpose of the RMA s5(2)(a) - “... to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations”.

Q5. How should the Auckland Plan address housing needs (e.g. supply, range, location, affordability and quality)?

(a) CTA supports a compact urban form. Sprawling development requires people to travel long distances, and requires investment infrastructure such as roads, waste, water and electricity.

(b) We are of the view that it should be possible for the standards for housing to be reviewed by the people who are affected by them i.e. those who will inhabit them, and neighbours and those who work and visit the area.

(c) New housing should be built only where good public transport is established and close to the facilities that the inhabitants will want to access.

(d) New housing should preferably occur in brownfield areas.

(e) The current regulations which provide for minimum parking should be changed to allow parking to be shared with other buildings so that less land is used for parking and private vehicle use is minimised. Council should consider parking dispensations in relation to heritage amenity.

(f) Council and developers should work together to provide good quality affordable housing.

(g) A plaque should be hung in a public place in the building following construction listing the key parties involved in the project, namely: developer, Council officer and key professionals, e.g. project manager, engineer, architect.

(h) Housing should provide sufficient warmth, space and protection from noise.

(i) New apartments can be good adaptations of already existing buildings. New apartments should contain communal areas for the purposes of people interacting, such as a common deck space or a meeting room, and should, where possible, incorporate roof gardens, solar power and a place to hang washing that is open to the wind, protected from the rain and not visible from the street.

(j) We support the guidelines at *point 354* that allow for appropriate levels of space and privacy, and, in particular, noise protection. We note that the first two factors are usually able to be assessed by potential buyers / renters but noise levels are not always apparent, especially as some noise occurs exclusively or mainly at night. Noise is an issue of particular importance in Auckland's CBD where there are in excess of 25,000 people living in apartments, their presence tending to be invisible to workers carrying out such services as glass collections, street cleaning (with machines and noisy leaf blowers) and street repairs. Members of the public also seem to be oblivious to the fact that thousands of fellow Aucklanders are vulnerable to having their sleep disturbed by noisy exits late at night from places of entertainment.

(k) We support the greening of all buildings, both commercial and residential.

Q15. Are these the priority initiatives that will make Auckland attractive to visitors? Can you suggest any others?

(a) CTA's aims encompass the following initiatives, which we see as priorities for making Auckland attractive to visitors:

- Creating a vibrant, creative world city
- Delivering a quality city in form and design.

(c) We do not see planning for the Rugby World Cup as relevant to the Auckland Plan as the RWC will be in its final planning stages when the Draft Auckland Plan (which looks out as far as 2040) is available for consultation.

Q16.

(a) In terms “Delivering a quality city in form and design” as a priority for the economy, we offer this quote from Power of Place, English Heritage (2000), “The historic environment is an irreplaceable asset representing the investment of centuries of skills and resources. It gives places a unique competitive advantage. It generates jobs. It attracts people to live in an area, businesses to invest and tourists to visit. Most of it is in everyday use; it is capable of an economic future; it is an asset we squander or degrade at our peril.” CTA sees that the development of heritage tourism represents an undeveloped growth potential.

(b) All over the world communities protect their heritage buildings through robust town planning regulations because they recognise their economic value.

Q18. How can we help Auckland become an Eco City?

(a) Waitakere City established itself as an Eco City and Auckland can learn much from the success of this city in putting in place eco policies and actions for the super city. There are many other centres around the world from which Auckland can learn. The transition town movement, which encourages local communities to respond to environmental and economic challenges with positive solutions that tap into the skills and innovation available in the local community, also has a lot to offer in terms of the goal of becoming an Eco City. Grey Lynn 2030 is an example of a community in central Auckland that has embraced the values of the transition town movement (and has submitted on the Auckland Plan),

(b) The Eco City model needs to be extended to include the 90% of Auckland which is rural.

(c) Becoming an Eco City will be a collaborative effort between Council and community and Council can provide the lead as well as support business, community and individual efforts. Support for businesses which are leaders in the fields of e.g. renewable energy and waste management would seem to be paramount.

(d) An example of waste management that Council could assist with is in the provision of a collection point, e.g. adjacent to the Pikes Point Refuse Station, where industrial waste as well as household reusables could be stored and made available for others to collect for their use. This would both reduce the amount that goes into landfill and make better use of finite resources.

(e) An initiative in Marrickville, Sydney, called Reverse Garbage, is one that could be adopted by Auckland. Reverse Garbage makes available industrial and commercial discards, off-cuts and over-runs by providing high quality, low priced, useful and unusual materials for use in arts, craft, education, small business, home renovation and other activities. (www.reversegarbage.org.au)

(f) Council could also assist, e.g. by way of a database and publicity, with such initiatives as sharing of household equipment like lawnmowers and ladders amongst households in the same neighbourhood. Community facilities such as scout dens and church buildings could also be made more use of in this way, reducing the building stock and footprint needed per community.

Q19. What initiatives should the Auckland Plan focus on to reduce greenhouse gases?

(a) At the top of the list we would place:

- The reduction and removal of green waste from landfills
- Planting of trees to act as carbon sinks.

This puts the cheapest initiatives and more quickly and easily implemented ones first. Furthermore, the planting of trees is carried out for many other reasons other than to act as carbon sinks, such as visual amenity, shade and supporting biodiversity. Streets can be planted with trees to create boulevards across the central city and on suburban streets. There are few large streets that wouldn't benefit from this.

(b) We quote from the Draft Urban Forest Plan March 2007 (1.2), "International concern about global warming and its linkage to the impacts of greenhouse gas emissions and its relationship to energy production through fossil fuels, points to the importance of trees in balancing greenhouse gas production. The urban forest provides significant environmental benefits including green house gas mitigation (CO₂ production), stormwater amelioration, particulate removal from the air, heat island reduction and habitat for birds and other fauna. The role that trees play in greenhouse gas mitigation is viewed internationally as a service to communities. The Kyoto Agreement sets targets to achieve for signatory countries like New Zealand. Auckland City contributes through the Cities for Climate Protection programme and there is a need to improve our understanding of the contribution of the urban forest within this wider context."

(c) The list of initiatives suggested for the Auckland Plan includes providing better public transport and cycleways, which also has other positive externalities, such as reducing congestion and improving fitness and health.

(d) New businesses and buildings should all be clean and energy efficient and Council should put regulations in place to ensure this. All new vehicles over which Council has purchase control should be electric or low emission. Renewable energy generation could be supported in the first instance by supporting solar energy generation, including making this a requirement for all new buildings.

(e) As per point (l) in our introduction we support Auckland's involvement in the C40 Mayoral alliance to share ideas with other cities as regards dealing with climate change and we look forward to Council reporting to the Auckland community on the initiatives from this alliance that it has or will be adopting.

Q20. Through the Auckland Plan how can we celebrate and further protect our distinctive natural and rural environment?

What are the most important values of Auckland's rural land that we wish to protect and how should we do so?

(a) We cannot substantially build on our green space and retain the character of Auckland. We need to decide which areas will be retained as un-built, such decisions being informed by the ecological and visual values of the land in question. Once even one structure is built in the landscape, that landscape is no longer a completely natural landscape.

(b) We also need to recognise that green space is more than a visual or recreational amenity; some of it is productive land that contributes to the Auckland economy and some of it is vital to produce food and support biodiversity.

(c) We need to identify future regional parks so that this land can be protected.

Q21. What aspects of Auckland's built environment, or the way it is managed, would you most like to see changed and how?

Should council apply the same level of protection to character neighbourhoods as it does to unique and scarce heritage items?

What could Council do to help owners of properties in character neighbourhoods retain and enhance their buildings and properties?

(a) The mayor's introduction to "Auckland Unleashed" states that, *"Alongside our natural environment, it is essential that we protect and maintain our built heritage - because it is an essential link to our past and is part of our identity."*

(b) We are pleased to see the mayor's and Council's focus on our built heritage, this being a focus of CTA as well. We congratulate Council on the move to set up a heritage advisory panel as well as the recent placing of heritage orders on two central Auckland buildings.

(c) In its submission on the Annual Plan CTA included excerpts from "The Cities and their People - New Zealand's Urban Environment" (June 1998). This report, authored by the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment:

- found that there have been losses of heritage and amenity values and adverse effects on the well-being of people and communities
- recognised that "liveability" stems from a combination of amenity values (including design features), historic and cultural heritage and intangible attributes such as character and "sense of place"
- recognised that many urban residents place a high value on amenity values and their contribution to improving the quality of urban life
- identified that liveability issues and the importance of good urban design are not adequately recognised in management approaches, policy or legislation.

(d) It is CTA's opinion that there needs to be a shift in attitude by Council and developers alike from "growth or heritage" to growth that incorporates sympathetically and adaptively reused heritage.

(e) RMA section 6(f) elevated "the protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development" to a matter of national importance that Council *must* recognise and provide for.

(f) The assessment of heritage buildings has been a contentious issue in the past. Council notes the importance of current and reliable information and knowledge to ensure that its plans and policies are informed.

(g) CTA suggests an independent audit of Council's process of heritage identification might be useful in determining what changes need to be made to controls, processes and practices as regards heritage protection.

(h) CTA supports the creation and maintaining of a regional cultural heritage database to provide information to landowners, resource consent applicants and other interest groups. We consider it essential that identification of resources providing heritage amenity should be identified in a manner consistent within Auckland, and furthermore, across New Zealand, i.e: the discipline of identification should be able to be determined consistently across the country in accordance with the intent of RMA s.6(f).

(i) Whilst it is acknowledged that completing a comprehensive assessment will take some time, CTA considers that in the interim, Council should adopt a precautionary approach to protect unidentified heritage by developing appropriate rules affording Council discretion to protect it.

(j) We recognise the need to also protect archaeological sites and those of significance to Māori, as well as historic town centres, the inner city and certain areas of the coast. There also needs to be protection of views of sites of importance, such as Auckland's volcanoes.

(k) Potential property buyers and/or developers need to be made aware of such heritage assessments, whether complete or pending, prior the point of purchase or resource consent application. The heritage value of surrounds and views needs to be considered as well.

(l) As far as the level of information incorporated into the Spatial Plan, legislation has provided for the identification of areas of regional and national significance. Whilst for planning purposes individual site information may not be necessary, its inclusion within Council's computer system of base information would help ensure the effectiveness of Auckland's spatial planning. It would also assist in another of Council's key projects, namely, "improving consenting processes".

(m) Council needs to ensure that applications are complete (in accordance with RMA section 88) and the collection and maintenance of site specific information for the Spatial Plan would also be useful for Council's consenting processes.

(n) Historic heritage contributes to Auckland in a number of ways, some of which are not easily measurable. Tourists value the aesthetics and historic interest of our heritage buildings and landscapes, and people who have grown up in Auckland or come here to live out of choice appreciate the higher quality of the environment afforded by our historic heritage.

(o) In CTA's view, is an urgent matter for items and areas across Auckland deemed by either the community or Council to have heritage value (if they are not already scheduled) to be identified, assessed, and, where merited, protected, ultimately in the upcoming Unitary Plan,.

(p) The question of whether "character" should be afforded protection to the same extent as "heritage" has been raised in the discussion document. CTA supports the proposals as outlined in *points 365 and 366*, particularly the development of a Heritage Plan and look forward to the clarity proposed for this plan as regards defining the character of neighbourhoods (*point 367*). Cumulatively, character contributes to and is an integral part of the city's heritage. **Some parts of character neighbourhoods will be more special than others and so will require a different level of protection, but certainly "character" should be provided with an appropriate level of district plan protection**

(q) Areas of higher heritage and character value, particularly the early suburbs, need greater consideration than more recently developed areas, both in terms of what can be demolished as well as the design controls imposed on new builds.

(r) The fundamental issue to be addressed is the equitable distribution of the costs and benefits of retaining heritage. Ultimately the costs of retaining heritage for the public good should be borne equitably and it is in this regard that incentives will be an indispensable an necessary policy tool.

(s) CTA considers the national importance of heritage, pursuant to RMA sec 6(f), is not adequately recognised and provided for with the proposed level of operational funding allocated to "natural, cultural and built heritage protection".

(t) In accordance with the purpose of the RMA, CTA would encourage Council to develop heritage programmes that *promote* sustainable management of Auckland's heritage resource. This should include targeted incentives to encourage and facilitate positive and enhanced heritage outcomes.

(u) Retention of heritage buildings should be incentivised with adaptive reuse always considered and innovative development encouraged.

(v) To assist owners of properties in character neighbourhoods retain and enhance their buildings and properties Council could offer rates reductions for building owners with a track

record of building enhancements. An example would be where an owner removed or carefully altered an insensitive extension to a heritage building. Furthermore, carparking requirements for developments could be reduced where adhering to District Plan rules would be harmful to the heritage fabric.

(w) Council should develop an effective mechanism whereby the costs and benefits of undertaking a seismic upgrade may be equitably shared between the public and building owners. Incentives may form a part of the resolution to that issue

Q22. How do you think the Auckland Plan should promote and support high quality development in Auckland?

(a) Development guidelines and an Urban Design Panel review with heritage architects involved should be a means of ensuring high quality developments.

(b) Developments in general should be design led, not developer led.

(c) A city architect responsible for overseeing new projects would assist in achieving high quality development.

(d) Council should discourage the development of new huge malls and the expansion of existing ones.

(e) Quality local shops should be supported and proposed new ones should take into account whether there is already adequate provision in the area.

(f) Streets should be shared more and not be the exclusive domain of cars 24/7 but also viewed as public spaces available for recreation and public events.

(g) The removal power poles and the under-grounding of overhead lines would improve the look of all streets.

(h) Enhancing and even re-establishing laneways would prevent the aggregation of city blocks.

Q23. What tools could the Auckland Plan incorporate to achieve quality urban buildings, streets and living environments?

(a) Major buildings and developments should be vetted by the Urban Design Panel.

(b) However, the Urban Design Panel membership and its powers needs to be reviewed. The Panel's performance would be enhanced by making the documentary record for a consent application public following the granting of consent.

(c) The performance of Council needs to be subject to more scrutiny as regards resource consents, heritage protection and building a quality environment. The need for this is particularly so when developments are approved which are out of character with the areas for which they are proposed and their aesthetic value is low.

(d) *Point 411* describes the development assessment process in Vancouver which sometimes involves signs being put on the front of the property, leading to people making submissions to the planning body. CTA has previously advocated that signs be placed on buildings and other sites when there are works proposed inviting the people affected (those who live or work in or visit the area) to make their comments on the proposals.

(e) As outlined in the book “Slow Cities”, in chapter 4, buyers in the residential housing market in various cities across the world are forming co-operatives that give them full control over planning, design and construction.

(f) Minimum standards for sustainable and aesthetic design should be considered by Council in conjunction with independent experts.

(g) The Heritage Plan proposed in “Auckland Unleashed” should be clear, robust and have the appropriate status to ensure a high level of protection.

(h) The Heritage Plan, along with built heritage, should equally recognise and protect heritage landscapes and land use, including rural landscapes and streetscapes.

(i) A visual tool could be developed for recognising viewshafts. Although currently provided for in the District Plan (Auckland City), such planning provisions have been ineffective. The importance of viewshafts is, in CTA’s view, insufficiently recognised and undervalued.

Q24. What do you think about the idea to re-categorise our centres as suggested?

How should Auckland’s network of centres be re-categorised (e.g. by their role and function or by the nature and extent of intervention categories)?

CTA supports each centre having a design, heritage and character assessment as part of local planning, subject to our response in question 25.

Q25. What controls are needed to manage and achieve intensification with high quality outcomes?

We consider that in some of the more sensitive local centres that lie in the path of intensification corridors, effective rules should be put in place that protect the inherent heritage value and underlying economic prosperity of those centres.

See also our answer to question 23.

Q26

- What do you think about the idea of gradual change to the way Auckland grows by having some new areas for growth (outside the current MUL), while also aiming to redevelop existing areas in a better way?
- (a) CTA supports retention of the current MUL and better redevelopment of existing areas.
- What do you think about the idea of allowing more intensive development in areas where people particularly like to live, such as coastal environments?
- (b) CTA is of the view that coastal environments need extra protection and that more intensive development should be constrained here.
- Do you think there should be specific "no-go" urban areas where new development should not be allowed, and what should be the nature of such "no-go" areas - what should be allowed in them and what not?

- (c) CTA agrees that there should be such “no-go” areas and as each area is unique, an assessment of each (as suggested in Q24) should be undertaken, with strong community input, to determine what should be allowed.
- How do we accommodate growth while supporting the vision of becoming the world's most liveable city?
- (d) These two goals are not incompatible and successful management in other cities should help in guiding Auckland.

Should the Auckland Plan:

- Support a compact city model that focuses growth in centres and corridors, supports public transport and protects rural areas from further residential and business development?
- (e) Yes.
- Consider areas with high amenity, (e.g. coastal or rural aspects, elevated sight lines on ridges) for intensification?
- (f) No.
- Support more local employment close to people's homes?
- (g) Yes.
- Protect specific areas from urban development?
- (h) Yes.
- Support a high standard of urban and rural design and heritage protection?
- (i) Yes.
- Investigate areas for new development beyond the current urban footprint?
- (j) No.
- (k) Growth should occur within the current Metropolitan Urban limits, with compact housing forms along public transport routes, without adversely affecting existing character and heritage housing and business areas or threatening valued natural environments.

Q27 Do you agree with these principles? Are there others you would add?

Auckland's infrastructure will:

- be adaptable: We will build systems that are resilient and robust and can adapt to sudden shocks, new technologies and longer-term shifts. These systems include our energy, transport, water and information systems as well as the social infrastructure which supports how we learn and live together.
- (a) Agree – but would like to see details of these systems.
- enable connectivity: We will facilitate opportunity through the freedom of movement of people, ideas, goods and services.
- (b) Agree in principle but seek explanation.
- be cost effective: We will make better use of what we have, maximizing the benefits from limited resources by increasing resource efficiencies and providing better value for money.
- (c) Agree.
- plan for longevity: We will consider the long term implications of decisions, recognizing that the region will experience enormous change in the future. What options are we locking in? What options are we locking out?
- (d) Agree.

- ensure stewardship: We will take responsibility for what our natural environment has provided us, for protecting what we value the most and using resources carefully.
- (e) Agree.
- (f) CTA adds that we should work with the infrastructure we already have and improve it rather than building new infrastructure (which may be included in the “cost effective” point above)

Q28.

- What do you see as the most important transport challenges the Auckland Council and its partners should give priority attention to and why?
- Which of the 3 options do you favour most and why? Are there other options you think we should consider?
- Do you support the Mayor's intention to give top priority to the City Centre Rail Link?
- Historically the Auckland isthmus was served by a network of trams. These were replaced by buses in 1956 as part of new networks of arterial roading infrastructure to serve the motorcar. Do you think Auckland should consider re-establishing a tram network as part of a public transport network?
- Auckland is a water city with options for an extended ferry network to the many bays and inlets. Do you think Auckland should consider extending the ferry services?

(a) CTA supports the mayor's commitment as expressed in his introduction to “Auckland Unleashed” that Auckland needs to “*give people choice in how they move around*”. CTA considers that the Auckland Council needs to focus on public transport and rather than increasing the roading network to grow the rail network (and we do support deferring / cancelling state highway projects to make funding available for rail) and to increase opportunities for safe and pleasant walking and cycling. The latter would include linking up the cycle network, with a priority being the extension of the North Western cycleway to Beach Rd. There are sections of cycle paths and cycle lanes all over the city but many of them are isolated and short, often running out just where they are needed from a safety perspective. CTA regards cycling as an integral component of a more sustainable lifestyle. More separate paths will encourage people to cycle who currently feel that on-road cycling is not safe enough.

(b) The least useful answer to Auckland's transport problems is to build more roads or to add a second (or third or fourth) lane to an existing road. Rather, the aim should be to take every second car off the road. We should also put more trains on the tracks we have already.

(c) We consider that, looking forward 30 years, as the Auckland Plan does, the challenges of climate change and the end of cheap oil need to inform planning on many levels.

(d) CTA has submitted on transport matters before, e.g. on the Draft Auckland Regional Public Transport Plan, and we include some of those submissions here, as well as some additional points. It is difficult to comment only on *priorities* here, as transport is such an important aspect of the Auckland Plan.

- (i) Walking is the most effective mode of travel so there is a need to prioritise pedestrians in the transport network. For example, the pedestrian priority at intersections such as the Wellesley St / Queen St could be extended to other
- (ii) Pedestrian activity can be encouraged by widening central city footpaths, slowing traffic and building more pedestrian bridges.
- (iii) Cycling routes need to be extended.
- (iv) If an inner city tram loop were established along Queen St, K Rd and Ponsonby, cyclists could cycle safely, as there would be enough space on the road for them without two lanes being taken up for cars.
- (v) There is a need for more routes and higher frequencies for cross-city travel.
- (vi) Cheaper public transport would encourage more people to use it.

- (vii) There should be more funding for shelters at bus stops.
- (viii) Public transport services need to be introduced to new urban areas before car habits become established.
- (ix) The benefits (both personal and global) of leaving the car at home should be promoted by Council.
- (x) We support the establishment of a commuter line between Auckland and Hamilton.
- (xi) We favour the development of park and ride facilities beside the ferry wharves.
- (xii) We would like to see provision on Queens Wharf for additional bus terminals with convenient access to Britomart rail terminal and the ferry wharves.
- (xiii) Council could promote car sharing amongst neighbours, particularly those in apartment buildings, as well as car pooling, by including information about car pooling on its website and Auckland Transport's website, such as a link to <http://www.jayride.co.nz/> and by advertising car pooling on billboards.
- (xiv) Priority / free parking could also be made available for those who use a private vehicle to transport people to places such as The Edge for arts events.
- (xv) We strongly support an extended ferry network, including to St Heliers, Panmure and Pakuranga, and also on the Manukau Harbour. Water transport does not require extensive infrastructure and has other benefits for the environment.
- (xvi) We consider the walkway-cycleway on the harbour bridge to be a key link in the transport network.
- (xvii) Train and bus routes should complement each other, not duplicate each other.
- (xviii) Consideration should be given to further options within the public transport network, as well as alternative funding, in particular regarding:
 - Trams
 - Rapid rail
 - An overhead RTN.

(e) Roading takes up a lot of space throughout the city and brings noise and intrusion of motor vehicles. The shared space concept addresses to some degree the dominance of the motor vehicle and brings a peaceful and slower pace. These areas could be extended and trials of closed roads at low usage times such as in the weekend could be carried out across the city.

(f) The book "In Praise of Slow" (Carl Honoré 2004 Chapter 4 "Cities: Blending Old and New") at page 87 says, "Studies around the world show a direct correlation between cars and community: the less traffic that flows through an area, and the more slowly it flows, the more social contact among residents. Page 88 states that, "By tackling the culture of speeding and reconfiguring the urban landscape to cut car use to a minimum, cities of all sizes are adapting to put people first". This can be done by laying speed bumps, narrowing streets, erecting radar cameras, synchronizing traffic lights, cutting speed limits and launching media campaigns. Motorists caught driving too fast can either pay the fine or face the local children's questions in the classroom.

(g) "In Praise of Slow" states on page 94, "When it comes to making urban areas more liveable ... you also have to give less space to the car. To that end, cities everywhere are pedestrianizing roads, laying bicycle lanes, cutting parking, imposing road tolls and even banning traffic outright. Every year many European cities hold car-free days. Some even empty the streets once a week. Every Friday night traffic is cleared from swathes of central Paris to make way for an army of inline skaters. Rome banned traffic for the whole of December 2002 from the fashionable shopping district known as the Trident. In 2003, London began charging drivers £5 a day to enter the city centre during weekdays."

(h) "At the same time, planners are redesigning residential neighbourhoods to put people ahead of cars. In the 1970s the Dutch invented the "woonerf" or living street, a residential area with lower speed limits; reduced parking; benches and play areas; more trees, bushes and flowers; and sidewalks that are on the same level as the road. The net result is a pedestrian-friendly environment that encourages slower driving, or no driving at all. The scheme is so successful that cities all over the world are copying it."

(i) Page 96 of the same book states, “North Americans are tired of long, stressful commutes, and many are choosing to live in rejuvenated city centres, where they can walk and cycle. A prime example is Portland, Oregon. Barred by law from expanding outward in the 1970s, local leaders set about regenerating the downtown with pedestrian-friendly neighbourhoods linked by light-rail lines. The result may be the most liveable city in the US.”

(j) The rail service needs expansion to already identified destinations such as the airport. A good contribution to the rail network was the recent extension of the line to Onehunga, much heralded by the local community. We are aware of the need for more stations as having been identified by the communities of Parnell (Cheshire St) and Purewa Valley. The Cheshire St site has potential for development beyond the provision of transport stop. The Gowing Drive site would serve Selwyn College students, among others.

Q29.

What is your preference for the form of a potential additional harbour crossing?

CTA prefers a bridge. A new bridge should be built to the west of the existing harbour bridge. It would provide for vehicular traffic (and other transport as provided for). It should be designed by somebody of truly “world class” ability who could produce a truly iconic bridge, i.e. Santiago Calatrava (one of the world’s finest architects/engineers: www.calatrava.com). The existing harbour bridge would have its “Nippon clip-ons” removed. This would both reveal the original design of the bridge as well as remove significant ongoing maintenance costs. Once reinstated to its original condition the original harbour bridge would be used for public transport, i.e. foot, bicycle, bus and future mass transport mode, e.g. trains.

Q30. What are your views on the suitability of options that could be used to fund Auckland’s transport?

CTA supports all options proposed. Parking charges should be reasonable

Q31. How can the mayor improve on the ideas and proposals for the Auckland Plan discussed in this document in order to ensure all Aucklanders enjoy a high and sustainable quality of life?

(a) *Point 31* Auckland 2040: “What we can look like?” does not include the ethnic mix Auckland may have in 30 years. Auckland currently is made up of a large number of different ethnic groups. We note the following figures from page 40 of “Auckland Unleashed”:

Auckland’s main ethnic groups 2006:

European and Other 60%

Asian 17%

Pacific Peoples 13%

Māori 10%

Auckland’s main ethnic groups 2021:

European and Other 48%

Asian 25%

Pacific Peoples 16%

Māori 11%

Auckland’s main ethnic groups in 2040 could be:

European and Other 20%

Asian 60%

Pacific Peoples 10%

Māori 10%

With a substantial and increasing number of Asian Aucklanders, it would seem that Council would do well to engage strongly with these ethnic groups in discussions about the Auckland Plan, both in 2011 and in its future revisions. Furthermore, as Māori are the tangata whenua / mana whenua their input to the Auckland Plan should be actively sought and strongly evident.

(b) CTA is concerned that there are other communities besides ethnic communities which have particular problems and aspirations, whether or not expressed to date, which should be engaged with by Council on matters that will affect them.

(c) CTA supports the Auckland Community Development Charter and notes that local communities wish to be involved in *genuine* consultation on proposals that will affect them.

(d) CTA advocates for smoke free parks and public open spaces and looks forward to a Smokefree Aotearoa by 2020. Communities being smokefree contributes to liveability on many levels, the most crucial one being survival itself.

(e) Noise as an issue is mentioned in “Auckland Unleashed” but needs more prominence in the Auckland Plan as it is a major issue as regards quality of life: Within its environmental protection services, noise is included as something to be monitored by Council. Areas of population density could be accompanied by maps of acceptable noise levels.

(f) Best practice programmes “from across the region” should be adopted, as well as the best practice from other parts of New Zealand and cities in other parts of the world. Auckland has had the benefit of many visiting experts such as those who have presented at the mayoral forums over the past several years. CTA is interested to know what projects or changes in policy have been implemented as a result.

(g) Water is essential for life. Essential services should not be for profit.

(h) CTA applauds the previous Council’s Transport Committee’s 21 October 2009 forum on shared use of Tamaki Drive. Such forums are an excellent opportunity for individuals, community groups and other stakeholders to provide input on issues that concern them, as well as to hear and to understand the concerns of others. We would like to see more such forums on the various issues that affect Auckland City and we support the point made at an Auckland Communities Summit on the Auckland Plan of making democracy visible and putting in place infrastructure ensure its occurrence, such as access to Council meetings and using a variety of communication styles, tools and forms, and enabling conversations between community and government, as well as conversations within the community, especially different groups that don’t usually come into contact with each other. Council needs to work collaboratively with all communities in ways that are seen by communities as appropriate and effective and enable subgroups within communities, such as neighbours, to connect with each other so they can support and learn from each other, get to know and understand each other.

(i) CTA is of the view that previous planning documents shouldn’t have to be reinvented.

(j) We note at *point 8* of the discussion document that, “*The Auckland Regional Growth Strategy compiled by the ARC on behalf of the region’s 8 governing councils in 1999 remains in effect until replaced by the Auckland Plan*”. This 1999 document, following a three-year process which involved technical analysis and research, and political input and consultation with thousands of people and organisations including politicians, developers; business people; planners; architects; infrastructure operators; iwi; transport; stormwater and environmental experts; students; school children; community boards and interest groups, does not differ in many respects from the intent and content of the “Auckland Unleashed”.

(k) The ARGS “sets out a vision for the future and provides certainty as to the outcomes Aucklanders want to achieve as the region grows and develops. The vision and desired outcomes provide certainty that future regional growth, in whatever form, will promote:

- safe healthy communities
- diversity of employment and business opportunities
- housing choices

- high amenity of urban environment
- the protection and maintenance of the character of the region's natural environment
- sustainable use and protection of the region's resources (including infrastructure)
- efficient access to activities and appropriate social infrastructure for all."

(l) The ARGS and other "legacy documents" i.e. former Auckland territorial authorities' growth and land-use plans / spatial plans are referred to in Appendix 1 of "Auckland Unleashed". The ARGS, an 84-page document, is represented by a map and a 117-word summary. CTA feels that this document represents research and thinking that should inform the Auckland Plan.

(m) We also found it informative to consider "Growing Smarter", the evaluation of the ARGS, as a useful guiding document.

(n) For example, the ARGS recommended (page 2):

- Growth in compact urban environments (intensification)
- Growth outside existing MULs only where environmental, accessibility and community principles can be met
- Most urban growth focussed around town centres and major transport routes to create higher density communities
- Much less emphasis on general infill throughout suburban areas
- Outside of suburbs, future urban (greenfield) areas are Takanini, East Tamaki, Hingaia, Westgate/Redhills, Albany/Greenhithe, Long Bay, Orewa/Silverdale
- Outside of suburbs, rural towns to roughly double in size through natural growth.

(p) The Growth Management Strategy, adopted by Auckland City Council in December 2003 should also be considered by Council as useful in formulating the Auckland Plan.

(q) Another legacy document, the Auckland Regional Land Transport Strategy, has as its key elements:

- passenger transport investment where there is heavy demand to a common destination and where separate rights of way or priority measures can be provided, such as the CBD currently or the growth centres and corridors proposed in the growth concept in the longer term;
- investigation of road pricing for reducing congestion levels on the busiest roads at peak periods;
- roading investment, particularly to improve connections between the non-central parts of the urban area to each other;
- traffic demand management measures to influence the pattern of demand, such as flexible working hours, tele-working, peak spreading, trip restraint, cycling, walking, car pooling, parking controls, road pricing and land use controls more supportive of mixed-use intensive development.

(r) We are aware that a great number of plans pertaining to greater Auckland have been written over the years but not necessarily implemented. Two further examples are the Draft Urban Forest Plan (in place at the time of writing on the former Auckland City Council website), developed as part of the open space framework for Auckland City as setting "the direction for the future improvement, protection and management of Auckland's open spaces", and the Victoria Quarter Plan, on which CTA submitted in April last year.

(s) More planning documents are referred to within the Auckland Regional Growth Strategy:

- Auckland City: Liveable Communities 2050 Strategy (1999)
- Waitakere Urban Villages Strategy (1998)
- Manukau Development East Tamaki Concept Plan (1998)
- Rodney District Development Strategy (1999)
- Papakura District Central Area Structure Plan (1999/2000)
- Franklin District strategic Growth Plan (1999)

(t) Another planning document that should be consulted to inform the Auckland Plan is "One Plan", the first version of which was in October 2008, available at www.aucklandoneplan.org.nz

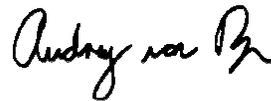
(u) Other plans were developed by the other cities now amalgamated into the supercity, some of which have a similarly brief mention in the appendices of "Auckland Unleashed". We note that *point 66* says, "*The document also acknowledges work that has been done by the previous councils (see Appendix 1: Legacy Documents)*".

(v) We trust that these plans are well known to councillors and council officers and will inform the Draft Auckland Plan.

We would like to be contacted about future opportunities to comment on the Auckland Plan.

Date of submission: 31 May 2011

Signature:



Secretary, Civic Trust Auckland

APPENDIX - Growing Smarter - The Auckland Region in the 21st Century

This appendix consists of extracts from "Growing Smarter - The Auckland Region in the 21st Century - An Evaluation of the Auckland Regional Growth Strategy 1999 - A Technical Report for the Auckland Regional Growth Forum" which CTA feels can usefully inform the Auckland Plan, particularly with regard to Auckland's built and natural heritage.

p 4

The RGS set a vision for the way the region would accommodate population growth by fostering the benefits of growth as well as managing its adverse impacts on the environment, infrastructure and communities over the next 50 years. It signalled a change in direction by shifting the emphasis from low density urban expansion and a reliance on private vehicles to focusing the majority of future growth in compact integrated communities within the metropolitan areas lined by passenger transport. ...

p 4

The evaluation concludes that the region needs to take a more sophisticated approach to implementing the RGS using new tools and approaches to achieve better, quicker implementation and on a larger scale. In particular, quality comprehensive redevelopment and intensification in town centres is critical to achieve the RGS vision. ...

Work on developing a Long-Term Sustainability Framework for the region, which was undertaken concurrently with this evaluation, has reinforced the importance of the core principles of the growth strategy - a more compact settlement pattern, and focussing growth in a network of vibrant walkable centres offering a diverse range of facilities and services connected by high quality passenger transport.

p 5

Furthermore, the evaluation shows that successful international cities have strengthened their positions around these principles and are implementing their strategies using a wide range of tools and approaches, such as urban development agencies, streamline planning approaches, master planning and place-based approaches, often focused in priority redevelopment and growth areas.

p 7

The report concludes that top priority needs to be given to the following actions:

- Establishing a refined classification for Auckland's centre, corridors and business areas, in order to provide greater certainty as to the location and sequencing of growth
- Completing plan changes to enable quality centres-based development
- Identify priority areas for implementation, aligned with key infrastructure development and investment
- Developing, trial and implement approaches to encourage quality intensification and redevelopment in centres and corridors
- Progressing initiatives to improve urban amenity in relation to open space, heritage and the natural environment
- Investigating enhanced roles for the public sector in large-scale urban (re)development
- Broadening the partnership around social objectives, at both the strategic planning level, and at the local implementation level (using place-based master planning and 'whole -of-government' approaches)
- Strengthening alignment of land use, transport and economic development through the Regional Land Transport Strategy review and other initiatives
- Co-ordinating infrastructure planning and priorities at a regional level
- Improving communication and dialogue with Auckland's diverse communities and key stakeholders on sustainability and the growth strategy's intent and progress
- Improving monitoring, information sharing and reporting.

p 11

Desired regional outcomes were developed with stakeholder and public input, based on existing council strategies at the time:

- Water quality in streams and coastal marine areas is maintained where it is good and improved where it is now degraded.
- More transport choices and high levels of access for all sections of the community, a closer relationship between home and work, activities, shopping, open space, etc, managing traffic congestion and a better passenger transport system
- Natural character of coastal environment including landscapes, ecosystems, native bush and water quality preserved and enhanced and access to clean and beautiful beaches maintained
- Air quality is maintained where it is good and improved in areas where it is now degraded.
- More efficiency in use of natural and physical resources, including urban land, rural land, infrastructure and energy resources.
- More employment choices everywhere, better match of employment to population in different parts of region.
- Improved opportunities for businesses, (business growth, development opportunities, affordable and suitable land and infrastructure)
- Higher quality urban amenity particularly business, residential, shopping and public space areas (more trees, better streetscape, better urban design etc)
- Safer healthier communities with high-quality, readily accessible community facilities and services publicly and privately provided (e.g. libraries, sporting facilities, schools, stadia, theatres, cafes, gyms, etc)
- Improved housing choice and affordability throughout the region
- Protection and enhancement of cultural heritage
- Expansion and protection of high-quality indigenous habitat
- A greater range and diversity of protected open space
- Better non-urban and rural amenity including landscape protection, and more trees and vegetation
- Physical and social infrastructure provided, maintained, enhanced and optimised - existing infrastructure maintained and utilised where it has sufficient capacity for growth, and upgraded where it has not.
- Cultural identity, including maintaining cultural diversity.

Principles developed, including:

- Enabling people and communities to meet their basic needs.
- Protecting cultural and natural heritage values, and foster cultural expression by cultivating a sense of place.
- Maintaining and improving water quality in all catchments, recognising and maintaining the qualities of the coastal environment; maintaining and enhancing indigenous habitats.
- Enabling a regional growth pattern which can provide a range of employment and housing choices (affordability and location).
- Encouraging a land use and transport pattern which enables people-focused communities and a range of quality business growth; which recognises different types and functions of corridors, and their relationship with land use; and which is flexible enough to accommodate change (e.g. new technology, new work practices).
- Enabling good local and regional transport networks and choices, and reducing the need to travel by car.
- Providing adequate open space, effective public transport and social infrastructure, and good urban design.
- Sharing the costs and benefits of growth.

p 50

International Lessons in Growth Management

“As an input into the evaluation of the RGS, a study was undertaken ... on international trends and lessons in growth management. Recent international research, literature and policy from those city-regions comparable to Auckland were sourced. ... The cities of Melbourne,

Sydney, Perth, Brisbane, Portland and Vancouver were chosen as the most comparable to Auckland. ... These cities had developed strategic growth documents prior to the Auckland RGS and the documents have been in place for a number of years now. The research found that these city-regions have also been reviewing their growth strategies within a sustainability context. Significantly, it was found that these cities have not moved away from their original strategic vision of a compact urban form, quality intensification, and liveable communities integrated with passenger transport. Rather, they have iteratively strengthened their positions and found new and improved ways of implementing their strategies.

p 51

The key implementation tools used by these city-regions include:

- Priority growth areas with associated management authorities to develop new urban areas on the fringe
- Priority redevelopment areas for specific, existing urban areas (activity centres, transit areas and corridor development)
- Land and property development companies or redevelopment agencies where land is acquired (through regulatory powers or the market) then developed to demonstrate best practice
- Land release programmes to facilitate orderly development through the timely provision of land, services and infrastructure
- Sustained commitment and investment in infrastructure which supports the strategic intent of the governing strategies
- Specific planning processes and practices such as fast-tracking critical projects, assembling land, creating specific town centre planning teams with delegated authority, and using voluntary codes of practice to supplement statutory planning tools.

The key lessons from the comparative review are:

- There is no simple approach to the challenging issues of growth management and success is generally reliant on a package of mutually-reinforcing mechanisms aligning at the same time.
- These cities have established long-term certainty, delivered through setting priority actions and a clear direction to the market and infrastructure providers, to assist in achieving desired outcomes.
- These cities have continually streamlined their planning processes and tailored new planning tools to deliver their visions and desired outcomes.
- Focused effort is critical. Many cities are concentrating energy and investment, and ensuring coordination into a small number of priority growth and redevelopment areas.
- Investment in existing infrastructure has been just as important as planning for new infrastructure. All infrastructure needs to be flexible enough to provide for the future.
- Monitoring and communicating results is an important part of implementation. Public and market confidence comes through delivering on promises, and providing information when outcomes will differ from the original intent.

p 75

Quality - urban design, amenity, heritage and open space

In spite of some progress, the capacity of councils to deliver their desired urban-design outcomes appears to be constrained by several factors. The constraining factors include:

- A limited pool of skilled and experienced urban-design professionals
- Staffing and resources
- Time constraints within the RMA process
- The difficulty of gaining developers' trust and confidence to ensure their participation in a pre-application discussion of urban design
- The extent of poor designs proposed
- District plans being "effects-based", lacking thorough consideration and appropriate weighting of urban-design matters
- Historic reluctance to say "no" to poor urban design
- Existing tools are largely regulatory (rules and assessment criteria). Such approaches have been met with a mixed response from the market place.

- There is no reward or incentive for innovation in design, no consistency of design criteria, and no clarity as to the weight different design criteria will be given.
- Height restrictions and parking requirements in particular are obstacles to more intensive development and innovative design
- Land fragmentation makes it difficult to secure sites of a sufficient size to enable comprehensive design and development
- Responsibility for heritage protection is fragmented.

p 77 & 78

Throughout the evaluation there has been wide-spread agreement that the quality of the urban environment is important and needs to be improved. A quality built environment that includes good urban design and development, and that respects the region's unique and natural setting, is crucial to creating integrated, liveable communities.

Consultation results show that while there is little total opposition to intensification occurring in inner-city areas, the community is concerned about getting the design, location and mix of activities right. Concerns were also raised about the integration and compatibility of new developments, the quality and quantity of open and community spaces, and the importance of pedestrian connections. Research has shown that there are wide perceptions that poor-quality higher-density development could result in the development of future slums.

Research has found that while occupants of intensive housing are often highly satisfied with their home and lifestyles, there is some dissatisfaction with design, construction and appearance of many developments by both residents and neighbours. The most common positive responses of residents of higher-density housing across a range of surveys are location and access to services, safety and security, community identity and cohesion, and a low-maintenance lifestyle. The most common negative responses are noise, parking, design and amenity, and privacy.

The development trends in Chapter 4 highlighted the extent of infill development. Infill can impact on historic residential character and on the pattern of development, as well as on the experience of individual buildings. Infill can cause the loss of context, such as open space, gardens and trees, and impact on the region's garden suburbs. Some councils, e.g. North Shore City, have made specific changes to their planning documents to address this issue. This is consistent with the RGS which aims to focus growth in centres and corridors and put less emphasis on suburban infill as a way of accommodating growth. Data shows that more intensive development has occurred in a wide range of areas outside of identified growth areas and, in many cases, this is a response to the quality of urban amenity including views, open space and coastal locations. This seems to be as important to residents as access to town centres and passenger transport. There is, therefore, a need to focus on providing improved urban amenity in areas where development is desired.

Special attention needs to be given to the protection of the region's historic heritage, including historic buildings and areas, as the region intensifies. While there are a range of tools available (e.g. district plan rules, regional plan policies, RMA section 6, schedules in district and regional plans, and funding incentives), they are not being used effectively to proactively protect heritage. Effective incentives are needed to encourage the development sector and community to play a role.

Heritage is important to the region's identity and to community connectedness. Further work is needed to survey and develop the cultural heritage inventory, and to develop positive linkages between heritage conservation tourism and business development. Responsibility for heritage protection is fragmented, and needs both a higher profile and regional focus. Heritage protection needs to be addressed in a comprehensive and proactive way. It is often an addition rather than a fundamental element of design and development.

Similarly, the provision of open space in intensifying centres is a challenge. There will be different needs for, and expectations of, open space as the community grows and diversifies (in terms of age and ethnicity). There will be increased demand for open space while there will be reduced opportunities to provide it, in many instances, and there will be increased pressure on existing open space. Therefore, in response to the RGS, the Regional Open

Space Strategy (ROSS) was developed in 2005. It highlights both the need for a diverse range of accessible open spaces, and the opportunities to protect the significant natural ecosystems, habitats and landscapes that contribute to the region's unique identity. It also sets out action plans and priorities, including the need for an acquisition plan.

While many local authorities have advanced their open space strategies using the Regional Open Space Strategy as their framework, there has been no regional forum to provide ongoing dialogue and to focus on implementation of the ROSS and sufficient resourcing for the actions identified. There is no consistent way that open space is defined, classified or zoned in the region and there are no guidelines, standards or criteria that define how much is an open space, or what accessible open space means.

Improving the implementation of the RGS will require a concerted effort to implement ROSS and the careful consideration of open space within all within all centre, structure and master plans.

While the RGS focussed on achieving environmental outcomes principally by avoiding development in highly-valued natural areas outside the MUL, there is a need to also focus on the quality of the urban natural environment. Protection of significant natural areas within the urban area is important too. There is opportunity to address a wide range of objectives such as the provision of parks and recreation opportunities, the enhancement of the natural environment such as streams, and the management of stormwater in a more coordinated way. Approaches such as low-impact design, blue-green networks, stream day-lighting (re-establishing natural streams or waterways previously piped) and tree planting, all offer opportunities to improve the quality of the urban environment and enhance the role of nature in the city. As part of this, there is a need for protection and restoration of biodiversity in urban areas, e.g. backyard biodiversity, and ecological linkages and stepping stones across the region to link up with larger natural areas in the Hauraki Gulf Islands and the Hunua and Waitakere Ranges (i.e. the regional natural network).

Urban design is concerned not only with aesthetics and built form, but also with the environmental, social, economic and cultural consequences of design. Experts such as Jan Gehl have highlighted the importance of functionality, getting the land use and transport integration right, and walkability, and of focussing on the quality of the public realm. Technical work has highlighted the importance of place-making approaches and master planning to achieve quality redevelopment and intensification. While structure planning is being used successfully in greenfield areas, it is not being widely applied in urban growth areas. It is clear that a focus on individual building quality will not, by itself, deliver quality urban design. While urban-design panels can provide early advice and urban-design rules can help, conventional subdivision patterns and existing district plan rules remain barriers to good urban design.

A study of the value of urban design by NZ Ministry for the Environment in 2005 warned "Poor design ... is likely to have significant adverse environmental, social and even economic effects. The perpetuation of poor design can lower quality of life and limit employment opportunities. An example... is low-density, peripheral urban development with rigidly segregated land uses and residential areas poorly connected to commercial activity and with poor internal connectivity. The literature is clear that the 'external costs' generated by such development are significant." In contrast, good urban design can deliver long-term benefits including better public health, greater social equity, enhanced land values, a more vibrant local economy, reduced emissions and more sustainable use of non-renewable resources.

p 80

The evaluation has shown that:

- A range of approaches is needed to ensure quality urban design and development, including smarter consent processes and incentives for innovative and quality development.
- There is a need to focus on the quality of the public realm and the functionality of the spatial form.
- To improve the protection of heritage and historic buildings, in particular within intensifying areas, there is a need to uphold the existing rules in district plans, to

develop more comprehensive schedules in regional and district plans, and to develop incentives for the community and development sector.

- Urban-design considerations are important regardless of where a development is located. The opportunity to establish an urban-design advisory panel, available to all councils in the region, could be explored. This panel would focus on projects that are large-scale or more complex, projects on high-profile sites, and projects that could have significant impact on the public realm.
- Structure planning, comprehensive master planning and place-based approaches are needed in urban areas undergoing redevelopment and intensification.
- Investment in improving the quality of amenity of growth areas will be needed to both encourage demand for intensive living and improve urban quality of life.
- Approaches such as low-impact design, blue-green networks, stream day-lighting, tree planting, backyard biodiversity, and ecological linkages within a regional natural network can all improve the quality of the urban natural environment, and also enhance protection and restoration of biodiversity in urban areas.
- There is a need to implement the Regional Open Space Strategy.
- Regional guidance on design matters that would benefit from consistency across the region (such as TOD, POD, and GOD) — is needed to provide a framework for local application.

p 102 & 103

Natural Environment and Natural Heritage

The Regional Growth Strategy outlines Aucklanders' aspiration for clean air, clean water, and for the maintenance and protection of the natural character of the region's coastal environment, including landscapes, ecosystems, native bush and beaches. The protection of habitat and a greater range of open spaces are also desired by the Auckland community. The sustainable use of resources through more efficient use of natural and physical resources, including urban and rural land, infrastructure, and energy resources is also a key regional outcome of the RGS.

The Long-term Sustainability Framework (LTSF) has built on these aspirations and has a goal of a 'unique and outstanding natural environment' that creates a strong sense of place and that protects the environment and natural resources for generations to come. The LTSF indicates that climate change, and population growth and associated resource use are challenges to achieving a long-term goal.

The LTSF indicates that as individuals and a community, Aucklanders will also need to modify behavioural and consumer habits to contribute to a reduction in our ecological footprint. This is because current production practices, transportation and consumption patterns are largely resource inefficient and can create large quantities of waste products.

Implementation progress and challenges

Significant legislative, planning and policy changes have occurred since the RGS was adopted; this detail is provided as Appendix Two. A number of statutory documents have been developed that provide a response to managing and protecting our natural environment. Key progress is outlined below:

- The Auckland Regional Policy Statement, supported by regional plans (Air, Land and Water; Sediment Control and Farm; Dairy Discharges) provide a management response under the Resource Management Act and are also implemented through district plans.
- The Auckland Regional Plan: Coastal (2004) contains schedules of cultural heritage sites for preservation, coastal protected areas and areas of significant conservation values.
- Proposed plan changes to the RPS continue this effort to protect the natural environment. Plan Change 8 has added additional landscape protections in the rural area, and reviewed and reclassified the volcanic cone viewshafts of the region. Plan Change 9 and 10 identify the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park Act (2000) and natural hazards as important issues in the RPS.

- The Waitakere Ranges Heritage Bill is special government legislation for protection of the Ranges and enhancement of its heritage features.
- The formulation of a Hazard Reduction Group, which provides greater clarity regarding the range, roles and responsibilities for managing natural hazards. It also reflects a number of new pieces of legislation that have been introduced since the RPS was written, namely the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002, the Building Act 2004 and the Resource Management (Energy and Climate Change) Amendment Act 2004.

The Auckland Regional Open Space Strategy was designed in response to the RGS and recognises that open space plays a vital role in enhancing the quality of our living environments.

The Auckland Regional Pest Management Strategy provides a framework for effective plant and animal pest management in the region. The strategy recognises that with over 150 endangered animals and plants, including some of the world's rarest birds, as well as significant forest, scrub and wetland areas, and also offshore islands, the potential impact of pests is a major issue within the Auckland region.

Initiatives such as the North-West Wildlink project are underway. This project is fostering a patchwork of natural 'stepping stones' to connect two of the region's biodiversity hotspots - the Hauraki Gulf Islands and the Waitakere Ranges. The initiative is the first of its kind in the country, with four local authorities and national government joining together with community organisations and individual landowners to achieve a significant vision of biodiversity restoration.

The North-West Wildlink project demonstrates that legislative responses to the natural environmental and heritage challenge can only go so far, and that work must be done, both collaboratively and strategically, on important issues for the region. In the last 5–10 years, community effort in Auckland has snowballed around environmental and biodiversity restoration and protection in urban and rural areas. Open sanctuaries have been established (Tawharanui Open Sanctuary Society Inc, ARK in the Park, and Shakespear Open Sanctuary Society Inc), island restoration projects have been flourishing, backyard biodiversity projects and private land covenants have all shown individual and community commitment to protecting the natural environment and heritage.

In spite of the progress outlined above, Auckland imposes particular pressures on its natural heritage resources because it is the largest and fastest growing urban area in New Zealand. Auckland is also one of the main entry points in New Zealand for international travel and trade, and there is a constant risk of new exotic plant, animal, and insect pests arriving in the region. These pests can pose serious threats to the natural environment, and to Auckland and New Zealand's economic future.

Protecting the remaining native vegetation is an important step for preserving natural areas, as is protecting and restoring wetlands. The retention and protection of remnants is also fundamental to restoring ecosystems and ecological processes that have been damaged or reduced in extent. Existing natural areas are the building blocks from which the restoration of biodiversity can begin.

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Lessons from the evaluation

Whilst the RGS evaluation has not completed new work on the natural environment and natural heritage, many of the key issues, both now and into the future, have been raised by the LTSF. There is a need to:

- Implement the Auckland Regional Open Space Strategy, and further develop urban parks with links to the waterfront and natural spaces within the urban area
- Protect areas from urbanisation through the identification of 'no go' areas — (these would be areas with high environmental and heritage values, or areas that are vulnerable to climate change)
- Strengthen natural protection of existing natural areas and by restoring ecological linkages through a regional natural network

- Use natural systems and processes in urban and infrastructure design, and to place a greater emphasis on green engineering solutions for the built environment
- Develop tools to manage pressures in rural and coastal areas
- Review and revise current policies to ensure regulative and economic instruments create bridges, not barriers, to sustainable practices.

The Auckland region has number of strategies and policies outline the need for maintaining, enhancing and protecting the natural environment, for both its intrinsic value and the value that the community holds. A compact settlement form that minimises urban sprawl into valued natural and heritage areas in the region is one way Auckland can contribute to the region's vision and goals.

If, however, any environmental goals are to be achieved, then progress can only be made by working with partners, providing better information, and consistently implementing urban and open space policies. Understanding the environment and knowing where valued heritage resources are, is crucial to this and can be achieved through monitoring trends over the long term.