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Cover picture – View of Whāngārei harbour entrance from Mount Manaia

Overview



Overview

This section includes a description of the long term plan , the consultation on the draft plan, a summary of the outcomes of consultation for each of the proposals within the draft plan ; the audit opinion on the plan and an outline of the council's strategic direction including the council objectives.

Message from the Chairman and Chief Executive

Welcome to this Long Term Plan for 2012-2022 - our vision for council's focus and direction for the next 10 years. One of the biggest issues we faced while considering public feedback was how to keep your rates bills affordable, yet still meet community expectations and improve specific services and activities.

With this Long Term Plan we aim to continue to deliver our existing programmes and strategies with some enhancements, increase our involvement in economic development and implement new government policies.

The tough economic conditions of the past several years are still affecting many Northlanders and there's also less external (central government) funding available; largely because of government prioritising its own spending to help with the rebuild of earthquake-stricken Christchurch. In a bid to balance extra demand on our resources but keep rates affordable, we are now slowing the redirection of our investment income away from rates subsidies and into economic development.

Last year we started a five-year transition to shift our investment income into a new 'Investment and Growth Reserve' to fund projects that increase job numbers and improve the region's economic performance. Eventually the reserve will receive all of our annual investment income (approximately \$6.7 million yearly). Changing the transition phase from five years to 10 years, cuts the projected annual general rates increases associated with the redirection in half.

Key focus areas for this council over the next ten years and particularly in the first three years of this plan include:

- Developing and implementing the new Regional Policy Statement. This is arguably Northland's most important planning document because it sets out how the region's natural and physical resources should be managed. With your help, we're aiming to



enable development and economic and social improvements, but also safeguard environmental bottom lines, Northland's special places and the things we – and those who will come after us – value.

As part of this, we've already completed a 10-year review of our existing regional policy statement and have drafted a new policy statement capturing the current issues Northland's facing. It also recognises a number of law changes since the last document was developed. We've already received valuable input on the new draft document from more than 160 residents and organisations after we carried out informal consultation in late 2011 and plan to release a refined, formal document for public consultation later in 2012.

- Improving Northland's economic performance. As well as investing in specific projects that will increase jobs and help Northland's economy, the new Investment and Growth Reserve will also be used to fund the council's economic development organisation to find, facilitate and deliver these projects. We have adopted the criteria proposed in the draft plan for determining eligible projects for funding. The council intends to use the reserve to generate returns on our investments that can then be invested in more economic projects.

We have disestablished NRCCT and amalgamated the promotional and economic development delivery arms into a single

organisation to achieve more effective and efficient services.

- Improving Northland's freshwater management. Water is one of Northland's most precious natural resources and much of council's work revolves around it. Our rivers and streams, lakes, aquifers and wetlands are important to us for our survival and economic prosperity; provide important habitats for a range of plants and animals and have cultural and historical value to Northlanders.

The government's new direction for improving the management of the region's freshwater lakes, rivers, aquifers and wetlands gives us an extra impetus to make some changes for the benefit of the region. It means we will set new objectives with associated quality and allocation limits. Interim default limits will be established and we will address catchments with the most pressure first (on quality and/or quantity). Catchments will be prioritised on the basis of known issues, with objectives, limits and flows set for the most urgent first.

- Flood protection improvements. We are committed to working through the 27 identified priority rivers implementing flood protection works where it is economically viable to the particular communities affected. In the first three years of this Long Term Plan we have projected capital works estimated at over \$12 million for Whāngārei, Kerikeri-Waipapa and Awanui. Further works are proposed for Kaeo in 2015-16 when Stage 1 will have been fully funded.

Other enhancements to our core services include:

- A small increase in our resourcing for pest management, an extra \$100,000 annually to target marine and pest weeds. We received overwhelming support for increasing our efforts to manage the region's pests and protect our special places and outstanding environment.
- An additional \$200,000 of funding for land management water quality initiatives to complement the work advanced by the Environment Fund and Northland's programme for implementing the Freshwater National Policy Statement.

All the initiatives described in this foreword and the full plan including our current activities - are reflected in a new set of objectives we've developed for this Long Term Plan and which set a new direction for us.

The new objectives are listed below and aim to contribute towards Northland's community well-being now and in the future:

- Maintain and improve the quality of Northland's overall environment.
- Build a business friendly environment that encourages business and employment opportunities.
- Invest in Northland to increase all our communities' economic performance and quality of living and reduce disparities.
- Promote regionally significant infrastructure and improvements that enable economic development, enhance the environment, and connect people and Northland to the wider world.
- Encourage the sustainable access and use of our environment in ways that will progress our collective quality of living.
- Promote the awareness and appreciation of our heritage, landforms, freshwater and marine environment to encourage our collective pride in Northland.

The council is mindful that the recently released local government reforms may affect our planning into the future. We are keeping a watching brief on the development of the reforms and will consider their implications carefully.

Your comments – whether in support or opposition – have collectively helped us better understand your needs and balance a range of expectations against the level of rates we need to fund them. We thank everyone who took the time to forward their views and come to the submission hearings.



Craig Brown
Chairman



Malcolm Nicolson
Chief Executive Officer

Our councillors



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About this plan

The Long Term Plan 2012-2022 reflects the council's future vision and direction for what it delivers on behalf of Northlanders. It reflects the council's current thinking and how we plan to deliver on it over the coming decade, based on various assumptions about our future environment.

We review this 10 year outlook every three years to reflect current policy, legislation requirements and take into consideration the current economic climate. In some cases future policy direction, legislation or a change in our economic circumstances may result in a change in direction and this may have different effects on the budgets rates and services described in this plan.

This plan includes budget projections for all of the council's groups of activities; the impact on the council's funding sources (including the impacts on rates) and the overall financial position for the council over the next 10 years. The plan describes the activities that we deliver; why we deliver them and how these activities contribute to community well-being and the council objectives. The information is related back to the current year's budget with explanations for any significant differences. The plan contains the council's major financial policies for borrowing, investing and the funding of its activities. It also contains the council's policy on significance, appointment of directors, partnerships with the private sector and developing Māori capacity for participation in the council's decision-making processes.

Each time we update the plan we consult with you the residents to seek your comment/feedback on any proposed changes to our activities, policies, funding, rates and council-controlled organisations. In the two years between long term plan updates the council develops an annual plan which highlights any differences to the projections contained in the Long Term Plan and contains any new proposals for public consultation. The annual plans also cater for differences in any of the financial assumptions made within the long term plan, for example, interest and inflation rates.

Guide to reading this plan

The information about the council's services/activities, policies and financials have been divided into the following sections:

Overview

This section includes a description of the long term plan, the consultation on the draft plan, a summary of the outcomes of consultation for each of the proposals within the draft plan; the audit opinion on the plan and an outline of the council's strategic direction including the council objectives.

Financial overview

This section includes our financial strategy, which describes the overall management approach of our financials. It links to the region's current and forecast situation and drivers for change, and also includes information about our rates including examples of the forecast rates for 2012/13 and the Prospective Funding Impact Statement.

Our activities

This section includes a full description of the council's activities/services (including expenditure/income budgets) for the next ten years, performance measures and targets, contribution to council objectives, asset information (where relevant), with comparative data from the previous year. It also includes information about the council's council-controlled organisations and its subsidiary, Northland Port Corporation.

Forecast information

This section includes a description of the underlying financial assumptions used when building the budgets and financial statements. It contains our financial statements including a new statement for the council's reserves and for capital expenditure. These statements show you the cost of services and how the costs are apportioned, and provide the basis for long term planning by enabling an informed assessment of the financial sustainability of the services and policy decisions of the council. The statements are prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practices (GAAP) and the New Zealand International Financial Reporting Standards.

Financial policies

The financial policies explain how the cost of achieving the plan will be met. The policies included in this plan include:

- Revenue and Financing Policy – shows how each activity's operational and capital expenditure is funded and explains why.
- Treasury Management Policy – policies on investing and borrowing.
- Remission and postponement of rates policies – remission of rates involve reducing the amount owing or waiving collection of rates altogether.

Non-financial policies

Includes the new Significance Policy, appointment of directors, partnerships with the private sector and policy on developing Māori capacity for participating in council decision-making.

User fees and charges

This section includes the full schedules for the council's fees and charges.

Legislative changes to the Long Term Plan

The council's Long Term Plan needs to meet certain legal requirements under the Local Government Act 2002. This legislation was amended in 2010 to improve the effectiveness of local government long term plans and included the following changes from previous long term plans:

- A new definition for "community outcomes" and the deletion of mandatory consultation, identification and reporting processes.
- Inclusion of a financial strategy to show the overall effects of proposals on the council's services, rates, debt and investments.
- A set format for all councils to use for the funding impact statements to show consistency across the sector and allow for easier comparisons between councils.
- The previous year's financial information is included in the statements for easier comparison.
- Many policies included in former long term plans can now be amended outside of the long term plan process; after this plan is adopted the council's treasury

management policies can be amended without public consultation.

- Mandatory groups of activities have been introduced for flood protection and control works – we have called this 'river management'.
- A list of our reserves (with their purpose) and the associated amounts (in the fund and expected to be withdrawn or deposited in the period).

About our consultation

We released the Draft Long Term Plan 2012-2022 for consultation with Northland residents and ratepayers for one month, from 19 March to 19 April 2012. A summary of the draft plan was distributed to mailboxes throughout Northland and the summary and full plan were available on the council's website along with a submission form and discussion forum.

During that month, council staff and councillors talked to seven interested community groups and stakeholder groups about the proposals in the draft plan after sending invitations to over 63 stakeholder groups. The consultation timeframe coincided with the formal public consultation on Northland's Regional Land Transport Programme 2012-2015 and the meetings included information on the draft programme.

We received 1,194 submissions on the draft plan and 100 submitters took the opportunity to present their views in person at the council hearings held in Dargaville, Kaitiāia, Kerikeri, Kaikohe and Whāngārei. Two of the hearings (in Kerikeri and Whāngārei) were joint hearings of the council and the Regional Transport Committee to also hear submissions on the Regional Land Transport Programme. All the submissions were printed and made available to the councillors and publicly at the regional offices and at the hearings.

Summary of consultation outcomes

Below is a summary of the council decisions following consultation on the draft plan and includes the outcome for each of the significant proposals that were included in the draft plan for community feedback.

Rates projections

This long term plan projects general rates increases on average of approximately \$11-16 per year (4.5-8.5%). The rates increases reflect inflation adjustments of 2.3-5.4% (staff costs at the lower end; electricity at the higher end); more expenditure on services and transitioning investment income away from rates subsidies so it can be used to fund economic development projects.

The increase in general rates for the first year of the plan (8.5%) is higher than the proposed average rate increase of 6.8% because it reflects additional expenditure to deliver more land management water quality initiatives.

New expenditure in 2012/13 that is ongoing over the term of the plan (these were included as proposals in the draft plan):

- Biosecurity \$100,000 a year – additional resources to accelerate our current efforts to manage the region's pests. It will be split between targeting marine pests (\$25,000) and increasing the scale and diversity of projects currently undertaken in weed control (\$75,000).
- Monitoring costs for priority rivers \$71,000 a year – to fund 14 new hydrometric sites for the priority rivers network to enable flood modelling and risk assessments and provide flood warning information.
- Biodiversity \$63,000 – additional resources to target clusters of erosion prone land within catchments and collaborate with land owners in the implementation of soil conservation measures in priority areas.
- National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management – implementation costs of \$110,000 a year which were unable to be

absorbed into business as usual resourcing.

- Māori engagement \$30,000 a year – additional resources to engage with Māori on resource management, economic development and participation in council's decision-making processes.

New expenditure in 2012/13 for the first three years only (a proposal in the draft plan):

- The marine areas project of \$25,000 a year - to investigate options and opportunities for better managing our marine environment, including the suitability of a marine park on the east coast of Northland.

Additional expenditure (adopted in response to submissions):

- An additional \$200,000, funded from the Land Management Rate, for land management water quality initiatives. These initiatives will be delivered in conjunction with the council's Environment Fund. This additional expenditure will complement work around implementing the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management. Business cases for the additional programmes are being prepared.

New council objectives

Improving the environmental, social, economic and cultural well-being of Northland is the council's overall goal, and the council has adopted the new objectives (or 'community outcomes') below to help us set a course to get there.

New council objectives:

- Maintain and improve the quality of Northland's overall environment.
- Build a business friendly environment that encourages business and employment opportunities.
- Invest in Northland to increase all our communities' economic performance and quality of living and reduce disparities.
- Promote regionally significant infrastructure and improvements that enable economic development, enhance the environment, and connect people and Northland to the wider world.

- Encourage the sustainable access and use of our environment in ways that will progress our collective quality of living.
- Promote the awareness and appreciation of our heritage, landforms, freshwater and marine environment to encourage our collective pride in Northland.

You can find more background on the new council objectives on pages 14-22.

Transition to change use of investment income

The council adopted a ten year transition for the re-direction of its investment income away from funding operations (and subsidising rates) to providing funding for the new Investment and Growth Reserve to fund economic development projects. The impact of a ten-year transition means on average rates will increase \$8.39 per year in Years 2-9 of this long term plan. There is no additional impact from the transition in Year 1 (2012/13) as the amount redirected in 2011/12 equated to two years' worth under a ten year transition. The ten year transition phase will alleviate, to some degree, the rates impact of the extra work proposed in this plan, and acknowledges the effects of the recession on individual households.

Criteria for new Investment and Growth Reserve

The council adopted the criteria proposed in the draft plan for funding economic projects from its new Investment and Growth Reserve. The full criteria for the Investment and Growth Reserve are on pages 120-121.

Change to council-controlled organisation structure

A streamlined structure has been adopted for the council's organisations. The Northland Regional Council Community Trust will be disestablished and the Trust Fund will come back in-house. The Trust Fund will be ring-fenced, managed independently and inflation adjusted over the lifetime of the plan to retain its real value. The residual income from the Fund will go to the Investment and Growth Reserve to contribute towards the operations of the sole operating council-controlled organisation.

The Trust Fund will be renamed the Community Investment Fund. Enterprise Northland Trust will become a shell entity to be available if a charitable opportunity is identified. The council becomes the owner of Destination Northland Limited and will widen its focus to include the delivery of economic development programmes and facilitating projects.

There is more detail about the new council-controlled organisation structure on pages 115-117.

Reduced funding for Destination Northland Limited

The council has committed the existing level of funding to Destination Northland Limited for 2012/13. Further discussions will be held between council, Destination Northland Limited and the tourism industry on future funding levels.

New direction for managing water

The council's implementation of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS Freshwater) will be prioritised (Option A), with interim limits. This means the implementation programme will target high-priority catchments first with time for adequate community consultation. Setting interim default limits for every catchment in Northland will prevent further degradation of water quality, especially in vulnerable areas that are not considered a high priority.

Northland's outstanding water bodies

Council has adopted the proposed criteria within the draft plan for identifying outstanding water bodies. An initial list of outstanding water bodies includes Kai Iwi Lakes (Taharoa, Waikere and Kaiwi) and the Waipoua River. A further review that is part of the implementation programme may identify more outstanding water bodies.

The indicative priority one water bodies/catchments identified to date include the outstanding water bodies listed above, Mangere River, Waitangi and the Upper Whāngārei Harbour catchments.

For more details about the NPS Freshwater and the programme to implement it see pages 89-90 of this plan.

New river management works

Whāngārei flood detention dam

A flood detention dam will be built in Raumanga in 2013/14, at an estimated cost of \$6,876,728 (excluding GST), as stage two of the Whāngārei Urban Rivers Flood Scheme. The geotechnical engineering assessment (completed during consultation on the draft plan) confirmed the site's suitability. The dam build will be funded through an internal loan and repaid over 25 years by extending the current Whāngārei urban rivers management rate. The rate will be charged per separately used or inhabited part (SUIP) of a property.

Whāngārei Urban River Flood Scheme Rates (including GST)	Current rate for 2011/12 per rating unit	New rate for 2012/13 per SUIP	New rate for 2013/14 and next 25 years per SUIP
Commercial CBD properties	\$247.83	\$247.83	\$274.37
Residential CBD properties	\$94.19	\$94.19	\$104.28
Commercial and residential non-CBD properties	\$33.21	\$33.21	\$36.77

New rate and works for Kerikeri-Waipapa

A new uniform targeted rate will be established for properties within the Kerikeri, Waipapa and Wairoa River catchments to fund river maintenance, flood modelling maintenance and detailed design for flood risk reduction options. The new rate will be \$48.90 (including GST) for the next two years. The targeted rate will be reviewed during a future annual plan consultation when the flood protection works, currently estimated at \$2,130,048 (excluding GST), have been refined.

Kaihū River Management Scheme

As proposed there will be no further investigations of capital works on the Kaihū river scheme. Extensive modelling has been unable to produce an equitable solution to the flooding and drainage issues of the Kaihū Valley. The current maintenance of the river channel and the current targeted rate will continue.

Kaeo stage two

Stage two of the Kaeo flood scheme, which also includes improvements to Waikara Creek will proceed with construction scheduled for 2015/16, at an estimated cost of \$605,679 (excluding GST). The existing targeted rate will be used to repay the stage two works internal loan over seven years and is projected to increase in 2015-16 from \$74.53 to \$108.12.

Awanui Flood Management Scheme

The Waihoe floodgate will be upgraded in 2012/13 at an estimated cost of \$100,000. The upgrade involves improving the discharge capacity through the Waihoe Channel. A further \$3.9 million of flood protection improvements are projected to be constructed in 2014/15 following further consultation on the options and a rating review of the Awanui flood management scheme. The rating review will change or confirm the current rating groups to reflect the benefits received from the flood scheme.



Awanui flood gates

Bus services in Kaitāia

A new targeted rate will be established to fund the current bus service operating in the Kaitāia, Mangōnui and Ahipara area. There was a good level of support in the submissions we received with many submitters prepared to fully fund the service if it was necessary. The service has not reached the threshold for government subsidy so the full funding amount will be raised through a targeted rate of \$15.27 (including GST) per separately used or inhabited part of a rating unit for 2012/13.

Bus services in Dargaville

The bus service in Dargaville received very little support through the submissions. The service did not meet the threshold for government subsidy and the operator has since indicated their withdrawal from the service. No funding for a bus service in Dargaville has been included in this plan.

Rescue Helicopter rate

The targeted rate for the rescue helicopter service for Northland will continue. Council has given NEST (Northland Emergency Services Trust), a three-year funding commitment for the \$600,000 funding.

Changes to monitoring activity

The small reductions in service proposed for our monitoring activity will proceed. The bathing sites monitored by council will reduce from 85 sites to 55 sites (any sites dropped from the programme that are not suitable for swimming or shellfish collection will have permanent signs erected). Our chemical collection service will cease as there are alternative commercial services available. There will also be a 30% reduction in resourcing for the Environmental Hotline (the types of calls to the Environmental Hotline that are no longer followed up are still being determined and will be publicised when finalised).

Council's leasehold property investment

The proposed criteria for selling some of the council's 76 longer term leases was accepted. These are our perpetual leases with 21-year rent review periods which are together worth \$16.2 million. Sales will be on a discretionary, case-by-case basis provided:

- Any sale would always be at or above market value with current leaseholders given first option to buy;
- A potential sale demonstrates clear economic development benefits including:
- The intention to expand the business or upgrade current buildings or infrastructure;
- Job creation;
- Other business development opportunities that would not otherwise be available if the land was leasehold.

The proceeds from any sale will be reinvested as part of the council's balanced mixed investment portfolio.

Joining the Local Government Funding Agency

The council will not be joining the new Local Government Funding Agency as either a principal shareholder or a guaranteeing local authority. This means we can still be a borrower but borrowings from the agency may be capped at \$20 million. The new agency, a council-controlled trading organisation, has been founded by local and central government to enable local authorities to borrow at lower interest margins than would otherwise be available.

New Significance Policy

The proposed Significance Policy was adopted by the council. The Significance Policy gives direction on the level of information and consultation required for local government decisions.

Revised policy on working with Māori

The revised policy on the development of Māori capacity to participate in the decision-making processes of local authorities was adopted. The policy has been renamed "Māori participation in decision-making policy".

User fees and charges

The user fees and charges as proposed in the draft plan were adopted - in general terms these fees and charges will increase each year to keep up with inflation. The fees and charges included a new fee for large boat ramps and a new scale of charges for cases of significant non-compliance with farm dairy effluent consents.

Council's objectives and vision

Council objectives

The council has defined a set of new council objectives for this Long Term Plan and future direction for the council as an organisation. The council objectives are the outcomes that the council aims to achieve in order to promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of the region (and meet the new legal definition of "community outcomes"). The council objectives have not been prioritised by the council – while each is equally important there will be periods of time over the life of this plan when some will be given a stronger emphasis and proportion of resources as policies and plans are developed and initiatives implemented.

The council will report its progress annually against each of the new council objectives within its Annual Report. Measures for reporting against each council objective will be developed following the adoption of the Long Term Plan.

This Long Term Plan has been developed under new local government legislation which includes a new definition of "community outcomes" changing from the community's identified priorities to the outcomes the council aims to achieve in order to promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of the region.

New council objectives:

Maintain and improve the quality of Northland's overall environment.

Build a business friendly environment that encourages business and employment opportunities.

Invest in Northland to increase all our communities' economic performance and quality of living and reduce disparities.

Promote regionally significant infrastructure and improvements that enable economic development, enhance the environment, and connect people and Northland to the wider world.

Encourage the sustainable access and use of our environment in ways that will progress our collective quality of living.

Promote the awareness and appreciation of our heritage, landforms, freshwater and marine environment to encourage our collective pride in Northland.

Our vision

Creating a region of choice

Our motto

Putting Northland first

Our mission

Through growth, putting Northland first by providing regional leadership, environmental protection, economic opportunities and integrated infrastructure.

Our values

- Put our community and region first
- Be a champion for our natural environment
- Be forward thinking and innovative
- Be flexible and open
- Be responsive and deliver value
- Be professional and accountable
- Work with others

Our values in action

Put our community and region first

Provide regional leadership, focussed on working towards strategies and action which will make a positive difference to Northland's communities and people.

Be a champion for our natural environment

We will provide policies, guidance and resources to enable our community to manage and enhance its environmental sustainability.

Be forward thinking and innovative

We will always look long-term at issues facing our region and seek innovative solutions.

Be flexible and open

We will adapt to change quickly, listen carefully to our communities and act fairly and openly in everything we do.

Be responsive and deliver value

We are committed to understanding what is important to Northlanders and take action to deliver value to them.

Be professional and accountable

We strive to deliver the highest levels of professionalism and we are responsible to the people and ratepayers of the Northland region.

Work with others

We will work together and in partnership with others to achieve the most effective and affordable outcome for the Northland region.

Whatungarongaro he tangata toitu te whenua – Mankind passes on but the earth remains for all eternity

E rua ano nga hua e kite ana e te tāngata i te wā e ora ana e ia i runga i te mata o te whenua. Ko nga mea na Te Atua i hanga, me nga mea na te tāngata ano i hanga.

Ta Te Atua i hanga ai, he taonga, he mea tapu, tapu rawa, mei ata tiaki marika, mehemea ngaro ai, ka ngaro mo ake tonu atu.

Ta te tāngata i hanga ai, he taputapu noa iho māna, ka whakamahia, ka whakapaua, ka whakarerea, e taea noa iho te whakahoua.

During a person's time on earth, he or she will see only two things; Things created by the hand of God and things manufactured by the hand of man.

Things created by the hand of God are of divine creation and are given the sacred description of Taonga. Being most sacred, they must be protected at all costs for once lost, they are lost forever.

Things manufactured by the hand of man are personal belongings and are for his or her convenience only. As such, they are usable, consumable, disposable and replaceable.

How we intend to achieve these objectives

Each of the council objectives is listed below with a table showing which council activities contribute towards achieving them. A commentary on how each of the groups of activities contributes to the council objectives can be found on the group of activity pages 82-141.

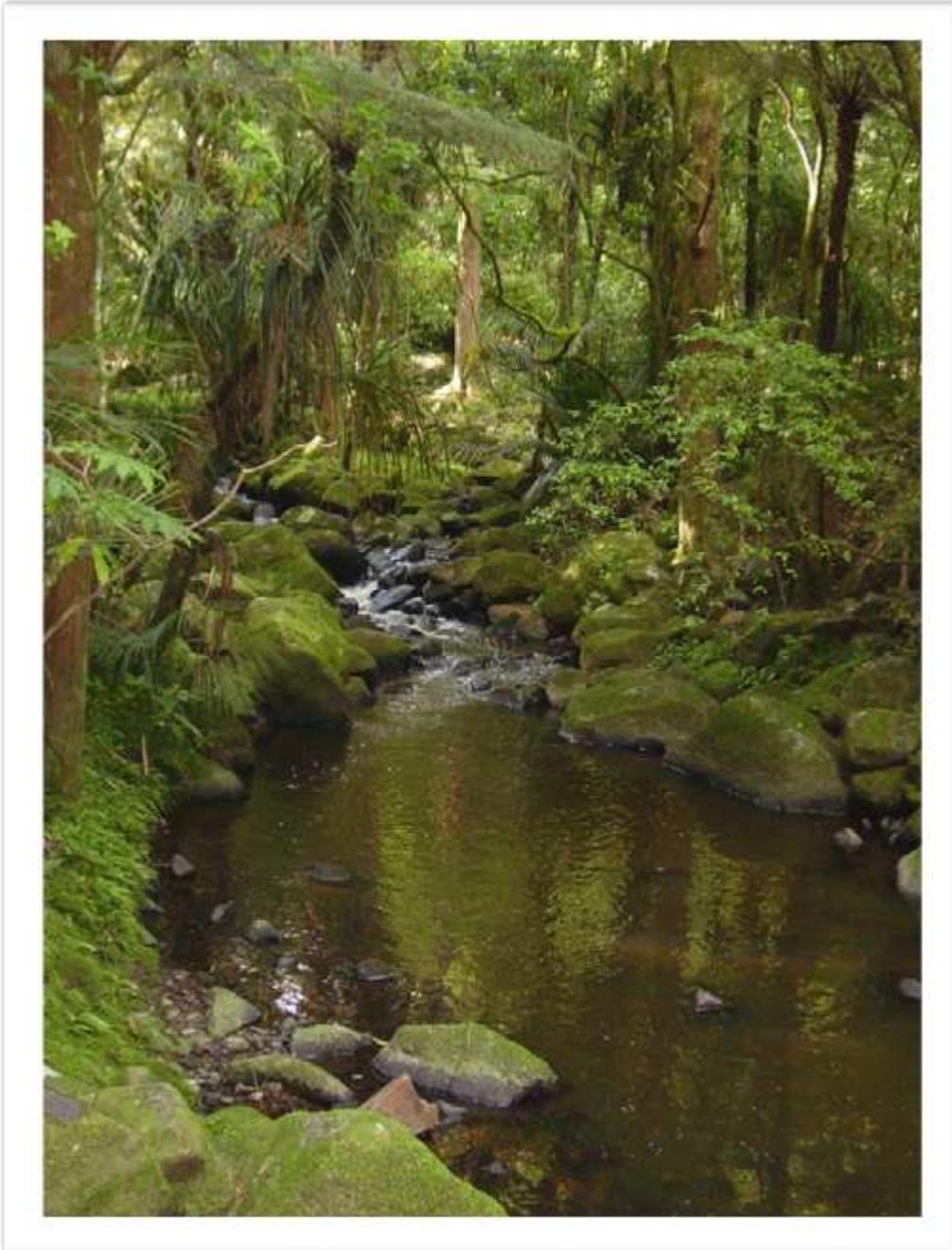
Council objective: **Maintain and improve the quality of Northland's overall environment.**

Related well-beings – environmental, cultural, social

Related council strategies/plans/policies	Related council activities	Current and future projects/initiatives	Proposed performance measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Policy Statement Coastal Plan Regional Water and Soil Plan Air Quality Plan Pest Management strategies Marine Oil Spill Contingency Plan Wetland Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource management planning Biosecurity Land and biodiversity Consents Monitoring Oil pollution response Harbour safety and navigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Regional Policy Statement Plan changes to regional plans Freshwater NPS initiatives Wetlands strategy Pest management strategies Integrated harbour management plans Estuarine restoration projects – mangrove management Soil conservation plans Lakes strategy Coastcare programme Marine protected areas Environment Fund Soil conservation and sediment/erosion control programme Mapping special places (Regional Policy Statement project) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water quality Oil pollution response Natural hazard profiling Safe pilotage Pest management Air quality

Council's strategic resource management policies, plans, programmed and projects all contribute to the achievement of this objective. The new Regional Policy Statement (currently in draft) and the programme for implementing the National Policy Statement for Freshwater will be central to the future achievement of the objective. Between them, they focus on managing key aspects of Northland's environment such as improving the region's water quality, and improving the management of the our precious coast, including its natural character, Northland's landscapes, natural features, historic heritage, wetlands, lakes and biodiversity. Our current programmes: e.g. Coastcare, oil spill response, pest management, wetlands, state of the environment monitoring, the Environment Fund, all support the objective and along with our resource management plans, will shape and in turn be shaped by our progress towards this objective.

In achieving this objective we are also contributing to other objectives, such as the sustainable use of our environment to progress our collective well-being, and encouraging our collective pride. Therefore progress against this objective will be achieving gains in not only Northland's environmental well-being but also in our cultural and social well-being. There are also significant economic benefits to be had in moving forward on these objectives. For example: having sufficient water at a suitable quality creates recreation and business opportunities; well managed heritage, landscapes and coastal environment attracts us, visitors, and investment, creating regional wealth and job opportunities, and the services we get from a well-managed environment - clean air, water filtration, soil maintenance and erosion and flood control - all have an economic value to Northland.



Council objective: **Build a business friendly environment that encourages business and employment opportunities.**

Related well-being – economic

Related council strategies/plans/policies	Related council activities	Current and future projects/initiatives	Proposed performance measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Policy Statement Strategy for the Sustainable Economic Development of Northland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource management planning Consents Monitoring Harbour safety and navigation Economic development Community representation and engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Regional Policy Statement Plan changes to regional plans Council’s business improvement initiatives (NRC) Business advisory services (EN) Economic monitoring information (NRC) Marine protected areas Horticulture strategy Energy Forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timeliness consents processing Advocacy

Council is at the forefront of some of the most challenging issues for Northland. The decisions it makes directly influence Northland’s well-being and have far-reaching economic, environmental, social and cultural implications, not just today but for generations to come. Council has initiated a stronger internal focus on being business friendly and over the lifetime of this plan will continually review its policy and planning processes to ensure that decision making is based on good advice, which is informed by a range of stakeholders and interests, skills and expertise, mindful of the contexts in which we and Northland operates, with relevant criteria for judging options. We will work with the business community to identify critical consent process improvements required within the council and how best to carry them out while meeting legal obligations. We will continue to work with our partners on the ground, the individuals and their representative organisations, to share knowledge, develop management approaches and to improve resource management performance in Northland.

Council objective: **Promote regionally significant infrastructure and improvements that enable economic development, enhance the environment, and connect people and Northland to the wider world.**

Related well-being – economic, social

Related council strategies/plans/policies	Related council activities	Current and future projects/initiatives	Proposed performance measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Land Transport Programme 30 Year Transport Strategy Priority River Management Plans Navigation and Safety Bylaw Strategy for the Sustainable Economic Development of Northland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport Harbour safety and navigation Economic development Resource management Civil defence emergency management Natural hazard Management River management Community representation and engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic development initiatives River works Regional roading network priorities Airport review Port projects Rail projects Broadband Energy Forum projects Moorings Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus service Pilotage services River design standards Economic development measures Advocacy

The council signals its continued support to progress infrastructural improvements within the region. The Regional Land Transport Programme is a regionally coordinated programme that prioritises infrastructure projects associated with land transport. The council provides the planning and administration support for Northland’s Regional Transport Committee which oversees the programme.

The council has made provision for the rail link to the Marsden Point deep water port by purchasing the land along the proposed route in a joint venture with Ontrack. A rail designation along this route has been granted by the Environment Court (12 April 2012). The council is advocating for Kiwirail to retain rail in Northland through the Regional Transport Committee.

The council’s river management activity includes addressing flooding in prone areas to improve access and land productivity. The council is working through the 27 priority rivers with investigations and design work for capital improvements and annual maintenance programmes.

The new Regional Policy Statement (currently in draft) promotes supporting infrastructure that significantly enhances the environmental, social, economic and cultural wellbeing of Northland. The plan also recognises that upgrades to existing infrastructure and the building of new infrastructure are costly activities and resources are limited, therefore it is important to get the best out of existing infrastructure. This includes using demand management tools to manage the need for new infrastructure, through making the consumption of resources more efficient. The new plan seeks to recognise the importance of future-proofing infrastructure for long term use and to ensure it can more efficiently adapt to changing technological, operational, economic, environmental and social conditions.

The council is a member of the Upper North Island Strategic Alliance (UNISA) which was formed in October 2011 to collaborate for responding to and managing a range of inter-regional and inter-metropolitan issues. Other UNISA members include (Auckland Council, Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Waikato Regional Council,

Hamilton City Council, Tauranga City Council, and Whāngārei District Council). A work programme has been developed for 2012 with the focus on economic development linkages, transport (including rail, roads and freight), ports (including inland ports) and tourism. Wherever possible, this work will leverage off work already planned or underway in the UNISA member councils.

Council objective: **Encourage the sustainable use of our environment in ways that will progress our collective quality of living.**

Related well-being – economic, environmental, social, cultural

Related council strategies/plans/policies	Related council activities	Current and future projects/initiatives	Proposed performance measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Policy Statement Regional Air Plan Regional Coastal Plan Regional Water and Soil Plan Sustainable Land Management strategies Pest Management strategies Civil Defence Emergency Management Plan River Management Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource Management Planning Consents Monitoring Maritime Operations Economic Development Biosecurity Land and Biodiversity Natural hazard management Oil pollution response Transport River management Community Representation and Engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freshwater national policy statement initiatives Regional Policy Statement direction Soil conservation plans Environment Fund Pest management strategies Dairying and Clean Streams Accord Integrated harbour management plans Top wetlands project Soil conservation and sediment/erosion control programme Coastcare Programme Transport initiatives Lakes strategy Moorings Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> River systems River maintenance Water quality Air quality Natural hazard profiling Pest management Consent significant non-compliance Bus service Economic development Advocacy Consent significance non-compliance

One of the key pillars of any regional council is to encourage the sustainable use of the environment as regional councils have the responsibility under the Resource Management Act of managing the region's natural and physical resources for community use and enjoyment today and into the future. The council ensures that as a region we strike the right balance between the competing values and interests of people in those resources - in their use, development and protection. The council is actively managing sustainability of our resource by working with, and assisting others to manage Northland's resources wisely; from advice, to managing pest plants and animals, assisting with farm plans and riparian planting, through to issuing consents to undertake activities, monitoring compliance with those consents and taking action to fix issues when required. Our strategy, policy and planning role focuses on how we can enable development and economic and social improvements, and also safeguard the environmental bottom lines, Northland's special places and the things we value.

Managing Northland’s natural and physical resources is a complex task. The regional council is not the only body interested in resource management. Individuals, groups, communities, tangata whenua, the district councils, our neighbouring council, Auckland Council, and multiple agencies, are all involved and all wish to see their interests and goals achieved. Effective resource management in Northland involves setting goals and then striving to achieve them through a mixture of advocacy, education, encouragement, regulation, economic assistance, enforcement and other forms of intervention. It depends on working with others, taking a long term view and recognising and considering the social, economic, environmental and cultural effects of our decisions.

Council objective: **Invest in Northland to increase all our communities’ economic performance and quality of living and reduce disparities.**

Related well-being – economic, social

Related council strategies/plans/policies	Related council activities	Current and future projects/initiatives	Proposed performance measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy for the Sustainable Economic Development of Northland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment and Growth Reserve funding allocations Enterprise Northland Growth projects Northland Regional Council Community Trust Fund Northland Regional Council’s investment portfolio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GDP per resident Employment rate Business growth

The council is committed to supporting the recovery of Northland’s economy and furthering its resilience and ability to provide prosperous fulfilling work/lives for Northlanders in the future. The new Investment and Growth Reserve is one means of supporting new and expanding business ventures and projects in Northland. The council has requested that the investments held by the council (including the Community Investment Fund, formerly called the Northland Regional Council Community Trust Fund) be shifted over time to increase the proportion of direct investment in Northland, Northland projects and Northland’s well-being; where compatible with achieving similar or better investment returns.

The council has adopted the criteria for determining eligible projects for funding/investment from the Investment and Growth Reserve. Enterprise Northland Trust will be preserved as a charitable entity to be utilised should an opportunity present itself that would increase Northlander’s quality of living. The restructure of the council’s council-controlled organisation provides a vehicle for pursuing economic development projects within Northland that aim to increase jobs in Northland; increase the average weekly household income of Northlanders and increase the GDP of Northland.

Council objective: **Promote the awareness and appreciation of our heritage, landforms, freshwater and marine environment to encourage our collective pride in Northland.**

Related well-being – cultural, environmental

Related council strategies/plans/policies	Related council activities	Current and future projects/initiatives	Proposed performance measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Policy Statement Navigation and Safety Bylaw Regional Coastal Plan Regional Water and Soil Plan Sustainable Land Management strategies Pest Management strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource Management Planning Consents Monitoring Education Land and Biodiversity Natural hazard management Biosecurity Maritime services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultations on plan changes Consent conditions Monitoring of consents Promotional publications and advertising Freshwater national policy statement initiatives Mapping special places (Regional Policy Statement project) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring of consents Water quality Pest management Consent significant non-compliance

Northland is known as “the birthplace of the nation” and is known for its many national icons, such as ancient kauri forest and its scenic and accessible coastline (a national treasure), sheltered harbours, many offshore islands and ecosystems of important conservation value. The council wishes to instil more collective pride in our region by increasing Northlanders’ awareness and appreciation of Northland’s abundant and diverse features that make it a very special place.

About our key planning documents

Regional Policy Statement

The Regional Policy Statement provides the framework for managing resources of our region in a sustainable way. People depend on a healthy environment and the benefits it provides for their well-being and long-term economic success. The council manages the region's natural and physical resources for community use and enjoyment today and into the future by working with others and using efficient processes. Through the Regional Policy Statement we focus on the regionally significant issues that need attention and the overall Northland framework for resource management. Our aim is to ensure our resources are well governed and managed to meet the needs of Northlanders, to provide for their environmental, cultural, social and economic values, and get the greatest long term benefits. We enable development but also safeguard the environmental bottom lines and Northland's special places and the things we value.

We are currently developing a new Regional Policy Statement for Northland. Within the policy statement we must give effect to the government's directions set down in national policy statements. The Regional Policy Statement is then given effect through Northland's regional and district plans by implementing the direction set down.

Key to the development of the Regional Policy Statement is tangata whenua and public participation and engagement to ensure that they strike the right balance between use, development and protection. This balance needs to ensure that we are able to provide for our own well-being today while ensuring there are sufficient resources available for future generations to provide for theirs. Our regional planning documents are therefore intended to enable activities that have minor adverse effects to be carried out with minimal controls, cost effectively, while providing greater guidance and direction (including the requirement to get a resource consent) for

activities that could produce a greater negative environmental, social, cultural or economic effect. Managing Northland's natural and physical resources is a complex task. We define, design and implement tools to change behaviour to achieve council objectives. Effective resource management in Northland therefore involves a mixture of advocacy, education, encouragement, regulation, economic instruments, and other forms of intervention.

Regional Coastal Plan

The Regional Coastal Plan covers the region's "coastal marine area", which is the area from mean high water springs to the 12 nautical mile (22.2 km) limit of New Zealand's territorial sea. The purpose of the regional coastal plan is to assist the council, in conjunction with the Minister of Conservation, to promote the sustainable management of resources in the coastal marine area.

The regional coastal plan for Northland manages the following activities:

- Structures (e.g. wharves and boat ramps)
- Reclamation and impoundment
- Discharges to water
- Dredging
- Moorings and Marinas
- Aquaculture.

It does not cover fisheries management. This is dealt with separately by the Ministry of Fisheries.

Regional Water and Soil Plan

The regional water and soil plan covers the effects of land use activities on water and soil in Northland above the line of mean high water springs. This plan is important for our region considering that we have 1.26 million hectares of land, 26,700 km of rivers and 3480 hectares of natural lake area to manage. The Plan identifies the significant water and soil issues faced by Northlanders and seeks to address these through the policies and rules. It also proactively promotes a programme of environmental education, advocacy, information provision and advice. The Regional Water and Soil Plan for Northland covers the following activities:

- Discharges to land such as landfills, rubbish dumps and tips, sewage, stormwater, agricultural discharges, industrial and trade discharges
- Discharges to water
- The taking, using, damming or diverting of surface and groundwater

- Building and modifying structures in river and lake beds
- Introducing plants to river and lake beds
- Drainage and river control activities
- Earthworks
- Vegetation clearance
- Activities within the Riparian Management Zone along rivers, lakes, and the coastal marine area.

Regional Air Quality Plan

The regional air quality plan applies to air in the whole of the Northland region, excluding the coastal marine area. The plan identifies the significant air quality issues and sets out policies and rules so that these will be managed. Air quality in the coastal marine area is managed through the Regional Coastal Plan for Northland. The Regional Air Quality Plan for Northland applies to all types of discharges to air including:

- Agrichemical spray application
- Abrasive blasting
- Burning of fuel or waste
- Odour
- Industrial pollution
- Dust.

Regional Land Transport Strategy

The Northland 30 Year Transport Strategy 2010-2040 is an in-depth look at where Northland's transport is now, where the region wants to be in 30 years and how it intends to get there. Legally, Northland must produce a strategy like this – with its broad 30 year outlook - every six years. More detailed planning reflecting the overall thrust of the strategy is then developed – and updated – every three years via a Regional Land Transport Programme.

The vision of the document is 'People and freight in Northland have access to an affordable, integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable transport system. To achieve the 2040 Northland transport vision, eight outcomes have been developed to help us plan the priorities we need to focus on.

The eight transport outcomes are:

- A sustainable transport system.
- A safe transport system.
- A region that is well-connected to Auckland and other parts of New Zealand.
- A well-developed and maintained transport network.

- Bulk freight moved from road-based to rail and coastal shipping.
- Improved transport choices and accessibility to key services.
- More efficient port services.
- Enhancing the environmental and cultural values of Northland through strategic transportation planning.

Key initiatives in the strategy include:

- The long term goal of four-laning State Highway 1 from Auckland to the Bay of Islands.
- The development of an international airport in the Bay of Islands.
- Developing a strategic route to direct freight traffic away from State Highway 1.
- The long term goal of bridging the Hokianga Harbour.
- Linking Northport to the national rail network.

Civil Defence Emergency Management Plan

The Civil Defence Emergency Management Plan demonstrates how we deliver civil defence emergency management activities within the region over the next 5 years. In support of its mission "Working together to create resilient communities in Northland", the plan has four key goals:

1. Increasing community awareness, understanding, preparedness and participation in civil defence emergency management; through public education initiatives and community-led civil defence emergency management planning.
2. Reducing the risks from hazards in Northland; by improving the Group's understanding of hazards and by developing and monitoring a Group-wide risk reduction programme which demonstrates how individual agency initiatives contribute to overall regional risk reduction.
3. Enhancing capability to manage civil defence emergencies; through increasing the number and capability of civil defence emergency management staff and by having effective plans, systems and procedures in place to respond to emergencies.
4. Enhancing capability to recover from civil defence emergencies; through a continued focus on Recovery Plans, Professional Development and Exercises.

Regional Pest Management Strategy

The Regional Pest Management Strategies are an action plan that describes why - and how - plant, animal and marine pests will be controlled in Northland. The Strategies aim to educate landowners and the wider public about the threats potential pest species pose and ways to stop these pests reaching Northland. Where a pest is already established here, the Strategies offer a number of options to reduce the threat (or threats) it poses. These include:

- publicity and promotion;
- advice to individual landowners;
- regulation;
- control by the council (either directly or by using contractors);
- joint agency agreements;
- support for Community Pest Control Areas.

The strategy was adopted in June 2010 and typically has a life of five years before it is reviewed. The new strategy has an increased focus on site led programmes as opposed to species led. Site led programmes are considered more strategic with an emphasis on sites of significance and communities motivated to control pests in the long term. There is also a focus on increased surveillance in order to detect pests at the early invasion stages so we don't get another 'possum' or 'gorse' pest.

Strategy for the Sustainable Economic Development of Northland 2001-2011

The goals of the strategy developed in 2007 were to increase capability throughout our region at child, adult, community/marae and business/Hapu/Iwi levels; improve the structure and balance of the Northland economic profile, and increase overall prosperity. The strategies included delivering secure infrastructure to Northland; positioning Northland for investment and growth; establishing a regionally supported process for identifying/developing Northland leaders; deliver improved educational/skills outcomes that lift Northland's productivity and prosperity; instil an enterprise focus in youth prior to transition from school to the workplace; establish integrated "single entry" business growth and support process; encourage research activity in Northland through increased presence and collaboration between NorthTec, universities and crown research institutes; Intensify sector strategic activity – across all key sectors.

Post consultation on the draft Long Term Plan when the proposals have been finalised and the shape of the council-controlled structure is determined the strategy will be refreshed to reflect the new situation.

River Management Plans

The Priority Rivers Flood Risk Reduction Project identified 27 river catchments where the risks of flooding were unacceptable to the communities and essential infrastructure. Five of the river catchments were being managed when this project began; the remaining 22 priority river catchments have had river management plans developed which assessed the potential flood risks and identified potential mitigation options in order to reduce the impacts of flooding on our communities. The plans have been developed using a common methodology for hydrologic and hydraulic modelling, risk management and option identification. This allows for a consistent approach to river management to be applied throughout the region.

The river management plans are intended to be living documents that will evolve over time to assist in guiding future development within the catchment, whilst retaining and improving on the natural river environment with a basis for considering flood risk reduction initiatives.

Marine Oil Spill Contingency Plan

The Northland Marine Oil Spill Contingency Plan details the council's response to oil spills in the marine environment. The primary objectives of this contingency plan are:

- to prevent further pollution from the marine oil spill; and
- to contain and clean up the marine oil spill in a manner that does not cause further damage to the marine environment, or any unreasonable danger to human life, or cause an unreasonable risk of injury to any person.

The plan includes specific objectives about timeframes for evaluating reported oil spills, mobilising an appropriate response operation and commencing clean-up operations.

About our region

Our region

Northland is known as “the birthplace of the nation”. It is also known for its national icons, such as ancient kauri forest and its scenic and accessible coastline (a national treasure), sheltered harbours, many offshore islands and ecosystems of important conservation value.

Northland is a long, narrow peninsula with a subtropical climate. It has a land area of 13,286 km². The region is growing in popularity as a holiday destination due to its outstanding natural environment, warm climate, low population density and proximity to Auckland. It is a diverse region in both socio-economic patterns and environmental characteristics.



Our people

Our population has continued to grow and is estimated to be 159,000 at June 2011 (148,000 in 2006 census). The largest ethnic group is New Zealand European, however, Northland has a growing Māori population, predicted to increase from 31% to 36% by 2016. The largest age group

in Northland is 10-14 year olds. We also have a significant number of older people too – 16.3% of people in Northland are aged 65 years and over, compared with 13.2% of the total New Zealand population.

Our culture

Cultural tourism is an integral part of the experience that Northland offers. Art and heritage trails guide visitors throughout the region along the Twin Coast Discovery Highway. Northland’s waters are one of the favourite recreational playgrounds for lovers of anything aquatic. There are few places in the world that can match what Northland has to offer. Beneath the waters lie many attractions too with some of the world’s top and most easily accessible dive and snorkelling sites. The warm waters of Northland make this New Zealand’s natural playground.

Northland has a rich history as the first area settled by a large Māori population and the centre of early European exploration and settlement. There is an extensive range of traditional and archaeological sites, historic buildings and structures. Traditional sites are important because of their historical, cultural and spiritual significance to Māori. This includes everyday sites such as pā sites and traditional food gathering areas, and wāhi tapu (sacred sites) such as urupā (burial grounds), war sites or tauranga waka (sites where ancestral canoes landed).

Archaeological sites relate to the more recent European occupation during the timber milling and gum digging eras and include camps, dams and coastal shipwrecks. The heritage of Northland is also reflected in the early colonial buildings and structures such as the stone store at Kerikeri, the missionary houses at Waimate, Kerikeri and Russell and the Waitangi Treaty House and National Reserve.

Our economy

Northland has the most diverse economy of New Zealand’s 16 regions. Manufacturing (including the Marsden Point Oil Refinery) is the largest industry, accounting for around 17% of Northland’s GDP. The primary sector (agriculture, forestry and fishing) contributes about 14% followed by business and property services (11%). In the five years prior to the 2008-2011 recession Northland’s economy had been growing in line

with the national economy. This had been an improvement on past years.

However, Northland's economy has struggled to recover from the recession. Economic output in the year to December 2011 is estimated to have increased by 1.5% in real terms, following on from a nil growth in 2010 and a 2% decrease in 2009. The national economy grew by 1.4% in 2011 after increasing by 1.2% in 2010.

The number of people unemployed in Northland has remained relatively static over the past three years at about 6700, equivalent to almost 9% of the labour force. The current level and rate of unemployment in Northland is similar to those that existed in the late 1990s/early 2000s. Since early 2008, the biggest decreases in employment have occurred in the construction, agriculture, forestry and fishing, and retail/wholesale trade sectors. The number of house sales in 2011 was 54% lower than in 2007, with a 5% decrease in the median house price. The fall in prices in Northland was among the steepest in the country. Residential consents have fallen to their lowest level in more than a decade. Prospects for non-residential construction are better, with the value of consents being close to the 10-year average.

Our environment

With its proximity to the sea, almost subtropical location and low elevation, Northland has a mild and rather windy climate. Summers tend to be warm and humid. Winters are usually mild with many parts of the region having only a few light frosts each year. The prevailing wind for most parts of the region is from the south-west, however, in summer tropical cyclones give rise to north-easterly winds and heavy rainfall.

The mean annual rainfall ranges from about 1000-1300mm in low-lying coastal areas, to over 2500mm on some of the higher country, with approximately one-third of the yearly rainfall total falling in the winter months of June, July and August. High-intensity rains can cause severe flooding. Droughts are also common in Northland during the summer months. Records show that parts of the region, on average, have a drought of economic significance every three years.

Climate change is predicted to cause higher temperatures and extreme weather patterns with

greater intensity rain events and periods of drought. Northland's subtropical weather and wide range of places for things to live means we have many different plants and animals, many of them found nowhere else. Our ecosystems of importance include rivers, lakes and wetlands, forest and shrublands and our coastal environment. We also have a range of pest animals and plants we need to eradicate or manage with the help of the community.

Many of Northland's rivers are relatively short with small catchments. The Wairoa River is Northland's largest river draining a catchment area of 3650 km² (29% of Northland's land area). Most of the major rivers flow into harbours, rather than discharging to the open coast, which has significant implications for coastal water quality. The region has a large number of small and generally shallow lakes but we also have Lake Taharoa of the Kai Iwi group which is one of the largest and deepest dune lakes in the country – it covers an area of 237 hectares and is 37 metres deep. Our groundwater is a valuable resource as it is used by many towns and rural settlements for domestic water supply, irrigation and stock drinking water. Northland also has one geothermal field around Ngāwhā Springs, to the east of Kaikohe.

Northland has a diverse history of mining and a significant ongoing mining industry presence. During 2009 the region produced 3.6 million tonnes of minerals with a value of \$35.1 million (excluding the value of cement). Mineral production in Northland is currently dominated by:

- Limestone for the Golden Bay Cement plant at Portland which produces more than half of the cement used in New Zealand also exports cement;
- High quality china clay, produced at Matauri Bay, for export;
- Aggregate; being produced at more than fifty quarries throughout Northland;
- Limestone; used mainly as fertiliser in farming, from more than twenty quarries; and
- Sand; both from onshore and offshore resources, for building and industrial use.

Mineral resource assessments that have been carried out in the past suggest that the region potentially has a wide variety of mineral deposits

and resources (estimated at \$47 billion, excluding aggregate, limestone and sand) and that there is a very real possibility of future mineral exploration investment, new mining operations and consequent economic growth within the region if that potential can be realised. However, before this economic potential could be realised, the reports noted that there needed to be sufficient mineral exploration to locate and define these resources.

Last year the council, with its partners the Far North District Council, government (Ministry of Economic Development, NZ Petroleum Minerals) and Enterprise Northland Trust seized the opportunity to fill in some of the information gaps and commissioned a state of the art aerial survey (mapping aeromagnetic and radiometric methods) of Northland's mineral and resource potential. The information is now available and New Zealand Petroleum and Minerals will run a competitive tender for mineral 'exploration permits' based on the information acquired.

The information is also expected to be useful to a broad range of non-mineral industry sectors – for example agriculture, forestry, horticulture, hazard assessment, and infrastructure providers. Marketing opportunities are currently being explored.

Our infrastructure

The present transportation network includes 6530 kilometres of road, a rail link from Auckland via Whāngārei to Otiria, a deepwater port at Marsden Point and commercial airports at Whāngārei, Kerikeri and Kaitāia. Public transport services are available in urban Whāngārei and between Kaitāia, Mangōnui and Ahipara. The Marsden Point Oil Refinery is a nationally significant asset. The refinery provides 70% of New Zealand's domestic market for petrol, 84% of the diesel, 83% of the jet fuel, all of the fuel oil and 75% of the bitumen that goes on our roads.

The Northport deepwater port offers a number of opportunities. The majority of cargo through the port is timber-related, fertiliser or cement, with kiwifruit as a seasonal addition. A rail link between the port and the main trunk line is in development with land purchases and designations complete. Further progress has been postponed while KiwiRail investigates the economic viability of the Northland-Auckland rail line.

Kerikeri airfield has customs clearance services available and is within flying distance for light aircraft arriving/departing from New Zealand to Norfolk Island, Noumea in New Caledonia or Lord Howe Island, which can be used as a stepping stone to the Australian mainland. Kaitāia airport has the longest sealed runway in Northland (1405 m) and Kaikohe airfield has the longest grass runway in Northland (1500 m).

In Northland there is a very small hydro-electric power station on the Wairua River and a geothermal power plant at Ngawha. The vast majority of Northland's power needs are generated from outside the region and transmitted via the national grid from Auckland. Marine turbines are being investigated for the mouth of the Kaipara Harbour and wind power generation is being investigated for Pouto Peninsula, Ahipara, Glinks Gully and Bayllys Beach.

Currently the government is funding the installation of ultra fast broadband in Whāngārei (the first area to receive the initiative in the country) through a local fibre company. Most of the region has broadband but it is comparatively slow.