DRAFT:

Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy

Te Rautaki Tupu Taaone o Kirikiriroa

October 2022

Hamilton City Council
Te kaunihera o Kirikiriroa

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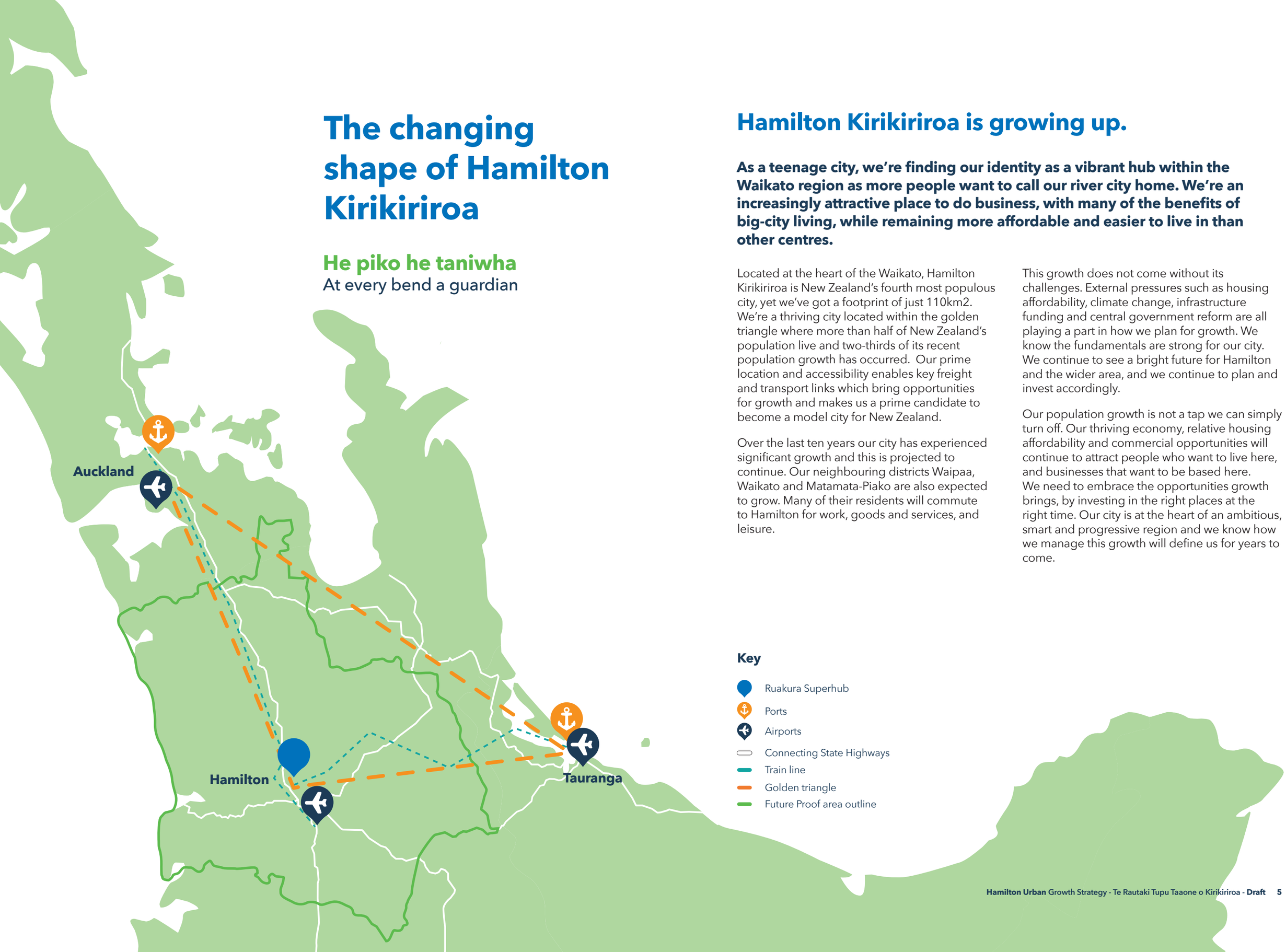
The changing shape of Hamilton Kirikiriroa

He piko he taniwha

At every bend a guardian



Hamilton Kirikiriroa is growing up.

As a teenage city, we're finding our identity as a vibrant hub within the Waikato region as more people want to call our river city home. We're an increasingly attractive place to do business, with many of the benefits of big-city living, while remaining more affordable and easier to live in than other centres.

Located at the heart of the Waikato, Hamilton Kirikiriroa is New Zealand's fourth most populous city, yet we've got a footprint of just 110km2. We're a thriving city located within the golden triangle where more than half of New Zealand's population live and two-thirds of its recent population growth has occurred. Our prime location and accessibility enables key freight and transport links which bring opportunities for growth and makes us a prime candidate to become a model city for New Zealand.

Over the last ten years our city has experienced significant growth and this is projected to continue. Our neighbouring districts Waipaa, Waikato and Matamata-Piako are also expected to grow. Many of their residents will commute to Hamilton for work, goods and services, and leisure.

This growth does not come without its challenges. External pressures such as housing affordability, climate change, infrastructure funding and central government reform are all playing a part in how we plan for growth. We know the fundamentals are strong for our city. We continue to see a bright future for Hamilton and the wider area, and we continue to plan and invest accordingly.

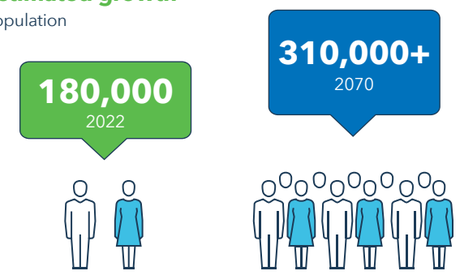
Our population growth is not a tap we can simply turn off. Our thriving economy, relative housing affordability and commercial opportunities will continue to attract people who want to live here, and businesses that want to be based here. We need to embrace the opportunities growth brings, by investing in the right places at the right time. Our city is at the heart of an ambitious, smart and progressive region and we know how we manage this growth will define us for years to come.

Our city currently has around **60,000** homes for around **180,000** people. It's projected that over the next **50 years** these numbers will double to around **120,000** homes for about **310,000** people.

Our **$12 billion** economy made up **41%** of the Waikato's **$29.5 billion** GDP in 2021 and provided **43%** of the jobs across our region.

As we plan for a bigger city, we will continue to **monitor** how quickly we grow. We will **adapt** our approach to match this growth.

Estimated growth
Population



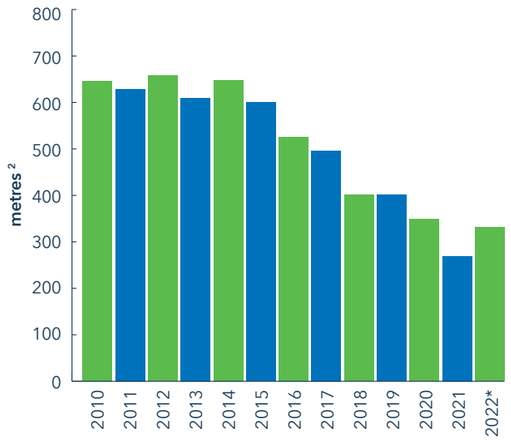
Estimated growth
Housing

Estimated growth
GDP

Estimated growth
Jobs

How the development of our city has changed

Median new freehold section size from 2010 - 2022



* Partial year data
Estimated growth figures have been rounded

How the development of our city has changed

New homes by type for 2010 - 2022

* Partial year data

The changing shape of Hamilton

Note:
This map shows a snapshot of the City's boundaries over time. It does not show every boundary change that has occurred.
Current population has been rounded up from the Statistics New Zealand estimate.

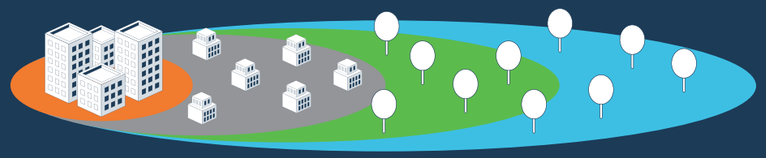
OUR VISION:

Hamilton Kirikiriroa is the best place to live and work with connected, vibrant and prosperous communities

OUTCOMES:

1. **Grow up and out from the central city**
2. **Grow along transport corridors**
3. **Support the development of quality greenfield neighbourhoods**

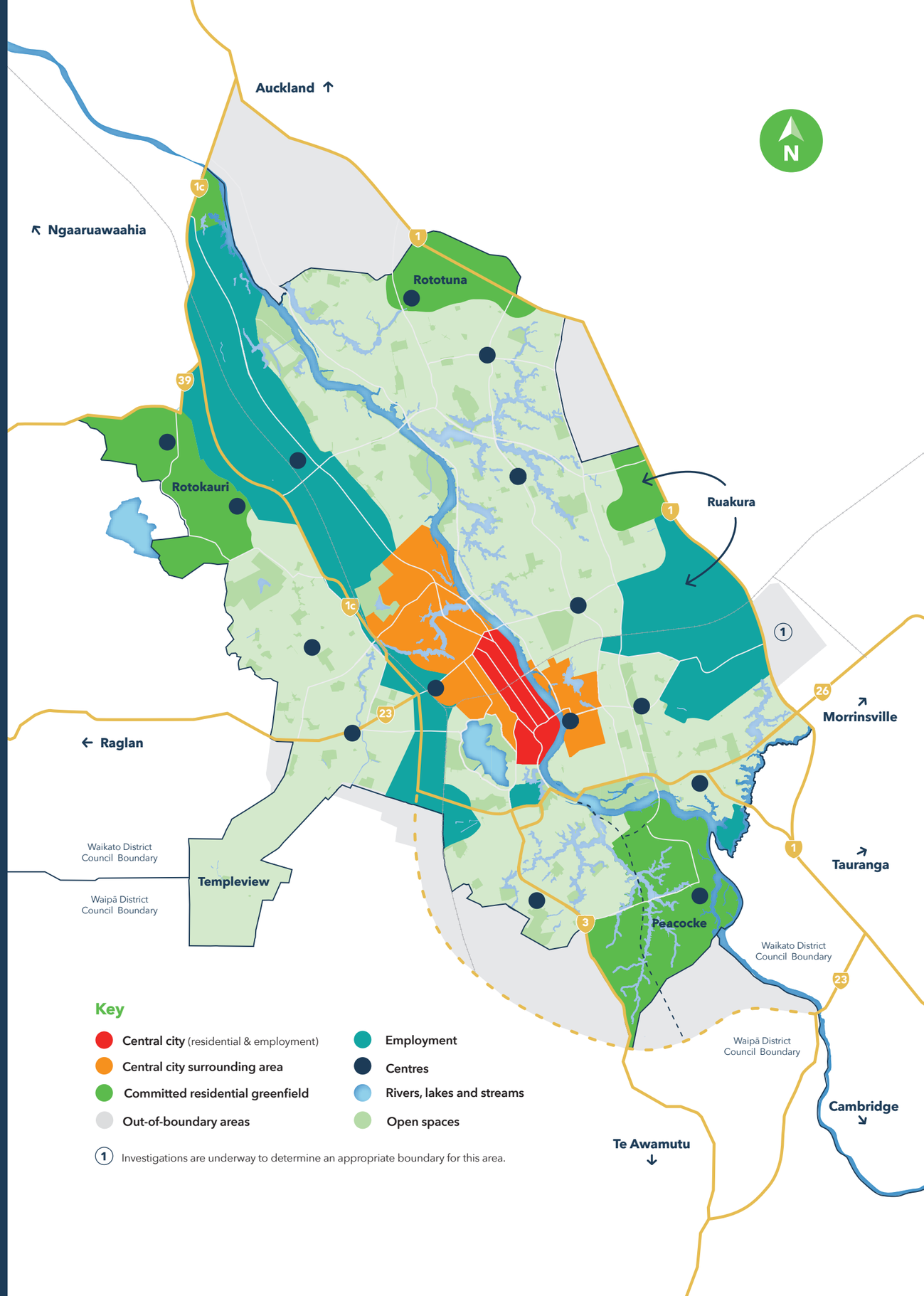
Growing from the central city out >> Corridors >> Quality greenfield communities



Central city | Brownfield | Greenfield | Out of boundary

KEY CONSIDERATIONS AS WE GROW:

- The health and wellbeing of the Waikato River
- Improved travel choices
- Working with our neighbours
- Climate change
- Our environment



Vision and purpose

OUR VISION:

Hamilton Kirikiriroa is the best place to live and work with connected, vibrant and prosperous communities

Kaaore he taaone pai ake i Kirikiriroa hei nohonga, hei waahi mahi tahi ki ngaa hapori whitawhita me ngaa ha

Purpose

This Strategy guides where, when and how Hamilton Kirikiriroa will grow. It's about homes and jobs.

It is a refreshed approach to managing our urban growth for the next 50 years. It will help us deliver communities that improve the wellbeing of Hamiltonians.

Our role in growth is to enable more homes and jobs, ensure there is a pipeline of land supply and support the wellbeing of our communities. We do this in collaboration with our Future Proof partners, through strategic integrated land use and transport planning, provision of infrastructure, infrastructure funding and financing and by partnering with developers, iwi and key stakeholders.

How we got here

This Strategy was developed with our key stakeholders and partners, taking direction from national and regional policies and initiatives. Important factors such as climate change, the impact on the Waikato River and accessibility were considered to determine which growth areas should be prioritised.

We've been guided by the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi including having open and welcoming discussions, working in partnership with iwi, being conscious of our environment and honouring our shared responsibility as guardians of te whenua (the land).

This Strategy is not a standalone document. It sits within the wider context of our other strategies including He Pou Manawa Ora: Pillars of Wellbeing, Access Hamilton: Ara Kootuitui Kirikiriroa, Our Climate Future: Te Pae Tawhiti o Kirikiriroa, Nature in the City, Open Space Strategy, Play Strategy and Housing Strategy which together help us shape a vibrant Hamilton.

Over the last ten years the city has grown by:

33,000 people

11,000 homes

3,000 businesses

We're a young city with a median age of 33+

Key considerations as we grow

The health and wellbeing of the Waikato River

The Waikato River is at the heart of Hamilton Kirikiriroa. It supports life throughout the city and region, it is central to our culture and has shaped the form of our city. As we continue to grow, we must put the health and wellbeing of the River at the heart of everything we do.

As our city grows, this means:

- promoting investment that protects and restores the Waikato River and delivers on our obligations under Te Ture Whaimana o Waikato, the vision and strategy for the Waikato River
- helping our communities conserve water through new ways in how we plan and manage our drinking water
- targeting growth in areas serviced by, or planned to be serviced by, high-quality three waters (drinking water, wastewater, stormwater) infrastructure.

Te Ture Whaimana is the primary direction setting document for activities that affect the Waikato River. It encompasses the vision for a future where a healthy Waikato River sustains abundant life and prosperous communities who, in turn, are all responsible for restoring and protecting the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River, and all it embraces, for generations to come.

Our environment

Nature plays an essential role in economic, environmental, cultural and social wellbeing of our city.

The more vibrant and healthy nature is, the more these benefits are multiplied. Hamilton Kirikiriroa is rich with gully networks that flow to the Waikato River and is home to native birds and other unique species such as the native pekapeka-tou-roa (long-tailed bat). As we grow it's important that we balance the need for housing alongside the need to protect and enhance our biodiversity. It's also important that we make the best use of our limited natural resources such as water.

As our city grows, this means:

- protecting and restoring our existing open spaces and gullies
- protecting and creating multi-purpose green spaces that improve water quality, resilience (to heat and flooding), biodiversity and amenity
- enabling the city to grow up to reduce the need for new greenfield growth areas
- working with our neighbouring councils and partners to ensure areas of ecological and conservation value are identified and protected in the future.

Our Nature in the City strategy sets our goal to increase our native vegetation cover from 2% to 10% by 2050. That's hundreds of thousands of plants across more than 1000 hectares to be restored.

Improved travel choices

Hamilton Kirikiriroa aspires to be a 20-minute city, allowing people to meet most of their daily needs by walking from their home, in pleasant surroundings, and with safe, easy, access to other parts of the city by biking, using micro-mobility or public transport.

As our city grows, this means:

- targeting growth in areas where more of people's daily needs can be met
- ensuring new communities deliver 20-minute city principles from establishment
- people have genuine options so they can choose to travel by modes other than car such as on bike, by bus or by using micro-mobility devices.

Access Hamilton: Ara Kootuitui Kirikiriroa is our transport strategy. It guides how our transport network can enable everyone to connect to people and places in a safe, accessible and smart ways.

Climate change

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time. The impacts of climate change are already being felt in our city and without immediate action, they will intensify – affecting the wellbeing of both current and future Hamiltonians.

Climate change will continue to impact the livelihoods of our community and the urban living experience in our city. For Hamilton Kirikiriroa, this means more extreme weather events, more and longer droughts, and heavier periods of rainfall. Our approach to growth therefore needs to enable our city to reduce carbon emissions while adapting to the changing climate to improve our resilience.

As our city grows, this means:

- creating a more compact city
- making decisions that support a low-carbon future in line with our emissions reduction targets
- enabling growth of homes and jobs in areas that can easily access public and/or active transport modes
- guiding growth that builds our resilience to climate change impacts, such as avoiding areas where there are flooding and other natural hazards.

Our Climate Future: Te Pae Tawhiti o Kirikiriroa is our climate change strategy. It guides how we will reduce emissions, enable low-carbon living, and create a city that is prepared for Hamilton's changing climate.

Working together with our neighbours

Hamilton Kirikiriroa is at the heart of the sub-region. It serves as an important urban hub with people travelling into the city each day for work and other services.

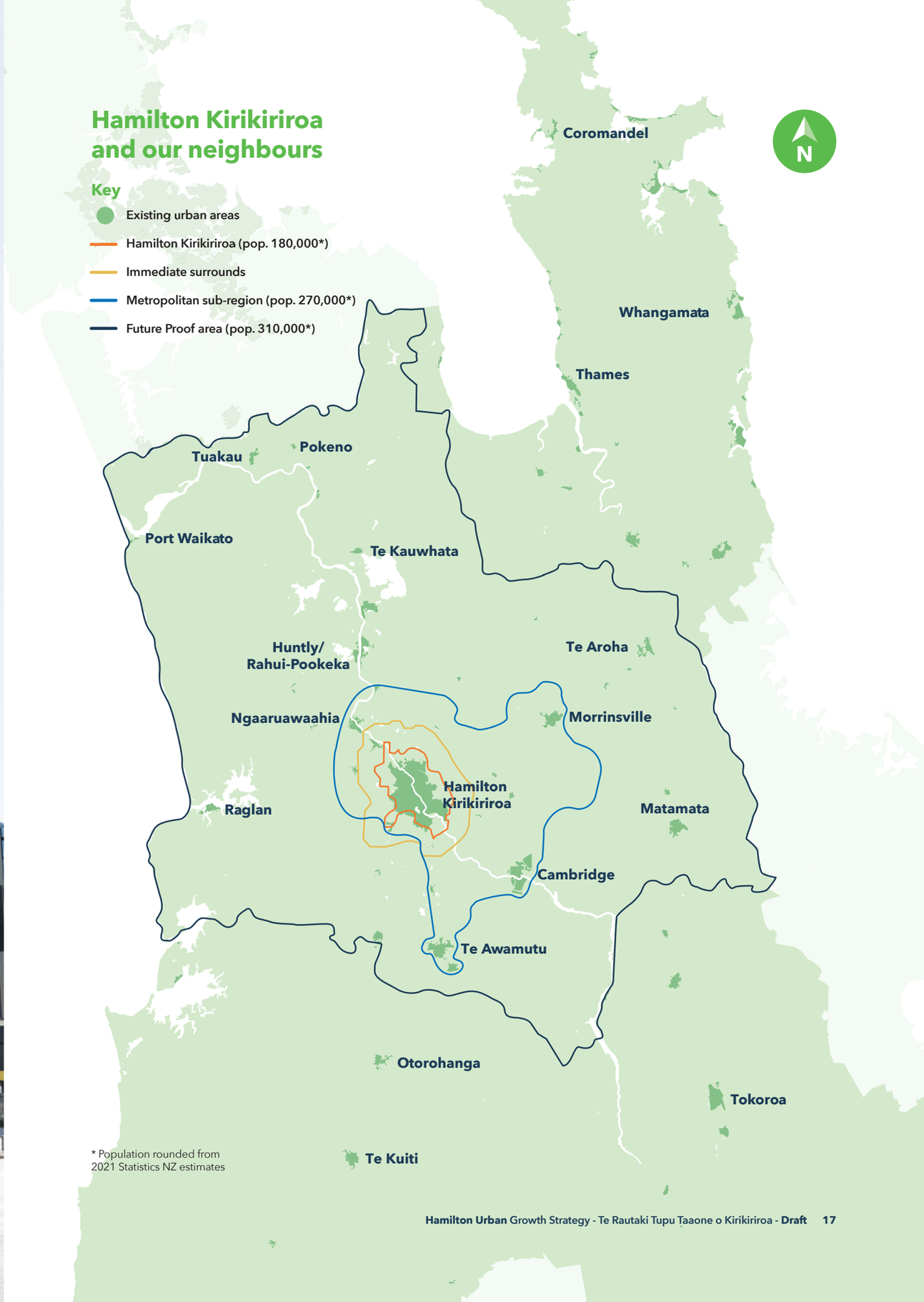
Many of the people living in nearby settlements and towns such as Cambridge, Te Awamutu, Morrinsville and Ngaaruawaahia access the services or work within Hamilton Kirikiriroa. We plan and invest to unlock the potential of the region by collaborating with our key Future Proof partners.

Future Proof is a partnership between local authorities, iwi and central Government agencies, set up to consider how the sub-region should develop into the future. The partners work together to consider the important issues that affect us now and over the next 30 years.

We work with our neighbours to meet our responsibilities under the National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD), Urban Growth Agenda, Hamilton-Waikato Metropolitan Spatial Plan (MSP) and to plan sub-regional infrastructure solutions.

Future Proof has undertaken business case work to identify long-term investments and associated benefits in relation to transport and three waters for our growing sub-region. Many of the recommendations from the business case work identify Hamilton Kirikiriroa as playing a key role in helping to realise these benefits, particularly for transport and wastewater.

Hamilton Kirikiriroa and our neighbours



* Population rounded from 2021 Statistics NZ estimates

What about jobs?

Our central city has capacity for retail and office growth.

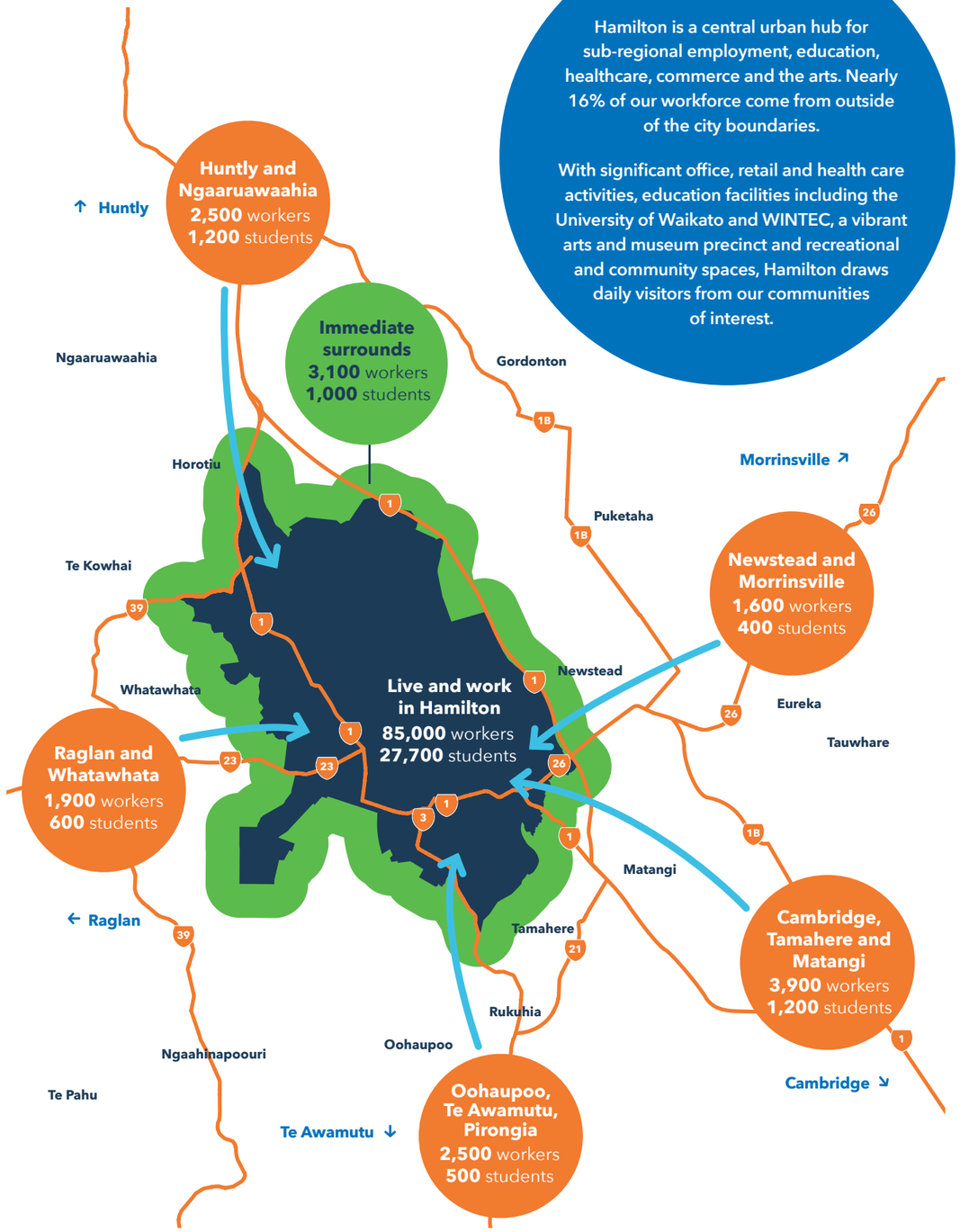
While the existing industrial areas like Frankton, Te Rapa and Rotokauri have some capacity to accommodate growth, Ruakura will become one of Hamilton Kirikiriroa's most important future industrial growth areas. It will complement the wider Te Rapa industrial corridor and the emerging Airport economic precinct. The transport connections this growth area has means it will thrive as an interregional hub for freight and logistics.

The city will enable existing businesses to flourish, new ones to establish and attract new businesses to Hamilton. Job growth and employment opportunity is fundamental to achieving a prosperous economy and thriving city. To do this, the city will ensure land availability aligned to business need, and the provision of world-class infrastructure services and transport networks.

Where do Hamilton workers and students travel from?

Hamilton is a central urban hub for sub-regional employment, education, healthcare, commerce and the arts. Nearly 16% of our workforce come from outside of the city boundaries.

With significant office, retail and health care activities, education facilities including the University of Waikato and WINTEC, a vibrant arts and museum precinct and recreational and community spaces, Hamilton draws daily visitors from our communities of interest.



Source: Statistics New Zealand and Infometrics,
Ministry of Education primary and secondary enrolment data

1

Outcomes

Grow up and out from the central city

Over the past decade the city has seen significant increases in the level of intensification throughout the city.

Currently, about half of the city's growth occurs in infill areas. This demonstrates the coming of age of Hamilton Kirikiriroa as a metro centre with new and existing residents appreciating the benefits of compact city living. In the long term, the goal is to support 70% of growth through intensification of existing urban areas.

To move towards this goal, we're prioritising our infrastructure investment in the central city. This will see us supporting the redevelopment of areas to promote high-density growth with a range of housing choices, high-amenity environments, excellent access to jobs, services, education, parks and open spaces and community facilities. Over time, we'll take a staged approach to enabling intensification in other nearby centres and suburbs close to the central city.

Our focus areas:

- prioritise growth investment to enable development in the central city and surrounding areas including Maeroa and Whitiora
- support achieving 70% intensification over the long term
- collaborate with public and private sector partners to unlock opportunities for a range of housing options in the central city
- work with communities and our partners, like Kāinga Ora, to help shape redevelopment that delivers well-housed, flourishing and connected communities.

What this will look like:

- more people living and working in the central city
- higher densities and taller buildings; our city is growing up
- increased business attraction and economic growth
- regeneration of existing urban communities with improved wellbeing outcomes for the whole community
- more infrastructure upgrades in and around the central city.

Intensification means more people living and working more closely together. It also means more homes at greater heights, a mix of housing types and a focus on townhouses and apartments.

It opens up opportunities for people to choose what type of home they want and where. It plays a part in improving housing affordability, delivering our 20-minute city aspirations and meeting our emissions reduction obligations. The most vibrant, diverse and exciting part of a city is often its centre where density (the number of homes or jobs by area) is highest and there is the greatest range of people, buildings, public spaces, facilities, services and choices.

More people interacting together in our central city will drive innovation and help build a cosmopolitan hub that serves as the centre of arts, culture and entertainment in the region.

2

Grow along transport corridors

As we grow it's important that we make our city easy to get around. Outside of the central city, we will promote investment, density and economic development along our key transport corridors.

For transport corridors to provide good public transport options and work really well, they need more people living close to them and more jobs at key points along them. Focusing housing and jobs along the key corridors defined in the Metro Spatial Plan (MSP) will improve travel choices, promote public and active transport usage and reduce dependency on cars.

As more people start to live in the newer areas of the city, such as Peacocke and Rotokauri, we need to make sure our existing networks and key transport corridors are able to offer the choice of travel by all modes of transport.

Our focus areas:

- enable and encourage intensification and mixed-used development at key transport interchanges
- take advantage of transport corridor upgrades to enhance three waters networks
- require greenfield developments to integrate with the rapid transit network.

What this will look like:

- more homes and jobs at key points along transport corridors
- easy to access the central city and surrounding areas from all areas by walking, biking and public transport
- easy to get around the city from new greenfield growth areas like Peacocke, Rotokauri and Ruakura through a range of travel choices.

This map represents long-term aspirations of the Future Proof partners to plan transport networks to align with our projected growth. This is subject to change following more detailed work.

3

Support the development of quality greenfield neighbourhoods

Hamilton Kirikiriroa is fortunate to have a good pipeline of greenfield growth areas which will one day be home for thousands of future Hamiltonians.

Our committed greenfield growth areas include Rototuna, Peacocke, Rotokauri-Northwest and Ruakura. Greenfield growth areas, while requiring significant investment to unlock, offer an opportunity to deliver great communities from the start.

For greenfield communities to deliver good community outcomes they must provide the following:

- increased diversity of housing typologies and local needs
- higher-density neighbourhoods that are supported by genuine transport options that are reliable, efficient and high quality
- support for emissions reduction by providing a range of travel choices. This includes networks of biking and micro-mobility infrastructure and appropriate public transport along key corridors to ensure connectivity with the wider city
- ample greenspace to increase biodiversity and protect the natural environment and the areas we value
- high-quality integrated land use that delivers environmental and water quality improvement, resilient communities and avoids natural hazards
- the right amount of amenity, play and recreation options that are in the right place and easily accessed
- neighbourhoods that are designed to celebrate Hamilton Kirikiriroa's unique sense of place. They have their own character and consider the underlying topography, local ecology and notable landscape features and are developed to protect and enhance the surrounding area
- vibrant local centres that provide opportunities for employment and services for the community.

What about additional greenfield growth areas?

Planning for long-term growth helps make sure there's enough land supply and supports affordability through competitive markets. Our growth planning has ensured that we have a plentiful supply of committed greenfield growth. Any additional greenfield growth areas, such as out-of-boundary developments, must enhance the overall wellbeing of current and future Hamiltonians and create quality communities.

Our out-of-boundary principles guide decision making for progressing unplanned or out-of-boundary greenfield growth areas. The principles set out expectations to developers, landowners and other key partners to ensure any new development areas contribute positively to achieving the city's vision.

Our focus areas:

- follow through on existing development commitments. Finish Rototuna and continue our work in partnership to enable the greenfield areas of Ruakura, Peacocke and Rotokauri-Northwest
- accelerate delivery through partnerships and innovative infrastructure funding and financing mechanisms
- continue to work with our Future Proof partners to plan collaboratively for long-term growth outside the city boundaries
- investigate peripheral areas identified in strategic land agreements to make sure we have growth opportunities that are aligned with the out-of-boundary principles.

What this will look like:

- Rototuna, Peacocke, Rotokauri-Northwest and Ruakura continue to grow into new communities, enabling homes for more than 50,000 people as well as jobs
- our greenfield growth areas are delivered in partnership and funded using innovative funding and financing tools
- any new areas are planned for and delivered in accordance with the out-of-boundary principles.

Principles for out-of-boundary development

Any out-of-boundary development must enhance the overall wellbeing of current and future Hamiltonians and create quality communities by:

1. **Delivering**
   - neighbourhoods where key services are close by and easily accessible
   - compact and accessible developments
   - alignment with key public transport corridors providing good access to the central city
   - affordable housing choices
   - sustainable and integrated infrastructure solutions
   - significant land value uplift for the benefit of the wider community
   - places to work, or quality connections to places of work
   - places for recreation
   - best-practice urban design.
2. **Enhancing** Hamilton Kirikiriroa's economy
3. **Protecting** and recognising cultural heritage
4. **Responding** to climate change
5. **Growing** green areas and biodiversity
6. **Meeting** the costs of all infrastructure
7. **Not compromising** planned investment.

Growth funding

As a city, we want to embrace growth and put the right infrastructure and amenity in the right places, at the right time, to support quality communities.

Alongside the significant investment required to unlock greenfield growth areas, significant investment is also required to support quality intensification within the city. As we grow up and out from the central city we'll need to ensure that we have invested to improve the existing infrastructure, so that it can support a higher number of people living there while also protecting the things we value such as the Waikato River.

The high costs of growth means it is becoming increasingly challenging to fund infrastructure through Council's conventional funding sources like rates and development contributions. We can't do it alone.

This means that a partnership approach to funding new areas is required where those who benefit from growth pay for growth. Increasingly, we need to look for alternative and innovative ways of funding and delivering strategic infrastructure. This may include central government grants, long-term funding arrangements, special-purpose vehicles and private developer agreements.

Hamilton City Council uses the double vowel in te reo Maaori words to represent a long vowel sound as it is the preference of Waikato-Tainui.

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