

Growing numbers. Strategic directions. Quality of life. Neighbourhoods and communities. Business and industry. Long-term thinking. Sustainable and well planned. Good urban design. Innovation precincts. Acknowledging the Waikato River. Reducing our footprint. Intelligent and progressive. Planning for choice. Community capacity and pride. Building on our competitive strengths. Planning for the future. Is it good enough for Hamilton? Managing sprawl. Improving development in greenfield sites. Safe communities. Managing our land use. Getting around easily. Maximising opportunities. Enhancing the urban experience. Safe and enjoyable journeys. The Hamilton **Urban Growth Strategy** identifies these aspirations for **Hamilton** and the ways in which we will work towards their achievement.

A compact and sustainable city

# > enabling new ways of thinking

## IF YOU IMAGINE HAMILTON'S FUTURE, WHAT WOULD THE CITY LOOK AND FEEL LIKE? WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO SEE?

In the past, growth planning has been primarily driven by cost only. The development of this Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy by Council has included a broadening of the debate for different growth options from simple cost to a wider consideration of value delivered to the entire city. This is a significant shift in thinking and a more holistic way of prioritising growth options.

Council's spatial vision for the city – provided in the Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy – has been enhanced through the development of seven other collaborative city strategies. These strategies have been formulated with input from key city leaders and stakeholder partners.

In addition, the aspirations of key partners and other specialist technical information was used as the basis for an Enquiry by Design (EbD) process as part of this strategy's development. This unique process brought key city planning disciplines around the same table, resolving issues as they arose and testing solutions in an integrated and dynamic manner.

### *The key growth issues discussed included:*

- > our growing population
- > areas suitable for accommodating future residential growth
- > supporting city infrastructure requirements
- > where to develop first, why and when
- > what other land uses are required e.g. business and industry
- > ensuring social well-being and protecting the local environment


### *However this does not mean growth at any cost.*

#### *We still need to consider:*

- > the affordability of growth options

The principles underlying the city strategies were used as a framework to guide decisions through the EbD process. This ensured consistent thinking between the growth strategy and the strategic aspirations and direction of the city.

This Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy outlines the strategy approach that was agreed by Council following a thorough city-wide consultation process undertaken in November and December 2008.



**If you imagine  
Hamilton's  
future, what  
would the city  
look and  
feel like?**

THERE ARE AROUND 140,000 OF US LIVING IN HAMILTON RIGHT NOW. BUT BY 2041, THAT NUMBER IS EXPECTED TO INCREASE TO AROUND 225,000. WE WILL BE SHARING OUR CITY WITH AROUND 85,000 MORE PEOPLE.

# >growing numbers

To accommodate them, the city will need around 36,000 more homes. We will need to provide for all kinds of accommodation choices, catering for young and old, large and small families, first home buyers and more mature occupiers, city dwellers as well as suburban households. *How can we provide this choice when we are running out of room to grow?*

## Our past approach to growth

Council's previous strategy for growth is now a number of years old and has become outdated. *The approach has been based on:*

Structure Plans for the Rototuna, Peacocke and Rotokauri growth cells.

- > These are indicative plans showing how we propose land to be used, for example how much will be for residential living, where it will be, will there be a town centre to support it and how will it connect with the bigger city.

An agreement with Waikato District Council about the areas on the Hamilton's boundary that will come into the city to allow us room to grow.

- > The agreement was developed in 2005 and was based largely on construction dates for major transportation projects such as the Hamilton bypass. It is a now a number of years old and is being renegotiated given the changes to anticipated timing of key transportation projects and the changing aspirations of the partners to the agreement.

The Hamilton Community Outcomes identified aspirations for a city that is "not too big and not too small". The fact is we are growing, whether we want to or not. Why? We are the focal point of a rapidly growing and prosperous region and as

such growth pressures are inevitable. Growth can create opportunities.

While we don't have an option whether we grow or not, we do have an option whether or not we actively manage this growth...or simply allow it to happen to us.


## The need to manage growth

- > Large scale development of the Rototuna, Peacocke and Rotokauri growth cells at once may not be possible to do without significant increases to the cost of growing and running the city.
- > The way we currently develop land in the city is inefficient. With the majority of section sizes being maintained at 600-800 square metres, we are sprawling. This has impacts for the cost of travel and how we get from A to B.
- > Sprawl is contributing to making land a scarce resource and therefore making it more and more unaffordable.
- > With the world's population also growing, our land is becoming more important for food production. The land surrounding Hamilton is highly productive growing soil.
- > The environment has a budget too. Having enough water to meet our current needs, lots of open space to enjoy, good air quality and energy for our everyday needs are elements of our lifestyle which we often take for granted. Future population growth will put increased pressure on the local environment and these key resources.
- > The type and quality of growth occurring in the city is often uniform and in some cases fails to blend with existing communities or is

## Legend

- Commercial Service
- Industrial
- City Centre / Local Nodes
- Res. High Density Area
- Suburban Centre Vehicular Service area.
- Community Facilities
- Recreation General
- Vehicular Movement
- Railroad





aesthetically undesirable. Knowing this, there is a strong desire within Council and the community for the city to become more proactive when it comes to urban growth and design, and to live more sustainably to minimise the impact on our future environment.

- > Over recent years, Hamilton's growth has predominantly occurred in the north of the city – continuing this trend may not necessarily provide for future social or cultural needs of all our residents.
- > In addition to this, in recent years demand for industrial land has outstripped supply. In order to remain economically competitive, Hamilton needs to be able to attract new businesses and in particular have room to accommodate businesses that build on our comparative advantages.

**WE NEED TO CHALLENGE THE CURRENT  
APPROACH TO CITY GROWTH AND DETERMINE  
THE BEST FUTURE FOR HAMILTON AS A WHOLE.  
OUR NEW WAY OF THINKING NEEDS TO ENABLE:**

- > forward-thinking infrastructure development within the limitations of available budgets
- > enhancement of social, cultural and environmental values
- > a strengthening of our unique identity, in particular, making better and more creative connections with the Waikato River
- > greater options for industrial and commercial land use including retail space
- > a range of lifestyle choices and living environments and better quality urban design, *and*
- > getting from A to B easily and safely
- > development that is viable within the available resources of Council and the development community

SINCE THE 2006-16 LONG-TERM PLAN, COUNCIL HAS BEEN WORKING WITH KEY PARTNERS TO DEVELOP A SUITE OF EIGHT CITY STRATEGIES.

# > achieving a shared outcome

These strategy documents are guiding a collaborative approach for achieving shared outcomes for Hamilton and are geared to deliver tangible on-the-ground results through a series of high profile projects and programmes. In doing so, the strategies will contribute to progressing Hamilton's community outcomes.

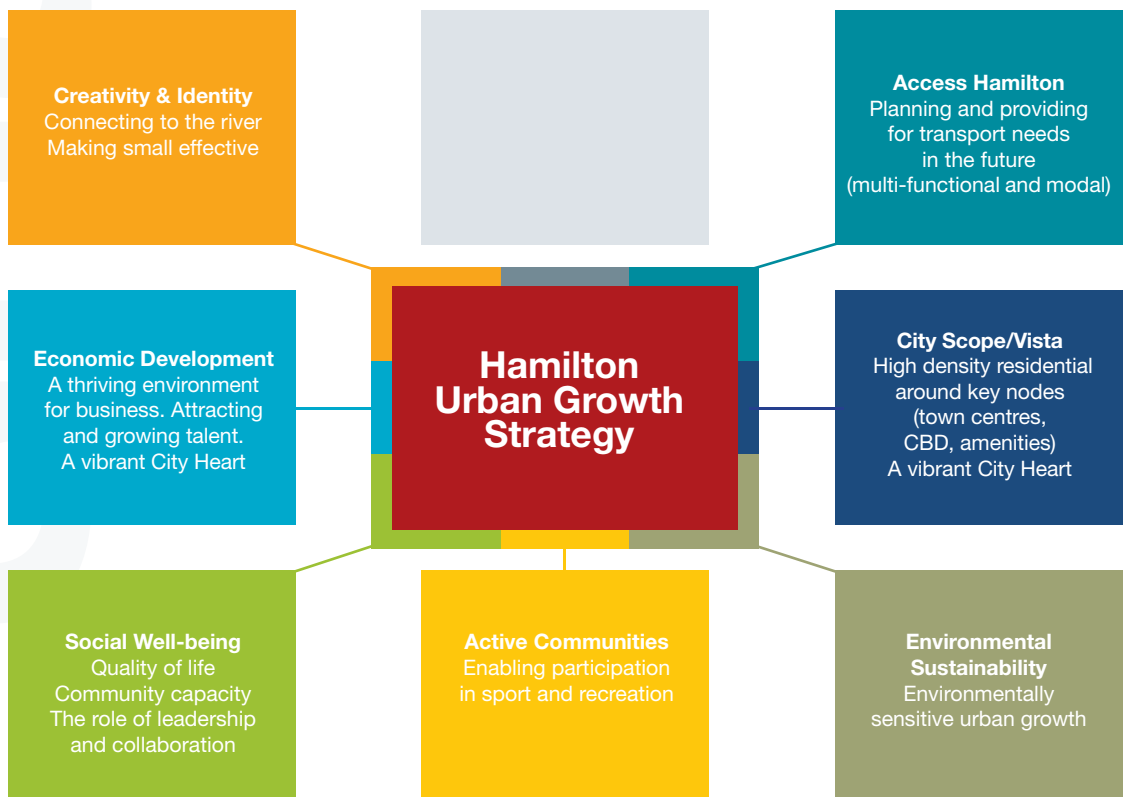
**The full suite of strategies are:**

- > Environmental Sustainability
- > Social Well-being
- > Economic Development
- > Access Hamilton
- > CityScope

- > Creativity and Identity
- > Active Communities, *and this*
- > Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy.

Significant consideration has been given to how key principles from each of these strategies will inform and enhance the way the city grows - we are not starting from a 'blank page' for city growth. The key to going forward will be ensuring alignment between our urban growth decisions and these strategic aspirations. The Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy will be the blueprint to deliver co-ordinated sustainable growth in Hamilton.

**Strategy directions and linkages to critical urban growth issues**





> Wherever viable we should ‘mend before we extend’, first strengthening our existing communities and workplaces in order to maximise benefits and efficiencies from amenities, public services and infrastructure.

Kobus Mentz  
(urban designer and enquiry by design facilitator)



# mend

**WE KNOW THAT THERE ARE PARTS OF THE CITY THAT ARE IN NEED OF REGENERATION. IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF THE LIVING ENVIRONMENT AND MAKING PUBLIC SPACE MORE INTERESTING AND SAFE WILL CONTRIBUTE TO A MORE VIBRANT CITY.**

Hamilton is a thriving city and increasing numbers of people want to live here. Recent numbers and projections emphasise that we will be stretched to provide space for them to live, work and play. The concept of mending is essentially making the most of what we have.

## **Improving the quality of the current living environment of the city**

This should be the first priority. There is a general acceptance that many developments occurring in our established neighbourhoods do not deliver the outcomes the community expects. They don't tend to blend appropriately or enhance the aesthetic. We recognise a greater focus needs to be given to working with the development community to lift the standard of more compact living environments in regenerating parts of the city. Much of this work will occur through the comprehensive review of Hamilton's District Plan and the City Development Manual.

## **Developing the land we have available in existing parts of the city more efficiently**

Current development section sizes are a consistent 600-800 square metres. This has impacts for the cost of travel and how we get from A to B and pushes up the cost of land. By providing a range of section sizes, including options for those wanting smaller sections and more compact living environments such as townhouses and city apartments as well as our traditional "quarter acre" lots, we will increase the capacity of the city to accommodate more of our growing population while providing more choice. We also know that our family size and structure is changing – families are getting smaller and there will be more people in the future in retirement age.

Our family size and structure is changing rapidly. More compact living environments in parts of the city create better numbers of users and therefore help to support the efficient operation of public transport. In such cases, services are more likely to cover their own costs and not require significant ongoing public subsidy. In addition, other transport modes such as walking and

cycling become less attractive if local activities are further away from people's homes.

This issue is particularly important for local neighbourhood shopping nodes and schools.

In order to deliver a range of quality living options throughout the city, we may need to be more selective and specific about where compact living is best suited within the city and what these developments should look and feel like.

More compact living environments will allow us to proactively limit sprawl and manage our city's urban footprint.

We recognise that market factors will continue to influence development trends into the future irrespective of Council intervention. However, market demand is also rapidly changing. Hamilton now has choices and can be discerning. We need to be asking 'is it good enough for Hamilton?'

## **Growth Approach 1:**

Over the next 10-20 years, approximately 50% of Hamilton's new dwellings will be increasingly provided through regeneration of existing parts of the city. It is recognised that this will not be appropriate for all areas. Therefore this regeneration will focus in and around key nodes including the CityHeart, transport hubs, suburban centres and areas of high public amenity such as parks and the river.





Areas of expansion should deliver diverse and wholesome settings for new communities, seamlessly connected with the city.

Examples of compact living environment densities:




CITYHEART



SUBURBAN CENTRES AND TRANSPORT HUBS



AREAS OF HIGH AMENITY



Rototuna is the  
current primary  
growth area for  
residential growth.

# extend

THE CONCEPT OF EXTENDING REFERS TO GROWING THE SIZE OF THE CITY AND ITS URBAN FOOTPRINT. IN A HAMILTON CONTEXT, THIS GENERALLY MEANS CONVERTING 'GREENFIELDS' THAT IS, PREDOMINANTLY RURAL LAND INTO URBAN ENVIRONMENTS.

As only up to 50% of the projected growth can be accommodated in existing areas of the city, the reality is that there will still be a continuing need to provide Greenfield options for growth.

While statisticians can estimate when the growth will occur, they can't determine where.

Distinct greenfield opportunities exist for residential development in the Rototuna, Peacocke and Rotokauri areas; all being within the current Hamilton city boundary. These areas have structure plans that provide for a range of activities and land uses and are designed to ensure development is undertaken in a managed way and provide good urban design outcomes.

*We don't need to develop any major new greenfield areas within the next decade. Why?*

- > Firstly, due to our ability to absorb up to 50% of the projected growth in the existing city. This is starting to occur on a modest scale particularly in areas fringing the CityHeart.
- > Secondly due to development already committed to in the remainder of Rototuna, and some early development commitments in Peacocke and Rotokauri.

## Extending in the shorter term

Rototuna is the current primary growth area for residential growth. There is still a number of years' capacity existing within this area. Depending on market uptake, we anticipate that growth will continue in this area and if land continues to be developed as it is currently, it won't reach capacity for at least another 10 years.

We know that the developments already consented in this area will meet supply for the next few years. Beyond this supply, there is approximately 220 hectares of land remaining

in the Rototuna area for residential development. If more choice in living environments were available, for instance, more townhouse developments in key areas such as town centres or around parks and open spaces, then it is anticipated that the area could last longer – until approximately 2025.

*There remains a commitment to undertake Stage 1 of the Rotokauri area.* We can't develop beyond Stage 1 until construction of the Te Rapa Bypass is completed (anticipated to occur in 2013).

*In addition, there is a current and restated commitment to facilitate the first residential stage of the Peacocke area in the vicinity of Dixon Road.*

## Growth Approach 2:

The commitments to developing the remainder of Rototuna and Stage 1 of both Peacocke and Rotokauri remain.

The development of Rototuna and Stage 1 of both Peacocke and Rotokauri will include greater choice in living environments, for instance, more compact type developments in key areas such as town centres or around parks and open spaces



## Extending in the longer term

In the longer term, residential growth will be prioritised in the Peacocke area rather than in the remainder of the Rotokauri structure plan area. Both of these areas are likely to be developed at some point in the future and have had structure plans developed to ensure development is undertaken in a managed way and provide good urban design outcomes.

Following much debate, Peacocke was prioritised due to the unique strengths it has and what particular outcomes are seen to be more beneficial for the city in the likely development timeframe.

The general economic environment, pace of development within the city and developer aspirations will determine the exact timing of when future stages of Peacocke are released for residential development. Currently Council does not anticipate this to be before 2025 but will continue to monitor growth within the city and adjust plans as required.

### So what does Peacocke offer?

- > Good access to employment in the CityHeart, hospital, Ruakura innovation precinct, university and airport. *See map on page 13.*
- > Proximity to the Waikato River provides high amenity value and options for superior public space including access to Hamilton Gardens via a new river crossing as well as the potential extension of Hamilton Gardens across the river
- > Access to extensive gully system which provides interesting recreation spaces and enjoyable walking and cycling networks.
- > May offer opportunities to refresh investment and living environments in the south of the city

- > Detailed planning will be undertaken to reflect requirements for environmentally sensitive development
- > Standard range of opportunities for dedicated public transport infrastructure and services
- > Planned arterial road network (connection to the Eastern Arterial ring road via a new bridge) has significant benefits
- > Proximity to CityHeart and hospital provides opportunities for walking and cycling to work (via safe and pleasant off road routes)
- > Approximately 580 hectares of land available for residential development (beyond the first stage)

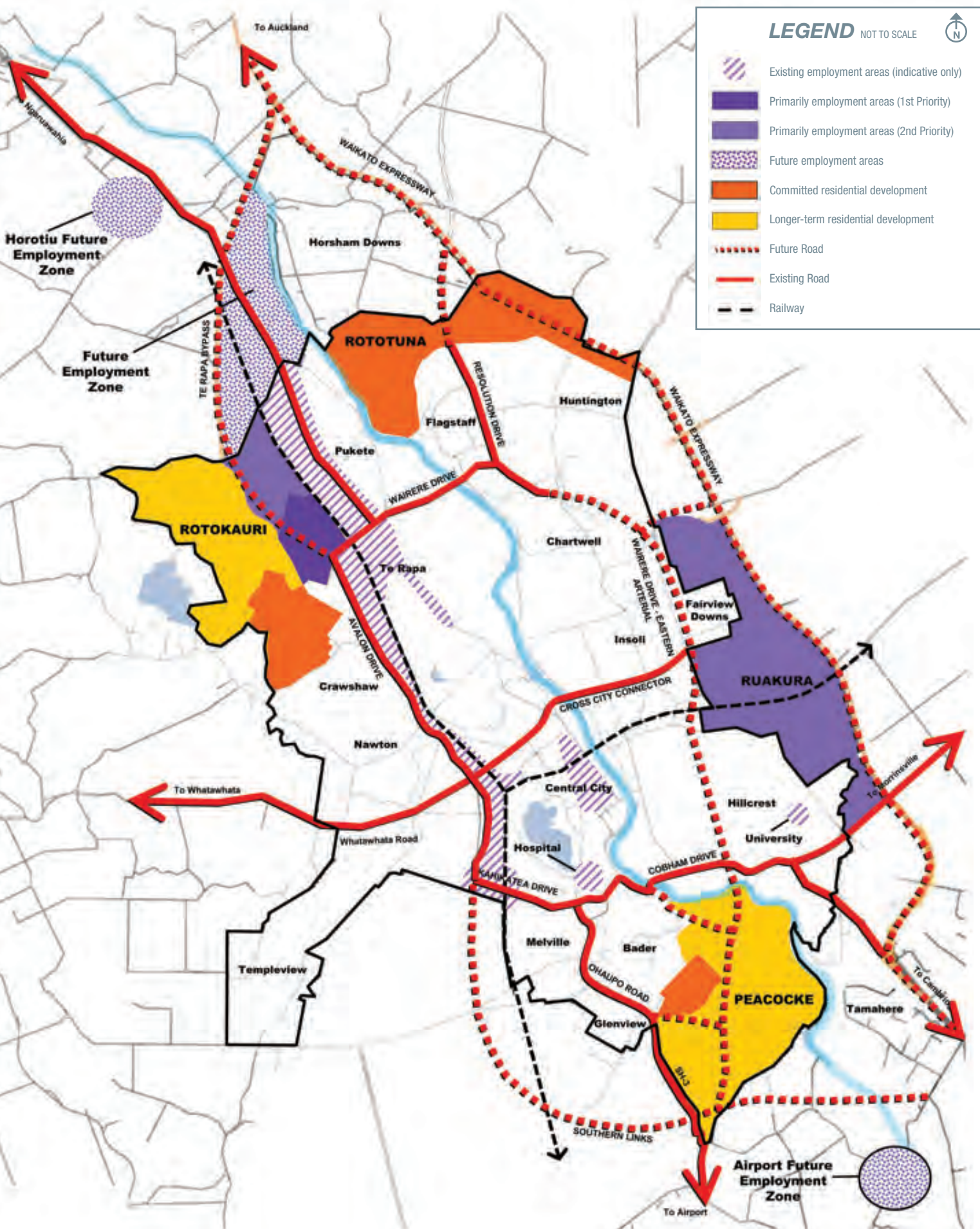
### Other considerations...

- > Rolling topography may require specific urban design and architectural solutions to make best use of sites
- > Distance to existing wastewater treatment plant will require significant piping (or an alternative solution)
- > Planning of road network, particularly state highway links, is currently less advanced
- > Better community outcomes are likely to cost more and will require higher upfront costs

## Growth Approach 3:

To prioritise the residential growth area of Peacocke in the longer term





# > ruakura

## high-value, innovation precinct

PROVIDING MODERN, ATTRACTIVE BUSINESS SETTINGS FOR THE CITY'S INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL SECTORS IS VITALLY IMPORTANT TO HAMILTON'S FUTURE ECONOMIC WELL-BEING.

Hamilton is planning for future growth by developing new business zones across the city. Employment uses are sensitive to location so Hamilton will be developing concepts for these areas to encourage the clustering of related businesses.

There is a current and restated commitment to undertake Stage 1 of the Rotokauri area which includes around 70 hectares of industrial and employment land. The existing business profile and locational advantages tell us that the Rotokauri area is ideally suited to accommodate service trades, light industry, manufacturing and a general business precinct. Beyond Stage 1, further stages of industrial and employment land will be made available in response to demonstrated demand. This is largely an extension of land uses anticipated in Stage 1.

### Where are the other opportunities?

Hamilton is the urban centre of one of the world's leading agricultural and pastoral regions. It is also New Zealand's leading centre for the research, development and commercialisation of ag-bio and agri-technologies. This includes a host of related internationally competitive food, manufacturing and engineering companies that are already clustered here.

To build on these strengths, we are proposing to develop an innovation and employment precinct in the Ruakura area of the city, specialising in research, innovation and high-technology businesses. This will see the integration of the future development of Waikato Innovation Park and complementary industrial development in the area, with the research facilities at the Ruakura Research Centre and the University of Waikato as well as some general employment based on identified demand.

**In order to achieve this, Ruakura will need to become part of the city.** It currently sits in the Waikato District. The transfer of Ruakura into the city was agreed several years ago and was timed to coincide with the development of the Hamilton bypass section of the Waikato Expressway. We can't afford to wait that long if we want to maintain Hamilton's competitive advantages and secure these leading innovation and high-tech businesses in the city. Transfer of the Ruakura area into the city is now anticipated to take place in 2010/11. A more detailed structure Plan for the Ruakura area will be developed as part of the review of the Hamilton District Plan.


Ideally, we want to begin development in this area within the decade starting by actively developing the area around the existing Innovation Park.

Having a number of alternative employment locations across the city creates efficiencies in our transport networks and allows for the property market to operate more efficiently.

## Growth Approach 4:

To enable the development of a high technology, innovation precinct in Ruakura - beginning development within the decade in the area around the existing Innovation Park and subsequently releasing additional land for more general employment needs.





> To build on our strengths, we are proposing to develop an innovation precinct in the Ruakura area of the city, specialising in research, innovation and high-technology businesses





# > looking broader and even longer term

**FUTURE PROOF IS THE NAME OF THE PROJECT THAT WILL PLAN AND MANAGE GROWTH IN THE AREA COVERING HAMILTON, WAIKATO, WAIPA DISTRICTS AND THE MORRINSVILLE AREA OVER THE NEXT 50 YEARS.**

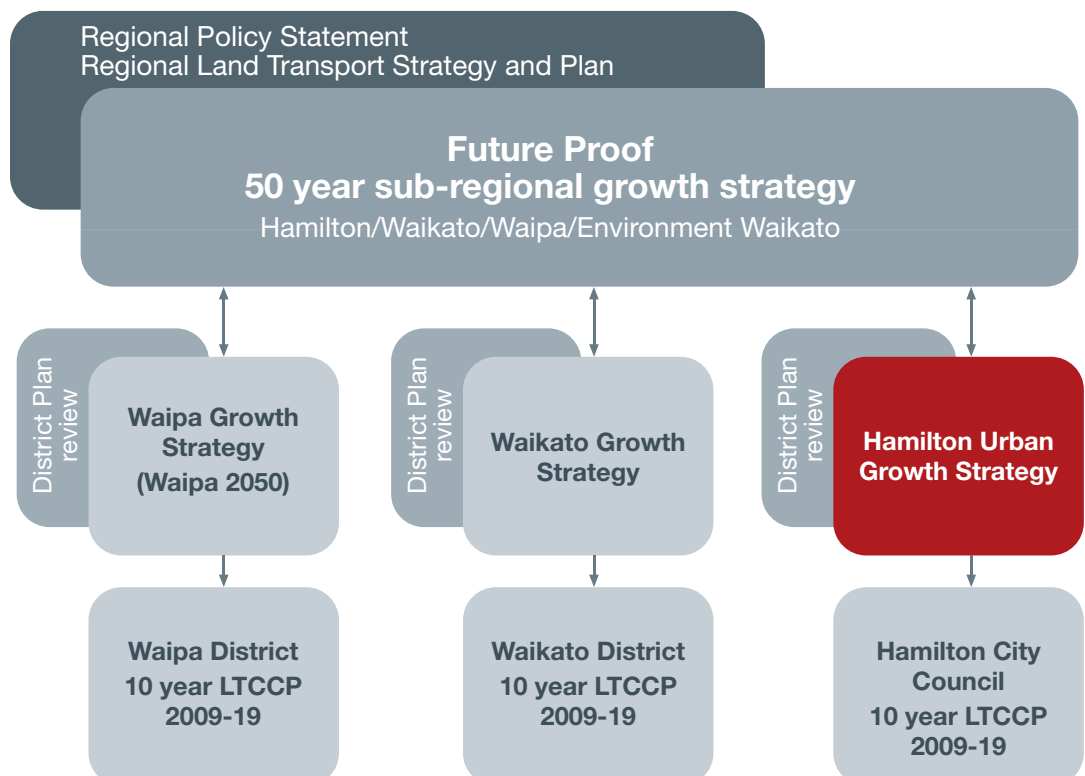
Future Proof is a combined project between five councils (Hamilton, Waikato, Waipa and Matamata Piako Districts and Environment Waikato), Tangata Whenua and the New Zealand Transport Agency. Future Proof deals with the challenges and impacts of growth facing the sub-region. In June 2009, following consultation in late 2008 and early 2009, the subregional growth strategy and implementation plan for Future Proof was adopted. The complex issues concerning future urban and rural land use, natural and cultural resources, roads and other infrastructure, need

to be addressed if community well-being for the area is to be sustained in the long-term.

The Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy was developed in parallel with the Future Proof strategy and as a result there is significant alignment between the two strategies. The Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy is regarded as providing more localised interpretation of the Future Proof principles and will help to guide the review of the Hamilton District Plan.

For more information on Future Proof please go to [www.futureproof.org.nz](http://www.futureproof.org.nz).

Relationship between the **Future Proof Growth Strategy** and the **Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy**







> The Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy was developed in parallel with the Future Proof strategy and as a result there is significant alignment between the two strategies.

# > taking the strategy forward

**The Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy provides the strategic blueprint for future urban development of Hamilton City.**

The upcoming review of the Hamilton City District Plan will consider what changes should be made to the regulatory planning environment in the city to encourage development that is in-line with this strategy. For more information on the review of Hamilton's District Plan please go to [www.fastforwardhamilton.co.nz](http://www.fastforwardhamilton.co.nz). The new Hamilton District Plan is anticipated to be notified in late 2011.

Changes to the economic environment, demand for land and shifting developer aspirations will mean that any of the indicative timeframes for the start of new growth areas outlined in this strategy are likely to move. Council will continue to actively monitor growth within the city and respond through future reviews of this strategy and other planning tools.

While this strategy provides the blueprint for development – Council will make the necessary investments in infrastructure to facilitate urban growth as required through subsequent long-term plan budgeting processes.

These investments will need to be balanced against Council's other priorities for funding and ultimately secured through future long-term budget planning processes.



