



Future Proof Submission on  
*Auckland Unleashed*  
*Discussion Document for the Auckland Plan*

May 2011

**To:**

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**Submission:**

This is a submission by the Future Proof Implementation Committee on the **'Auckland Unleashed'** discussion document. The content of the submission follows overleaf. We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on the document.

We would like the opportunity to have further discussions in respect of this submission, and to be heard at any subsequent hearing of submissions.

**Signed:**



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Bill Wasley  
Independent Chair - Future Proof Implementation Committee

## **1. Introduction**

This is a submission by the Future Proof Implementation Committee, the governance group responsible for implementation of the Future Proof Growth Strategy. The FPIC includes representatives from the Future Proof sub-regional councils of the Waikato Regional Council, Hamilton City Council, Waipa and Waikato Districts as well as Tāngata Whenua (Waikato-Tainui).

The Future Proof Strategy is a 50-year growth management vision and implementation plan which was adopted by the Strategy partners on 30 June 2009. Future Proof is currently in the implementation phase. The Strategy takes a strategic, integrated approach to long term planning and growth management.

The Future Proof Implementation Committee would like to commend the Auckland Council on Auckland Unleashed – Discussion Document for the Draft Auckland Plan (“Discussion Document”) and the development of an Auckland Spatial Plan.

This submission on the Discussion Document mainly centres on the relationship between Auckland and the Waikato and also the role of the Upper North Island as this is of significant interest to Future Proof Strategy implementation. Future Proof is happy to work with the Auckland Council on some or all of the matters raised in this submission and to discuss any of those matters further.

Future Proof would like this submission and the suggested amendments to be considered in the development of the Draft Auckland Plan.

## **2. The Future Proof Strategy**

### **2.1 The Future Proof Sub-Region**

The ‘sub-region’ refers to the administrative areas of the territorial authorities of Hamilton City Council, Waipa District Council, and Waikato District Council, and is an area of rapid population and development growth. The Waikato region is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest in New Zealand and is part of the ‘golden triangle’ that is

Auckland, Waikato and the Bay of Plenty. The golden triangle is expected to contain 53% of the nation's population by 2031 and account for over half of New Zealand's total economic activity.

The Future Proof sub-region is the growth hub of the Waikato region. It is projected that the Future Proof sub-region will contain 96% of the entire Waikato region's population growth out to 2026.

Development of the Future Proof Strategy began as a result of:

- Community and council concerns about the lack of collaboration and leadership in the management of growth across territorial boundaries in the sub-region.
- A need to understand the likely quantum of growth and how such growth is best managed.
- New Zealand Transport Agency ("NZTA") concerns about the lack of integrated land use and transport planning in this area.
- An awareness of the need to inform the Waikato Regional Policy Statement and the Waikato Regional Land Transport Strategy documents.
- An increasing recognition of the region's role in the "golden triangle" that is Auckland, Waikato and the Bay of Plenty regions.

The Strategy seeks to provide a consistent knowledge base and vision for its partner councils and other agencies in order to plan for, and sustainably manage growth in an integrated manner. Specifically the Strategy provides a framework for co-operatively managing growth and setting goals for future implementation. This allows the costs and resources required to fund and manage infrastructure such as transport, wastewater, stormwater, recreation and cultural facilities to be identified and provided for.

## **2.2 Strategy Features**

The key features of the Future Proof Strategy are:

- A focus on providing well designed, sustainable and affordable housing and lifestyle choices;
- Increased densities in new residential development and more intensive redevelopment of some existing urban areas to reduce the need for car dependency;
- Metropolitan Hamilton being a vibrant and lively place where people want to live, work and play;

- Thriving business centers in the sub-region's towns providing local housing and employment options along with a range of social and recreational activities;
- Development directed away from hazard areas;
- Green spaces (i.e. wildlife habitats, public open space and farmland) between settlements;
- Planning focused on resilience of communities and infrastructure while moving towards highly energy efficient devices and low carbon emissions;
- Protection of future infrastructure corridors, energy generation sites and mineral deposits;
- Protection of versatile and productive farmland by directing rural-residential and residential development and business land closer to towns and villages. This will also assist in reducing reverse sensitivity issues;
- Identification, planned maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity areas, clusters and corridors;
- Integrated transport and land-use planning;
- The values, principles, aspirations, role, responsibility and place of tāngata whenua in the sub-region;
- Development of key transport corridors; and
- Recognition of and support for protection of strategic nationally and regionally important service and businesses.

### **3. The Upper North Island and the Relationship between the Waikato and Auckland**

Significant population growth and economic activity currently occurs and is projected to increase in the Upper North Island. In particular the so-called 'Golden Triangle' or Economic Growth Triangle of Auckland, Waikato and the Bay of Plenty is becoming increasingly important. The relationship between these three regions as well as Northland is key from a land use, infrastructure and economic development perspective. It is also important from a social, cultural and environmental point of view.

There are very strong links between Auckland and the Waikato. The Waikato is a significant productive area which has a mutually beneficial relationship with Auckland as New Zealand's largest city. The Waikato region is developing a significant role as a freight storage and distribution centre given its

geographic location between the two major ports in Auckland and Tauranga. The region is keen to develop this role as a leading freight handling and distribution centre for the Upper North Island.

In terms of the role of the Upper North Island and the relationship between Auckland and the Waikato regions, there are some key points for the Auckland Unleashed Discussion Document to note:

- The three regions of Auckland, the Waikato and the Bay of Plenty are expected to grow at a greater rate than the rest of the country and by 2031 it is expected that together they will account for 53% of New Zealand's population.<sup>1</sup> The three regions are responsible for the production and attraction of over half of all road and rail freight in New Zealand.<sup>2</sup>
- The significant role played by the Port of Tauranga, the Ports of Auckland and their associated freight hubs, including the Crawford Street inland port in Hamilton.
- Auckland, Waikato and the Bay of Plenty currently generate over 45% of the nation's gross domestic product, this will continue to grow and is projected to account for half of New Zealand's total economic activity by 2025.<sup>3</sup>
- There is high growth forecast in retail trade for the Auckland, Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions.
- Significant tertiary education activity across a range of tertiary institutions and the importance of this in terms of underpinning further economic, social and cultural development and growth.
- The integration of economic activity between Auckland and Hamilton is likely to increase as transport corridor improvements are completed and travel times reduced.
- The forecast growth in freight traffic generated in the Waikato region is expected to double by 2031. The majority of this freight traffic is between the Waikato and Auckland.

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<sup>1</sup> *Waikato Inter-Regional Transportation Study*, 2009, at page 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Waikato Inter-Regional Transportation Study*, 2009, at page 6.

<sup>3</sup> New Zealand Council for Infrastructure Development, *Meeting New Zealand's Transport Infrastructure Needs to 2025*, 2006

It is essential that the Northland, Auckland, Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions think in terms of supply chains between Northport, the Ports of Auckland and the Port of Tauranga, and the land based network required to support these ports.

The NZTA is also considering developing an Upper North Island Freight Network Plan because of the significant freight growth in this area. It is important that all four regions and the NZTA work together in order to develop a plan that will help support key economic development objectives.

This Future Proof submission has focussed on developing and fostering the relationship between Northland, Auckland, the Waikato and the Bay of Plenty given the importance of these regions in New Zealand's economic future.

The Waikato Regional Council has also submitted in detail on many of these issues as well.

## **4. The Auckland Unleashed Discussion Document**

### **4.1 General Comment**

Future Proof is strongly supportive of references in the discussion document to inter-regional linkages and the role of the Upper North Island. Future Proof also believes that inter-regional collaboration is key to the development of the Upper North Island growth area.

The Auckland Plan will have implications for the rest of New Zealand, especially if a decision is made to roll out spatial planning to other parts of the country. We need to make sure that there is a consistent approach. Working together, especially through the Upper North Island Inter-regional Agreement will be an important means of achieving this.

The Discussion Document necessarily has a wide focus on integrated planning; social, cultural and economic development; infrastructure planning; land use and other matters. All four regions will need to plan for some or all of these strategic issues in an integrated manner. It is important that we have comprehensive spatial planning which provides a clear strategic direction for Auckland which can then be linked with the Bay of Plenty, Waikato and Northland. This is key from an integrated planning

perspective, particularly for infrastructure. If the spatial plan for Auckland is completed in isolation from the other regions then we will not achieve the level of integration and complementarity required.

Future Proof would like the Auckland Council to take into account the growth strategies of its neighbouring regions such as the Future Proof Strategy and the SmartGrowth Strategy in the western Bay of Plenty. Both of these strategies provide a clear long-term land use pattern that is integrated with infrastructure and funding and support the four well-beings.

#### **4.2 Summary of Main Submission Points**

A detailed response to the Discussion Document is provided in the next section of this submission. In short, Future Proof's submission makes the following key points:

- Suggested changes to highlight the importance of Auckland's connections and relationships with the surrounding regions and the role of the Upper North Island growth area.
- Adding to sections on inter-regional transport given the critical role that this plays in linking the four regions.
- The importance of having an identified land use pattern for all four regions from an integrated planning perspective.
- Support for the compact city model and the metropolitan urban limits.
- Changes to reflect a complementary rather than competitive relationship between Auckland and the surrounding regions.
- Highlighting the importance of working with surrounding areas and Central Government.

### 4.3 Detailed Submission

Document Reference	Future Proof Submission	Specific Recommendation
Section 2, Auckland 2040, para 31	There is a need to recognise the relationship between Auckland and its neighbouring regions as well as the rest of New Zealand. Auckland's growth is key to the development of New Zealand but there is inter-dependence between Auckland and other areas.	Suggest adding another bullet point along the following lines:  <i>"Our connections and relationships with surrounding regions and the rest of New Zealand are enhanced for the benefit of everyone in order to put Auckland and New Zealand in the best possible position globally".</i>
Section 3, Global Megatrends Shaping Auckland, para 49	Future Proof supports the references to the Upper North Island and the importance of the inter-regional relationships in this section. However, we are of the view that the Upper North Island regional and urban economic system could be developed in more detail. This will set the context for a more balanced approach to para 440 of the Discussion Document.	Add more material to para 49 regarding the Upper North Island. See pages 3-4 of this submission for more detail.
Section 3, Possible Top Spatial Priorities for Auckland, para 64	Future Proof is interested in the Southern Opportunity area identified in the Discussion Document. There is the potential to link this to the Waikato through the promotion of better infrastructure (especially transport) linkages and an integrated land use approach. Both Auckland and the Waikato can support one another in terms of making stronger connections between the southern part of Auckland and the northern part of the Waikato.	Suggest adding the following bullet point:  <i>"An area that has strong links with the Waikato region in order to promote complementary economic development opportunities".</i>
Section 3, Big Picture Possibilities, Map on page 29	Future Proof would like to see the map on page 29 more clearly demonstrate the relationships between Auckland and its surrounding regions.	Add to the map by including arrows that indicate the physical as well as the social and economic connections between Auckland and Northland, the Waikato and the Bay of Plenty.
Section 4, Key Infrastructure	Future Proof strongly supports the reference to	Suggest adding more information to para 138

Document Reference	Future Proof Submission	Specific Recommendation
Issues, para 138	<p>developing inter-regional transport links in para 138.</p> <p>The Waikato region sees itself as a key ‘hub’ in terms of freight movements and supporting port activity in the Upper North Island. There is significant potential for all four regions to work together in order to strengthen what they do best.</p> <p>There is a need to carefully consider the implications of a completed Waikato Expressway. For instance, when completed in 2019 the Expressway will have the following results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduced travel time between Auckland and Tirau (by 35 minutes).<sup>4</sup></li> <li>- The total distance from Auckland to South of Cambridge will be 135k or a 1.5 hour commute.</li> </ul> <p>Future Proof would also like to see this inter-regional infrastructure aspect linked to section 9, para 440 on infrastructure. There is a need to introduce the concept of regional interdependence rather than the potentially competitive view currently reflected in para 440.</p>	<p>regarding inter-regional transport trends. For instance it would be useful to refer to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The relationships between the three ports as well as the inland ports</li> <li>▪ The Waikato Expressway completion, in particular the implications of this, eg shorter travel times to Tirau and Cambridge</li> <li>▪ Rail linkages between the regions</li> <li>▪ The Ruakura transport hub</li> <li>▪ The long term and potential complementary roles of the Ports of Auckland and the Port of Tauranga</li> <li>▪ Supply chains between the four regions</li> <li>▪ Connections between the airports</li> </ul> <p>We would also like to see some of the information outlined on pages 3-4 of this submission regarding the Upper North Island added to this section.</p>
Section 6 People and Economy	<p>Future Proof would like to see more detailed references to the role of the Auckland economy, the Waikato economy and the Bay of Plenty economy included in this section.</p> <p>There needs to be a context for these economies</p>	<p>Add new paragraphs after 228 as follows:</p> <p><i>Auckland’s connections with the surrounding regions as well as the rest of New Zealand are also important and will assist the region in its goal to become more internationally competitive. Given</i></p>

<sup>4</sup> NZTA website: Waikato Expressway project December 2010.

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	<p>in order to explain the inter-relationships and the importance of the upper North Island.</p> <p>The Discussion Document represents an opportunity for improved economic linkages and enhanced Upper North Island growth.</p> <p>Future Proof would also like to see the long term land use pattern for the four regions of the Upper North Island linked to the transport needs identified in para 138.</p> <p>Future Proof would also like to see some approaches or actions added into section 6 that will help the four regions work together. A key part of this is for the four regions to have an identified land use pattern that integrates with infrastructure provision and funding. In that way the four regions can capitalise on the related nature of their respective economies. There is significant potential for the Waikato and Auckland to collaborate on the provision of business land in a way that is mutually beneficial.</p>	<p><i>the increasing importance of the Upper North Island economy, including the role of the ports, the high volume of freight, the growing populations and the inter-connected nature of these economies, it is essential that Auckland fosters these linkages.</i></p> <p><i>The Auckland, Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions currently generate over 45% of the nation’s gross domestic product, this will continue to grow and is projected to account for half of New Zealand’s total economic activity by 2025.<sup>5</sup></i></p> <p><i>The three regions are expected to grow at a greater rate than the rest of the country and by 2031 it is expected that together they will account for 53% of New Zealand’s population.<sup>6</sup> The three regions are responsible for the production and attraction of over half of all road and rail freight in New Zealand.<sup>7</sup></i></p> <p><i>Approaching the Northland, Auckland, Waikato and Bay of Plenty economies in an integrated manner will be key to improving Auckland and New Zealand’s international position.</i></p> <p>Some suggested additions for section 6:</p> <p>Add to the first bullet of ‘World Class</p>

<sup>5</sup> New Zealand Council for Infrastructure Development, *Meeting New Zealand’s Transport Infrastructure Needs to 2025*, 2006

<sup>6</sup> *Waikato Inter-Regional Transportation Study*, 2009, at page 7.

<sup>7</sup> *Waikato Inter-Regional Transportation Study*, 2009, at page 6.

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		<p>Infrastructure and Effective transport linkages’ (para 242):</p> <p><i>“...harbour crossing. <u>The completion of inter-regional projects such as the Waikato Expressway, the Puhoi to Wellsford Motorway Extension and improvements to the East Coast Main Trunk rail line are also important in terms of Auckland’s economic future.</u> All of these will bring significant economic benefits...agglomeration. <u>Tying these transport infrastructure projects in with the land use pattern will be essential from an integrated economic development perspective.</u>”</i></p> <p>Add to the bullet points in para 247:</p> <p><i><u>Identifying a 30 year land use pattern that integrates with infrastructure, particularly transport, and funding</u></i></p> <p><i><u>Ensuring that the nature and sequencing of new land use development is co-ordinated with the development, funding, implementation and operation of land transport through growth planning between Auckland, the Bay of Plenty, the Waikato and Northland</u></i></p> <p>Response to Question 6 (page 70) - Do you think that leading the development of an internationally connected, innovative economic system should be a major economic priority and would help make Auckland more internationally competitive?</p>

Document Reference	Future Proof Submission	Specific Recommendation
		<i>Future Proof supports the approach of developing an internationally connected and innovative economic system. We are also of the view that Auckland’s inter-regional linkages are an important part of this approach and these need to be fostered in order for Auckland to be more internationally competitive.</i>
Section 6 People and Economy, para 237 and response to question 10	Future Proof would like to see mention of the relationship between Auckland and its neighbouring regions as this is a key driver for the economy. This is particularly important if Auckland intends on having an outward-looking, productive and high value economy.	<p>Suggest adding the following theme to para 237:</p> <p><i>Developing and enhancing inter-regional linkages, particularly between Auckland, Northland, the Waikato and the Bay of Plenty.</i></p> <p>Response to Question 10 - Are these five priority areas the areas that Auckland should focus on to develop a more outward-looking, productive, high value economy?  <i>Auckland also needs to focus on its inter-regional relationships given that places like the Waikato have a significant productive rural sector, provides a key transport hub and has a strong urban economy – all of which links effectively with Auckland and should continue to do so. These relationships can be used as a means of developing the outward-looking, productive and high value economy that Auckland is looking for.</i></p>
Section 6 People and Economy, Map 4	Future Proof would like to see Map 4 – Auckland’s Significant Economic Directions expanded to include key inter-regional inputs.	Expand Map 4 to indicate the relationship between Auckland and Northland, the Waikato and the Bay of Plenty. These could be titled “ <i>Inter-Regional Connections and Opportunities</i> ”.
Section 8 People and Place	Future Proof takes a strategic, integrated approach to long term planning and growth	Response to question 26 (page 150) <i>Future Proof supports the compact city model and</i>

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	<p>management. Specifically the Strategy identifies 50 year land supply needs in the sub-region and sequences its release and development according to its ability to be serviced by appropriate infrastructure and equitable funding. This is set out in the Future Proof settlement pattern.</p> <p>The Future Proof Strategy is predicated on achieving a more sustainable urban form over time. The key means of achieving this is to restrain sprawl by increasing residential densities.</p> <p>Achieving higher densities is a key part of the Future Proof Strategy in terms of accommodating future growth, providing for a range of housing types, supporting transport outcomes and providing employment close to where people live.</p> <p>Future Proof supports the use of metropolitan urban limits as one tool for achieving better integration between land use and infrastructure while also encouraging a more compact urban form. Future Proof is in the process of implementing urban limits through the Waikato Regional Policy Statement review.</p> <p>It should also be noted that the issue of how Auckland approaches development is much more complicated than simply opening up more land. The focus should be on infrastructure timing and affordability, funding measures, achieving a good balance between intensification and greenfields development, providing for a range of housing</p>	<p><i>the use of Metropolitan Urban Limits.</i></p> <p><i>Future Proof supports all of the approaches outlined in bullet point four while noting that the issue of opening up more land will depend on community reaction, infrastructure provision, transport implications and funding.</i></p> <p><i>Hamilton, Waipa and Waikato districts have all committed, through the Future Proof sub-regional growth strategy, to a quality, compact urban form, within urban limits. The area between south Auckland and Huntly must be carefully managed to avoid unsustainable development patterns emerging.</i></p>

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	choices and promoting good design.	
Section 9 People and Infrastructure, Map 10	Future Proof supports Map 10 which sets out inter-regional connectivity. We would suggest that the word “road” be removed from the second challenge as we need to include rail in terms of the movement of freight.	Strong support for Map 10.  Amend the second challenge to read:  “Increasing <del>road</del> freight flows requires...”
Section 9 People and Infrastructure, para 440	While Future Proof supports the references in this paragraph to inter-regional connections we are of the view that this could be reworded to better reflect the complementary natures of the four regional economies. As it stands para 440 appears to be espousing a competitive view.	Suggest the following amendments to para 440:  “Inter-regional connectivity is a key issue for the success of the Auckland Plan (see Map 10 on opposite page). The form of the Waikato region, which <u>has a strong relationship with Auckland both socially and economically</u> <del>is showing a strong propensity to reach up to and draw off Auckland</del> , and the Bay of Plenty region, with its vast amounts of business land, <u>will be important in terms of impact greatly on the ability of Auckland to</u> <del>implementing</del> a viable, interconnected economic and urban growth strategy. The <u>Ports of Auckland and the Port of Tauranga</u> <del>is drawing considerable business from Auckland</del> , <u>are New Zealand’s two largest Ports and have the potential to be complementary</u> . There is a need to consider <u>supply chains between Northland, Auckland, the Waikato and the Bay of Plenty</u> . This is essential <u>from an inter-regional freight movement pattern</u> as well as <u>a land use point of view in both locations</u> . Auckland’s vital electricity supply and some water supply traverse neighbours to the south. <u>Given the inter-connected nature of</u>

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		<p><u>infrastructure between Auckland and its surrounding areas it is important that these four regions work together. This includes coordinating their land use intentions, infrastructure and funding and taking a broad, complementary economic development approach.</u>"</p>
<p>Section 9 People and Infrastructure, para 441</p>	<p>Future Proof would like to see the reference to the Upper North Island Inter-regional Agreement expanded to better reflect the current content and scope of that document.</p>	<p>Amend paragraph 441 as follows:  <i>"The agreement would cover a range of matters, including strategic opportunities, collaboration, joint initiatives, co-ordination of economic activities and services, integration and consistency of planning, the sharing of information and achieving cost efficiencies. <del>but in particular</del> It would also focus on infrastructure, particularly water supply, transport, electricity supply, freight movement in and out of Auckland, oil and gas supplies and export and coastal port facilities.</i></p>
<p>Implementation, Monitoring and Review</p>	<p>Future Proof would like to see the importance of working with neighbouring regions and councils specifically mentioned in the implementation, monitoring and review section.</p> <p>Future Proof supports the approach to work with Central Government agencies outlined in 'A Final Word'. This may require expansion in the Draft Auckland Plan document. The Auckland Spatial Plan needs to reflect where Central Government is heading with key service delivery initiatives in areas such as health, education, and social welfare. Interaction with Central Government will also be important from an inter-regional connections perspective. Central Government needs to be on board in terms of the development</p>	<p>Add to para 525 as follows:</p> <p><i>"The Mayor will work with a huge range of organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors in order to implement the policies in the Auckland Plan. <u>This includes working with our neighbouring regions.</u>"</i></p> <p>Consider expanding the role of Central Government and how the Auckland Council intends to work with the Government in the Draft Auckland Plan. This is important given the level of Central Government input and investment required in various areas, which includes developing the role of the Upper North Island.</p>

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	and strengthening of the Upper North Island growth area.	