

Hi there,

Bringing it together in a changing world

Working with the NZ Transport Agency, we're pleased to launch an important urban development and transport project for the western Bay of Plenty.

The Urban Form and Transport Initiative (UFTI) is a refreshed, coordinated and aligned approach across the sub-region on key issues, such as housing, transport and urban development. There will be a strong emphasis on the development of a robust evidence base, to address some of the current gaps we have in our information and research base.

UFTI has begun a 12-month programme of work which will be delivered in four phases. The project partners will work with iwi, the business sector, community groups and political leaders, building on the consultation undertaken and feedback collected as part of the Tauranga Transport Plan, Tauranga Urban Growth Strategy and Future Development Strategy.

As the region grows at a significant rate, it is constantly being challenged to ensure urban and transport infrastructure meets the needs of local communities. Planning, investment and development has been unable to keep up with demand.

In the past five years, local councils and SmartGrowth have tried to focus on overcoming these challenges. A lot of planning and community engagement has been done but it has been in silos and generally we have lost momentum from a sub-regional perspective.

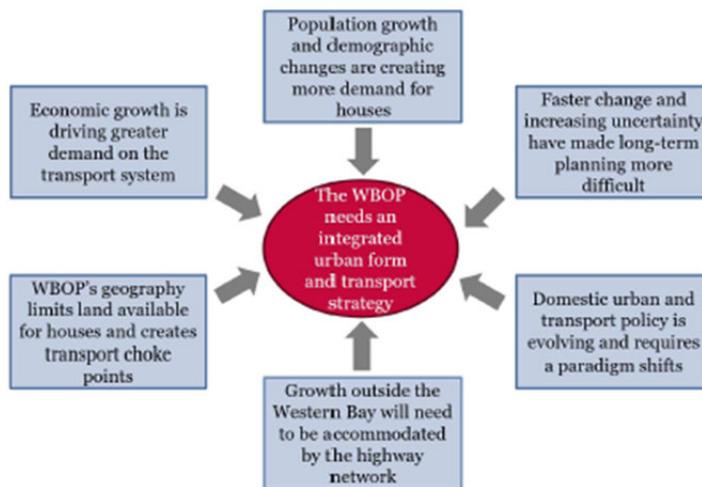
Transport is a major issue. So too is a lack of affordable housing and land supply which is constrained due to the natural environment as well as infrastructure affordability and provision. There are at least 24 major urban development or transport projects underway across the western Bay. Many have been developed separately and there is not an adequate master plan, supported by advanced modelling of options and scenarios, to align these at a governance and operational level.

There is an opportunity to build a much more cohesive approach. A key aspect of the next phase of the project is the appointment of a Project Director in early April.

Recent feedback on the SmartGrowth Future Development Strategy was loud and clear – local people want bold leadership as we move forward. With the launch of UFTI, we're hopeful that we're providing exactly that.

CHALLENGE

WBOP needs an integrated urban form and transport strategy



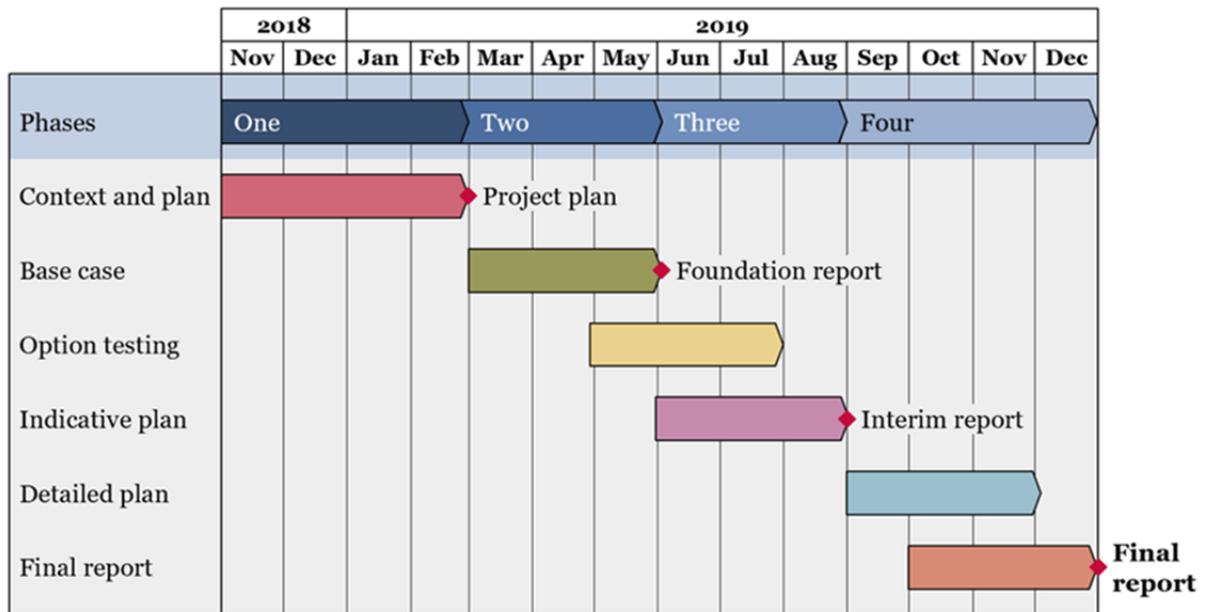
Independent Chair Bill Wasley

UFTI in a nutshell

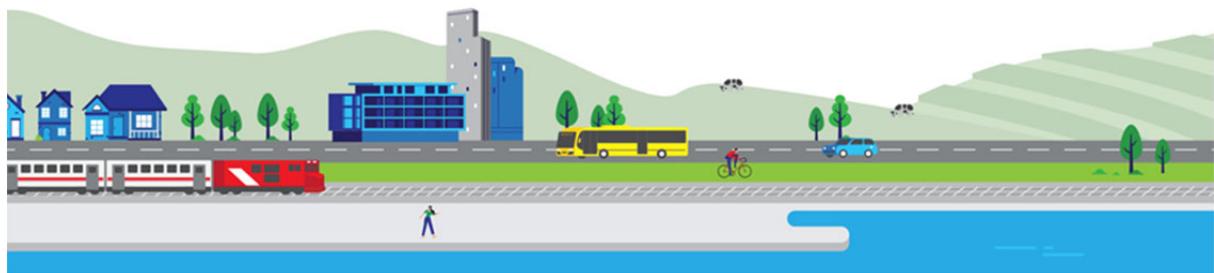
UFTI will deliver an integrated urban form and transport strategic approach that:

- Enables, supports and shapes sustainable, vibrant and interactive communities and a more liveable urban form
- Enables housing supply and choice in existing and new urban areas to meet current and future needs
- Improves measurable transport outcomes such as transport system safety, predictability, accessibility, travel choice, mode shift away from single occupancy vehicles and improved environmental outcomes, including CO2 emissions

- Supports and improves access to economic and social opportunities as the western Bay's population and economy grows
- Ensures long-lasting economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits and value for money from the agreed strategic approach



Lots more on the UFTI [website](#)



Some of the key elements of UFTI

Mode shift

Public transport, active modes, emerging technologies and the right measures and conditions must play a greater role to meet the growing transport needs and to shift current general traffic away from single occupancy light vehicles and provide for future travel demand.

We need to understand the potential and what tools need to be employed to achieve transport mode-shift and a more multi-modal sub-region.

Housing supply

Western Bay's near-term housing supply is at risk due to high population growth and unforeseen delays in the release of capacity in the Omokoroa, Te Tumu and Tauriko West new communities.

Approximately 17,000 of the 52,000 homes for which development capacity is needed by 2048 are not yet provided for in the current settlement pattern.

UFTI will assesses the extent to which increased intensification of existing urban areas and greenfield intensification is achievable.

Hewletts Road sub-area

The Hewletts road sub-area, which includes SH2 from Sulphur Point to the Sandhurst Drive interchange plus the surrounding industrial, commercial and residential areas, is an important and priority area. The State Highway and rail network provides access to and from New Zealand's largest port (handling 43% of all NZ's port export volume), the CBD, Eastern Corridor and wider BOP and Mount Maunganui's tourism, education and retail propositions. The area faces a range of competing demands that are difficult to manage with growing congestion and road safety issues.

The western Bay needs to develop a suite of solutions that can accommodate 5% annual growth in travel demand through the Hewletts Road sub-area and provide sufficient access to places of national, regional and local significance.

The Urban Form and Transport Challenge

Building a liveable city with transport that works for the future

The western Bay is growing fast; there are more people, houses, jobs and increasing transport needs. The Port is vital and the region is increasing its freight demand. The infrastructure is not keeping up and new investment is needed. The future can't look like the past. As Tauranga grows it has the potential to become a leading urban lifestyle destination, but it has some tough issues to resolve before it can achieve this.

UFTI will build a team to take an analytical, evidence-based approach to resolving the western Bay's most critical urban development and transport challenges.

Multi-modal transport options

The western Bay is experiencing increasing congestion problems that can no longer be relieved by road-focused approaches alone. Therefore, its heavy reliance on private vehicles must shift to the use of multiple transport modes.

UFTI's future multi-modal strategy is likely to combine several elements of leading global solutions.

Regional freight flows

The western Bay receives a large amount of freight traffic from other regions because it is home to the country's most productive port and is a key node in the Upper North Island's "Golden Triangle". Road and rail freight are contributing to western Bay traffic. Each road freight vehicle has a disproportionate impact on traffic, with one truck equivalent to between 2.5 and 10 passenger cars.

Freight trains have less of an impact but delay traffic at level crossings. Trains delay traffic for up to six minutes at level rail crossings. There are currently only 3 trains during the hours of 8am-9am and 5pm-6pm in Tauranga, but this could change.

Regional flows are a material component of local western Bay traffic and shifting road freight to rail could release a large amount of road capacity.

Managing uncertain futures

Planning liveable communities is more challenging than in the past

Faster technological, scientific and societal change and increasing uncertainty give rise to long-term planning challenges. Climate change, people's preferences, disruptive technologies, global and local economic performance and central government policy are all drivers of uncertainty.

The aim is to consider how well each of the options developed would perform under a range of possible futures and then arrive at a decision that is the most resilient and future proofed.

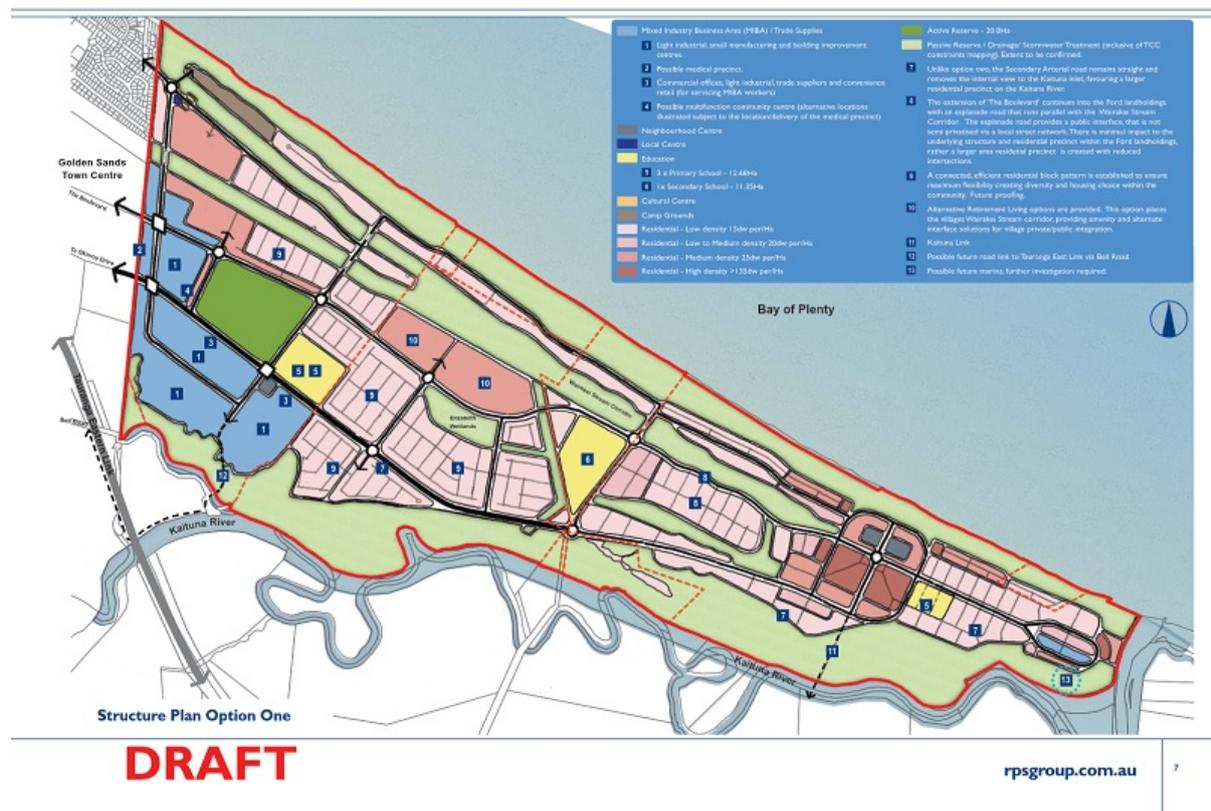
Urban form and transport needs of tomorrow will be materially different than today's. UFTI needs to develop a resilient strategic approach that will withstand the changing context

For more information check out the UFTI [website](#)

Kaituna Link

Do we need a link between proposed development at Te Tumu and the Eastern Link highway?

With further development planned at Te Tumu, people have questioned the need for a link from that area to the Eastern Link. A recent SmartGrowth investigation has concluded that the Western Bay of Plenty District Council District Plan provisions, including the zoning, are adequate to provide sufficient protection for the route should it be needed in the future.



Development capacity

There are currently around 6 years of theoretical development capacity remaining as at 1 January 2019. Some areas, such as The Lakes effectively have no remaining subdivision capacity and only a few years of sites in the pipeline for house builders. Further compounding the issue are some infrastructure challenges for particular sites and a slow release to the market by some developers.

The developers and building companies in the sub-region have clearly communicated that in their view the reality is there is less than 18 months realisable supply. Council staff agree that the realisable supply is significantly less than the theoretical supply.

Additional development capacity has been projected to come online through three main factors:

1. New major greenfield areas at Te Tumu, Tauriko West and Omokoroa.
2. Enabling more opportunity for intensification within the existing urban area of Tauranga City.
3. Provision for Special Housing Areas.

With the Housing Accord and Special Housing Areas legislation not being extended beyond September 2019, a critical tool for allowing this flexibility is no longer available.

Eastern Corridor

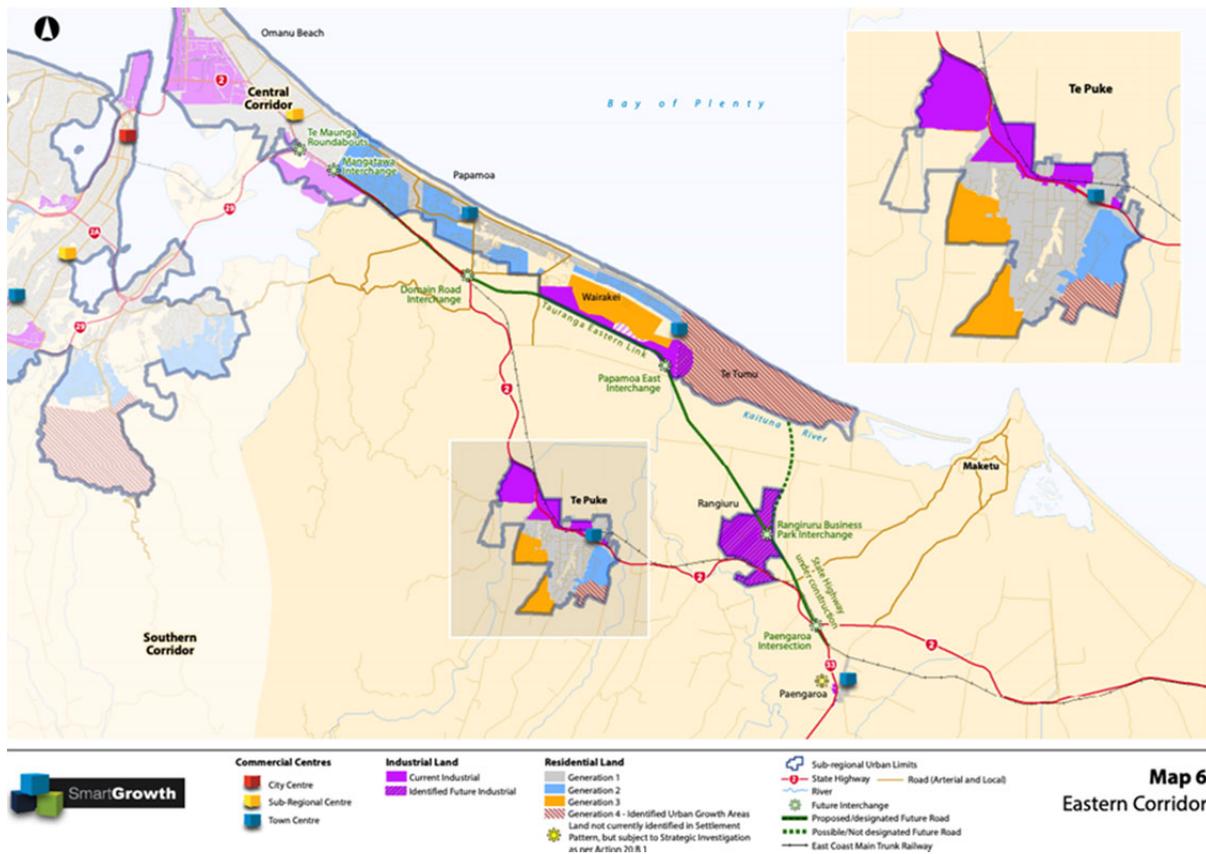
More growth for Paengaroa and Pongakawa?

A number of submissions on the Proposed Future Development Strategy supported future growth being catered for at Paengaroa, as well as other locations in the Eastern Corridor such as Pongakawa. The submissions also requested the need to undertake the assessment now, rather than over the next three years, particularly in relation to the shortage of housing for the rapidly expanding kiwifruit industry.

We're preparing to undertake a study to determine whether further urban development should be provided for in the Eastern Corridor. This is in addition to the currently agreed urban growth areas of Te Tumu and Te Puke.

The project will be undertaken in two phases:

1. The first phase is to consider whether additional urban growth areas should be provided in the Eastern Corridor or not.
2. If the answer to 1 is that there should be further urban development opportunities, a detailed study is required to determine the location and to consider other factors such as timing, viability and cost.



Smart Housing Action Framework

In March 2018, the SmartGrowth Leadership Group approved the Smart Housing Action Framework as its response to the Housing Need and Demand Research Report completed in December 2017.

The framework has four action areas.

1. Land provision and new partnerships – promoting and activating new ideas and joint projects.
 2. Policies and planning – getting our strategies, planning rules and regulations right.
 3. Community capacity and capability projects – developing skills, systems and resources to do
 4. things differently.
 5. Co-ordinated advocacy and communications – sharing our housing story and actions.
- Acting together to get results.

Progress actions so far include:

- Monitoring rental housing stock as part of the requirements of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development Capacity.
- Contributing to the work of the Regional Healthy Housing Forum
- Continuing to support the SmartGrowth Housing Affordability Forum's process to develop affordable housing on a designated block within the Omokoroa Special Housing Area
- Coordination and participation in Our Community Project work and in the People's Project Governance Group.
- WBOPDC's Housing Action Plan proposed actions include continuing to support 'A Healthy Whare Project' and expanding it into three new communities over the next three years. Council is planning to investigate social housing developments in Te Puke, in partnership with other potential providers.
- TCC's Tauranga Urban Strategy and related projects are focused on the delivery of a more compact urban form for the city via redevelopment and intensification of the existing urban area. Higher density greenfield outcomes can also contribute toward compact city aims. A number of projects are being scoped that seek to give effect to the Tauranga Urban Strategy.
- The following plan changes are underway:
 - Review of the City Living Zone (the zone adjacent to the CBD).
 - Changes to the City Plan objectives and policies to give effect to the centres-based growth principle in the TUS.
 - Investigation of growth and intensification of centres on the Te Papa peninsula.
 - A city-wide stormwater plan change to address the stormwater implications of intensification and the management of existing flood risk.
 - Accessible Properties is investigating the potential of its land holdings in the Tauranga central area as well.

What about the Future Development Strategy?

With the focus on UFTI, what happens to the Future Development Strategy?

Last year we engaged with many people in the western Bay on their views of what the future would ideally look like in for our area. Lots of people provided thoughtful opinions through our online survey, public meetings or online.

We've read through all those views and considered how they fit together and into the FDS. That work's now on hold but the information we gathered will be carried through into the UFTI project.

The UFTI work provides a coordinated approach to future development and transport and will take precedence over the FDS until the end of 2019 when all four stages will have been completed.

At that point the Future Development strategy will be updated to reflect the UFTI findings.

Collaboration and partnership sit at the heart of the SmartGrowth way of working

The three partner councils, [Bay of Plenty Regional Council](#), [Western Bay of Plenty District Council](#) and [Tauranga City Council](#) and tangata whenua provide governance oversight and management to SmartGrowth.

Government agencies, particularly the [NZ Transport Agency](#), play important roles in all aspects of SmartGrowth's work.

[Forums](#) provide important input and monitoring advice on a range of matters relating to the western Bay of Plenty.