

THE FUTURE AUCKLAND LEADERS GROUP

SUBMISSION TO THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON AUCKLAND GOVERNANCE

1. Introduction:

- 1.1 The Future Auckland Leaders Programme is funded and delivered by the Committee for Auckland, and supports the Committee's goal of igniting leadership and momentum for Auckland. The programme promotes leadership and a knowledge of Auckland within a young group of Aucklanders sponsored by Committee Members to contribute to the next generation of well-informed, visionary leaders for Auckland.
- 1.2 The Committee for Auckland is a not-for-profit organisation set up to contribute to making Auckland one of the world's great places to live and work. It is an independent alliance of corporate directors and chief executives, tertiary sector and not-for-profit leaders, working in the public interest. The Future Auckland Leaders group are younger leaders, aged between 25 and 44, and selected for their emerging leadership and are drawn from many sectors - banking, law, property, architecture, education, non profit, cultural, creative, telecommunications, health, community and resource management, local government and private enterprise.
- 1.3 The Future Auckland Leaders group welcomes the opportunity to provide this submission to the Royal Commission on Auckland Governance.
- 1.4 We endorse the Committee for Auckland submission and also raise particular issues we believe the Commission should consider.

2. Unity of Purpose:

- 2.2 With the structure of Auckland having one Regional Council, three District Councils and four City Councils, there is a real need and requirement for the area to have a cohesive sense of purpose (what are we trying to achieve in the region), united identity (who are we, and how are we viewed) and pride for Auckland to be a great city to live, work and play.
- 2.3 Each of these organisations has communicated their vision within their LTCCP documents and other statements of strategic intent. Each of these documents presents a perspective on the identity of the communities that it represents and the vision that it has for these communities. It is inevitable that each group of Councillors and the Officers of Council seek to differentiate themselves and to stand out from the pack. Waitakere City for example is firmly committed to becoming a sustainable city, a vision strongly represented by its mayor. Auckland City on the other hand is hesitant on this point and has chosen other factors to distinguish itself.
- 2.4 We contend that if the vision statements of the eight councils are reviewed together, they show eight different visions, all focussed within their own jurisdictions and all with potentially different futures. These vision statements have been taken from the respective council websites:
 - Auckland City Council – “Creating the First City of the Pacific”
 - Waitakere City Council – “Eco-City”
 - Manukau City Council – “Progressive, Proud, Prosperous”

- North Shore City Council - “Our city is prosperous, dynamic and diverse”
 - Rodney District Council – “We’re proud to live in Rodney... let’s keep it that way”
 - Franklin District Council – “A country lifestyle in harmony with our environment”
 - Papakura District Council – “lifestyle and opportunity”
 - Auckland Regional Council – “the Auckland region – a great place to live”
- (NB: finding these vision statements was not an easy exercise; this is an issue in itself).

2.5 These statements also point to a form of competitiveness that is a direct result of the current system. Obviously, all seven city and district councils want to be economically prosperous and to attract money and activity into their areas. The effect of all seven competing with each other means that there is duplication of time and resources which is ineffective and inefficient from a regional perspective.

2.6 While there is clearly a need for the voice and identity of local communities to be expressed there is also a need to identify the factors that are common in a unified vision for Auckland. Without defining and committing to these commonalities we are likely to continue to have at best a confused and fragmented image and at worst a competitive tension between the Councils within Auckland.

2.7 Providing a sense of identity and developing an element of pride in a city that has a relatively recent history, diverse roots and is often referred to as a sprawling metropolis, is a key challenge that many of our cultural institutions seek to address. Auckland War Memorial Museum’s primary approach is to maintain a reciprocal relationship with Auckland’s seven Territorial Local Authorities (TLA’s). This relationship is formalised by an Act of Parliament. The Auckland War Memorial Museum Act 1996 describes the obligations of a ten member board (5 of which are representatives from the TLA’s) and provides for sustained funding of the Museum by a levy on local territorial authorities. In return, the Auckland Museum is charged with providing small temporary exhibitions to councils and galleries within our TLA funding areas. This outreach programme is particularly important for those TLA’s with limited funding and enables the Museum to share collections and stories that are relevant to the local community.

2.8 We believe that greater Auckland needs to agree on an all encompassing “Mission Statement or Vision for Auckland” that provides all councils and populace with a ‘Unity of Purpose’ that creates the building blocks and guidance for our strategies for the city and region. How can they align if we do not have a single integrated goal for Aucklanders?

2.9 Without a clear mission or vision statement to provide the guidance, the councils will continue to be independent socially, economically and environmentally causing inefficiencies of all aspects, and Auckland will not realise its potential as a great place to live and work and as one of the world’s best cities. The issue comes down to needing strong and effective leadership and direction at a regional level. The ARC does not (perhaps cannot?) provide this and it is left to individual councils to try and deal with issues

themselves. This requires significant resources and only the wealthier councils can realistically start addressing the issues for their areas.

- 2.10 There are many examples of inefficiencies resulting from independent actions. If one takes as an example the implementation of the regulatory functions supporting the development within the region we see a picture where there is a lack of co-ordination, no clear agreement on best practice and duplication of operational infrastructure (e.g. information systems, operational business units). While each Council is governed by the same legislative frameworks they do not work together to achieve either a common purpose (e.g. through the alignment of district plans, development guidelines etc) or to share experiences in a meaningful way to improve the performance of operations and customer service. One wonders when the Councils will start competing with each other to attract new businesses and economic development in much the same way that the states in the US compete using their state tax system as a lever in the competitive process.
- 2.11 If Auckland does not have a 'Unity of Purpose', Auckland will continue to struggle with its regional, national and global identity, image, brand and perception and we will continue to see segregation, inefficiencies and inequality becoming more evident over time. The Tourism Industry has historically advertised Auckland as the gateway to the rest of New Zealand rather than being a destination in its own right. Seventy percent of all international visitors to New Zealand arrive via Auckland International Airport but only forty three percent of those visitors stay in Auckland (CEO of Tourism Auckland, Graham Osbourne as told to the Auckland Museum Sales Manager, Boris Sokratov).
- 2.12 With a 'Unity of Purpose', the potential exists to attract the best businesses to invest in the region, encourage a skilled work force to train and live in Auckland, and provide the current populace with pride and a sense of global achievement.

3 The Auckland Vision:

- 3.1 The Auckland vision needs to recognise that there is an extremely diverse group of stakeholders. These include not only the direct population and residential Aucklander, but also a wide range of other key stakeholder groups, i.e. businesses, communities, cultures, generations, tourists etc.
- 3.2 The vision needs to embrace a range of different worldviews. A snapshot from the 2006 census shows an increasing population and an increasingly diverse group of communities. The Auckland Region population increased by 7.1% over the period 2001 to 2006. The census confirms significant population growth rates for Auckland's Pasifika and Asian communities and a drop in the population of those identified as European. This level of growth and diversity would need to be considered in terms of ensuring Auckland has a unifying vision.

Regional Council by Ethnic Group for the Census Usually Resident Population Count¹					
<i>2001 Census</i>					
Regional Council	European	Māori	Pacific Peoples	Asian	Middle Eastern/ Latin American/ African
Auckland Region	754,749	127,629	154,680	151,602	13,335
<i>2006 Census</i>					
Regional Council	European	Māori	Pacific Peoples	Asian	Middle Eastern/ Latin American/ African
Auckland Region	698,622	137,133	177,936	234,222	18,555

- 3.3 The Auckland vision needs to be easy to articulate and formulate. First and foremost Aucklanders need to get it, embrace it and live it.
- 3.4 The Auckland vision needs to build an identity that supports diversity.
- 3.5 Having established this vision it needs to have longevity. It needs to transcend political cycles and unify successive governments and private sector in order for it to be realised / delivered.
- 3.6 Auckland needs to realise that it cannot be all things to all people. We have limited resources (people, money, time etc) and as a result we need to focus on the areas that make the greatest difference (hence the need for a unifying vision).
- 3.7 Creating a unifying vision is clearly a difficult task. Due to the diversity of stakeholders and communities involved it may be pragmatic to develop this vision around a few things that matter to all Aucklanders and that are central to either our identity or are critical to our daily lives. Developing a vision to encompass the critical functions that make Auckland liveable such as transportation is a clear requirement. The vision should also address how Aucklanders experience their city, a vision around strategic cultural/recreational assets such as museums, galleries, parks, sports activities and recreation areas would address how we see ourselves. Finally including the factors that make Auckland affordable such as water would ensure that we are clear on what we expect from our city.
- 3.8 The role of the Lord Mayor in London provides an example of how this may work. In this example the span of control/influence of the Lord Mayor is restricted to a number of strategic areas (including transport). It is however important that whoever is charged with defining the vision also has the capacity and permission to implement the vision. In our current system

¹ Taken from the Statistics NZ website: <http://wdmzpub01.stats.govt.nz/wds/TableViewer/tableView.aspx>

Auckland Regional Council provides some of this. In these areas the Regional Council is however restricted in its ability to implement. The implementation of regional strategies that are outside the scope of the Regional Council's delivery mandate are left to the goodwill of the Territorial Authorities.

- 3.9 Looking over the Tasman we see quite a different model of local government and regional governance. Australia has its 3 tiers of government (federal, state and local). It has a middle tier (state) that has significant power, autonomy and capacity to bring about change. This model results in the local government agencies being oriented toward localised service delivery and local community interests. Strategic decisions relating to the investment in the key assets of major cities and the states themselves are handled by the state government. While this is clearly not a system that can be applied directly in the context of Auckland governance it does highlight what can be achieved when decision making and execution capabilities are consolidated to address the needs of a region (in this case a large region/state). The Sustainable Sydney 2030 Strategic Plan is one example of a plan being “underpinned by a visionary approach and focused on sustainability”. This plan illustrates a dramatic and rapid shift in thinking and action that is needed to secure the City’s liveability and prosperity for current and future generations. The implementation of the plan is described as depending “on new systems of governance, including partnerships with state and federal government, other local councils, education institutions and business organisations. It will require new ways to involve and empower the community.”

4 Auckland’s Leadership and Governance:

- 4.1 Within the Auckland context it is important that a distinction is made between leadership and governance.
- 4.2 With a ‘Unity of Purpose and a Vision for Auckland’, the opportunity to contribute to a great city becomes a responsibility for all Aucklanders. With leadership responsibilities abdicated to elected officials, other organisations (i.e. private business, education, not-for-profit, cultural, environmental) outside the local government sphere operate in isolation. This is divisive and does not contribute to a Unity of Purpose or a Vision for Auckland. Leadership is needed to anticipate future events and to shift communities from reactive decision making to proactive policy making.
- 4.3 There are many leaders within Auckland. One of the issues is that these leaders are unlikely to identify themselves as Auckland leaders with a focus on Auckland. For example there are many public and private business leaders in Auckland who have the potential to contribute to a great Auckland, however they do not see this as their mandate or do not wish to focus their discretionary effort on Auckland leadership challenges.
- 4.4 A new model of Auckland governance should seek to identify ways in which these leaders can actively participate in both shaping and delivering Auckland’s future. Current governance structures provide many opportunities for citizens to be engaged in the decision making process. The role of the community boards is the best example of this ability. There are fewer ways in which business leaders are actively engaged in developing the future vision for Auckland and are subsequently requested to deliver this vision.

- 4.5 There are many leaders who are creating a great Auckland. Leading in schools, large organisations, cultural institutions, sports clubs etc. Many of them are change agents in their own fields and contribute to a great Auckland regardless of local democracy; it's a matter of harnessing them towards a unified goal.
- 4.6 The diverse group of leaders within Auckland need to first recognise they are leaders and that they have a contribution to make, and local governance has a role to play in this. This is about tapping into good governance which is participative and inclusive. To make a difference, this diverse set of leaders needs to abstract themselves to a level higher than their current focus. They all need to pool their wisdom and energy to achieve Auckland's vision. Advisory bodies could be formed to give advice on specific issues and can be hand-picked issue by issue. This would be a mechanism to engage Auckland's diverse group of leaders and tap into their areas of expertise.

5 Painting a Picture of the Future:

- 5.1 The Future Auckland Leaders group proposes the following considerations of what a new system could look like and how it would act.
- 5.2 If we consider some of the reasons why the system needs to change, this could help us to visualise what a new structure could look like.
- Artificial boundaries: Having 7 local authorities creates artificial boundaries between jurisdictions. Regional infrastructure, environment, economic, social and cultural issues transcend these artificial boundaries but are currently not being considered holistically. The boundaries create duplication of effort and therefore inefficiencies.
 - Vision: Currently there is a lack of unified vision for Auckland as a whole.
 - Regional Council lack of leadership: The Auckland Regional Council has been unable to take the leadership role in the region that was envisaged by the Local Government Act.
 - Key regional infrastructure: There are key infrastructural issues facing the region, including wastewater, stormwater and water, integrated transport system which includes efficient public transport, broadband, Rugby World Cup 2011. The current model will continue to make it difficult to achieve great outcomes.
 - Desire for better outcomes: There seems to be a renewed call from the public for improved outcomes for Auckland (based on feedback to media reports, involvement in Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) process, etc). There seems to be more interest in issues generally from the public.
 - Funding structure: This is probably dealt with through the Commission of Inquiry into Local Government Rates that took place last year, but councils face difficulty in funding local projects let alone regional infrastructure.
- 5.3 In terms of democracy New Zealand has, particularly since local government deregulation in 1987, worked to the principle of devolution of decision making to the lowest appropriate level. Any new system could have a tier of government that deals with the regional issues broadly along these lines:
- Infrastructure - including transport and Three Waters

- Growth - setting clear direction for Auckland's future
- Environment – setting environmental targets
- Economic development - leveraging off Auckland's size, position and standing in the nation and South Pacific
- International champion and tourism - overseeing international branding and the way in which the world sees us and coordinating bids for events.
- Regional culture - facilities such as the War Memorial Museum and Auckland Art Gallery, events such as the Rugby World Cup 2011, Pasifika and America's Cup are regionally significant. See link to article in NZ Herald Sunday 06 April 2008 re. Coordinated approach to Rugby World Cup 2011.
http://www.nzherald.co.nz/topic/story.cfm?c_id=476&objectid=10502316

5.4 A level of local government should be retained to deal with local issues and to continue the tradition of devolved decision-making. The link between the two levels of government is going to be crucial, and how each level can enable the other. Issues to deal with at local level include:

- Local planning - at area and local level. Having detailed planning down to local level needs to be done as close to the community as possible.
- Public space/reserves - maintain and enhance open space for the public's enjoyment and recreation.
- Public facilities - from community buildings such as local halls to street furniture, toilets and footpaths.
- Local economic development - supporting local small businesses and community organisations
- Events - local events that are often a key part of a local community.

5.5 There are numerous examples of cities throughout the world that have travelled the same journey that Auckland is currently on. The Future Auckland Leaders group offers the following case studies and additional information for the Commission's consideration.

- The Greater London Authority
 - <http://www.london.gov.uk/gla/index.jsp>
- Sustainable Sydney 2030
 - <http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/2030/>
- The Regeneration of Birmingham City
 - http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/GenerateContent?CONTENT_ITEM_ID=234&CONTENT_ITEM_TYPE=0&MENU_ID=263
- UK IDeA (Improvement and Development Agency for UK local government)
 - <http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=1>
- (PLUS) Participation, Leadership and Urban Sustainability
 - <http://www.plus-eura.org/>

6 Conclusion:

6.1 The Future Auckland Leaders group concludes with the following considerations and thoughts.

6.2 The new system of leadership for Auckland would be equipped to deliver improved environmental standards whilst still providing for population growth. The Sustainable Sydney 2030 Strategic Plan is an example of a plan that

recognises demands from continued population growth and change and balancing that against environmental and economic pressures.

- 6.3 The new system of leadership for Auckland should accentuate and develop the identity of Auckland. International city v. Asia Pacific and New Zealand identity. Do we need to be as big as other international centres? We should focus on being world class in our own unique way. Auckland does not have to aspire to being London or New York to be successful. Auckland needs to maintain a unique identity.
- 6.4 The new system of leadership for Auckland must have the capacity and the courage to collaborate on social, economic, environmental and cultural issues. To see the big picture of the challenges and the opportunities not just specific issues. In identifying and delivering the big picture, Auckland's leaders need to be given sufficient scope to make and implement decisions with minimal bureaucracy.
- 6.5 The new system of leadership for Auckland should be mandated to take into regard that the Auckland region must aspire (cultural challenge) to have a culture of excellence in order for it to be a great city to live and work in and to be one of the great cities of the world.
- 6.6 The new system of leadership for Auckland must be a structure that unifies Auckland and Aucklanders. We need to learn how to win and how to succeed. At the moment we seem to be practicing how to be divisive and to work against each other. As with many things unity and a common purpose is built one step at a time. Moving too quickly to a structural solution to bring about unity is unlikely to build the culture that is required to support a unified vision. Given its history Auckland needs to start with achievable goals that represents a shift in thinking and practice. Only after achieving these interim goals should more comprehensive and strategic goals be tackled.
- 6.7 The new system of leadership for Auckland needs to leverage the ecosystem of Auckland. Business, government, communities and individuals need to be aligned in what they are doing. Their efforts need to be working toward a common goal and be supportive of each other. In many respects this can be facilitated by joint planning between government bodies, business and communities. One mechanism which can be employed to align business interests with government interests is the implementation of public-private partnerships. Such partnerships have been implemented successfully around the world to manage significant infrastructure investment including roading and transportation. Businesses will invest in areas where there is a commercial outcome and a reason to invest. Public-private partnerships offer Governments access to additional capital and delivery capability to advance projects that can be difficult to fund directly through public investment.
- 6.8 The Commission should take into regard that the leadership and governance across Auckland needs to present a unified face to the vision and the actions it intends to take. While strong debate is important, public conflict (e.g. waterfront stadium disputes) needs to be managed carefully.