

### 3. Key Issues

#### 3.1 Introduction

The Whangarei District experienced significant growth over the period 2001 to 2008. This recent growth has resulted in widespread development throughout the district. Figure 19 illustrates the scattered nature of this development, with land development occurring throughout the district, including ribbon development along the coast and along transport corridors, sporadic development on the urban fringes, and scattered rural residential development throughout the rural and coastal areas.

Since notification of the first district plan (1998) under the Resource Management Act, successive councils have pursued enabling, market-orientated policies in regard to the land development. Land regulation in the form of zoning and minimum lot sizes has been extremely permissive – based upon a largely laissez-faire approach to land development. Liberal zoning and housing density provisions (a 350m<sup>2</sup> to 3ha minimum lot size across the whole district) reflected this approach. As a consequence, the district experienced a subdivision boom resulting in a situation today where there is estimated to be around 6,000 vacant building lots in the district spread across all zonings.

This growth (along with future growth) presents both challenges and opportunities to our communities, businesses and governing bodies. These include the following:

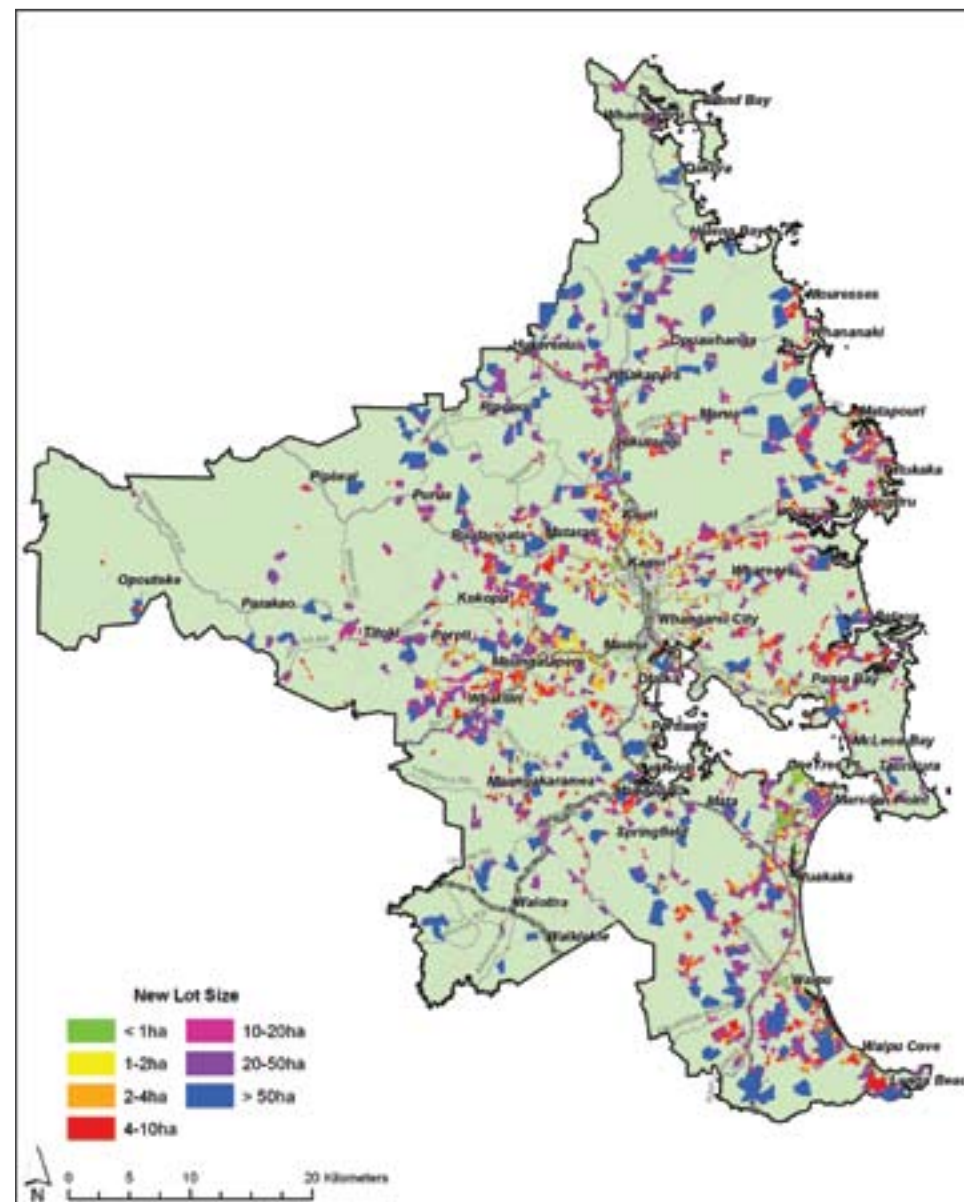
- Improved economic outcomes;
- Timely and efficient provision of infrastructure;
- Managing cumulative environmental effects; and
- Ensuring social and cultural well being.

#### 3.2 Economic Outcomes

Northland's gross domestic product (GDP) was \$4.5 billion in the year to March 2008 (Whangarei District's was \$2.5 billion). This represented 2.5% of national GDP, making Northland one of the smallest of the 16 regional economies in New Zealand (of similar size to Southland). Northland GDP per capita is about a third lower than the national average, and is the lowest of all regions except for Tasman. GDP per capita is \$28,890 in Northland, \$32,000 in Whangarei, and \$40,360 for the whole of New Zealand. Economic growth in Northland has averaged 2.8% per annum over the 10 years to March 2008. Growth has been volatile ranging from 5.4% in 2001 and 5.2% in 2006 to -1.4% in 2003 and -3.3% in 2009. This volatility continues a boom and bust economy that has characterised Northland and Whangarei historically.

Employment/unemployment levels tend to match the fluctuations in economic activity. Historically Northland and Whangarei have had similar and much higher rates of unemployment than the national average (9.25% compared to 6.28% over the last 20 years). During the early 1990s, unemployment in Northland and Whangarei reached 15%. Over the period 2000-2008, unemployment levels fell to historic lows (from 10.7% in 2000 to 4.1% in 2008). However, unemployment rates are now increasing under the present economic downturn (8.3% in Northland for the year ending March 2009). This compared to 5.8% for New Zealand as a whole, and is the highest unemployment rate in the country.

Figure 19: Subdivision Development 1996 - 2010



Unemployment is highest amongst Pacific people (16% in 2006) and Maori (14% in 2006), compared to European (5% in 2006). Unemployment is highest amongst the younger cohorts (21.2% in 2006 for 15-19 year olds), with 15-19 year old Pacific people (41% in 2006) and 15-19 year old Maori (31% in 2006) the highest. To improve long term employment rates in the district, overall economic activity needs to be more diversified and resilient. The boom and bust nature of the economy is best overcome by further diversification of economic activity, particularly in resilient labour intensive industries. In addition, high unemployment amongst Maori and Pacific people needs to be addressed through training and education, particularly amongst the younger age cohorts.

In 2006, the median income (personal, family and household) was lower in the Whangarei District than New Zealand as a whole (\$22,500, \$51,200 and \$43,900 compared with \$24,400, \$59,000 and \$51,400 for New Zealand). Moreover, 63% of Whangarei residents earn less than \$30,000 per annum, while only 15% earn more than \$50,000 per annum (compared to 58% and 18% respectively for the whole of New Zealand). Maori, Pacific people, Asian and other ethnic minorities are more likely to earn less than Europeans, i.e. 70% of Maori and Pacific people earn less than \$30,000 per annum, while only 10% earn more than \$50,000 per annum.

Whangarei District has a higher proportion of people on low incomes than New Zealand as a whole (22% compared to 18%). Maori, Asian and Pacific people are over represented in the lower income brackets, with 30% of Maori and Asian and 26% of Pacific people on low incomes. A higher proportion of dependent children live in households with low incomes (27% in Whangarei District than New Zealand as a whole (16%). A higher proportion of people in the Whangarei District are receiving benefits (13%) than the rest of New Zealand (10%). A higher proportion of people in the Whangarei District are receiving income support (17%) compared with the rest of New Zealand (14%).

Social deprivation is more prevalent in Northland and Whangarei compared to the rest of New Zealand with 57% of Northland's population classified as 'more deprived', 48% of Whangarei's population, and 40% of New Zealand as a whole. At the other end of the scale, 15% of Northland, 21% of Whangarei and 30% of New Zealand are classified as 'less deprived'. These figures represent a relative measure of deprivation not a measure of absolute deprivation. However, they provide valid comparisons of deprivation with other parts of New Zealand and provide trends over time. Lastly, New Zealand (including Whangarei District) has one of the highest rates of income disparity within the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), ranking 23 out of 30 countries. Income inequality has been shown to have adverse impacts on almost all social indicators including health, crime, suicide, obesity, teenage pregnancy, infant mortality, educational achievement, and many others.

To ensure a sustainable economy, future economic development in the district needs to provide an adequate and secure standard of living for all citizens, particularly for our children and grandchildren. This requires a sufficient and secure income for all citizens able to work. Those unable to work must have an adequate income to ensure they remain part of, and contribute positively to, society. Levels of income are key determinates of individual or family well being. Economic standard of living involves a complex combination of factors such as income, living costs, household size and composition. The more prosperous an economy, the better off the residents in that economy are in terms of opportunities to gain higher income, buy material possessions and access quality health care. In general, this leads to greater social connectedness, educational advancement, wider employment opportunities and increased life expectancy.

To increase the standard of living in our community economic development must provide a diversified, resilient local economy, rich in secure jobs, both skilled and less skilled, that are not at the mercy of boom and bust business cycles. In particular, the economy needs to provide

jobs for our young people, and for Maori and other ethnicities. If we are to retain our young people, we must provide worthwhile, meaningful employment for them. This cannot be stressed enough. Secure, well paid employment is the necessary precursor to improving the future for our community – without it, social problems will continue to grow.

Specific attention needs to be applied to education and training for young people, particularly Maori and Pacific people. Training for trades and other employment-oriented skills needs to be widely available, and young people need to be encouraged to participate. Developing employment skills will lead to less unemployment, better income levels, less social and health problems, and a less dysfunctional society. High unemployment amongst Maori and Pacific people must be reduced, through training and education, particularly in the younger age groups. Apprenticeships/trades training, particularly in targeted industries, such as engineering, marine industries, forestry, aquaculture, and tourism, hold out much promise in this regard.

### 3.3 Infrastructure and Services

Growth in our economy and population requires considerable investment in infrastructure and services. The spatial arrangement of development has major implications for the provision of physical infrastructure. There is potential for substantial costs to Council, the business sector and the community. Continued widely dispersed development and settlement patterns have effects on both the timing and costing of hard infrastructure, including:

- Roading;
- Water;
- Wastewater;
- Stormwater; and
- Solid Waste.

#### Roading

We rely heavily on private cars for most of our personal travel, and on road vehicles for most freight movement. A widely dispersed settlement pattern requires roading infrastructure to support it. The scattered distribution of recent development poses problems for the timely and cost-effective provision and maintenance of roading infrastructure. Subdivision and land development creates demand for both new roading and the upgrading of the existing roading network. It is difficult to plan for new roads and upgrades of existing roads if the location of future subdivision and development is unknown. In these circumstances the provision of roading infrastructure tends to be reactive rather than proactive. The efficient and timely provision of roading infrastructure requires integrated transport and land use planning.

Urban Whangarei is faced with severe capacity and congestion issues, particularly in the Whangarei CBD area and along State Highway 1 as it passes through the City. Increased traffic counts on all parts of the roading network are putting additional strain on the Whangarei urban network which is already operating well beyond its design capacity. With increasing growth pressure, this will continue impacting on the wider community as the Whangarei urban area is a major bottleneck for through traffic to the east and west coast communities of the region and to destinations north and south of Whangarei.

Recent efforts by Council to secure funding from Central Government to address these issues have resulted in a programme of major projects in the near future to improve traffic flow and safety in Whangarei City. These include a new harbour crossing link to Pohe Island (2010-2013); Spedding Road extension to be built in conjunction with the Kamo Bypass project (2009-2010);

Porowini Avenue over-bridge and link road project (2008-2012); Mill Road/Nixon Street upgrade (2010-2012); Riverside Drive/Onerahi Road four lanes (2014-2016); and Walton Street four lanes (2016-2019).

To ease congestion on State Highway 1 through Whangarei the New Zealand Transport Agency has committed to a series of major upgrades from Tarewa Road to Kamo Road. These include four-laning parts of the road, signalisation of the Tarewa Road intersection and a major upgrade of the intersection of State Highway 1 with State Highway 14 (2009-2012). In addition, construction of Stage Two of the Kamo Bypass started in 2010 and will provide a new connection between Western Hills Drive and the existing bypass north of Kamo Road.

### Water Supply

Currently, the water supply infrastructure provides potable water to approximately 80% of the district's population. The remaining 20% access water from springs, bores, streams or rainwater. There are six water supplies operated by the Whangarei District Council: Whangarei City; Whangarei Heads; Hikurangi; Bream Bay; Maungakaramea; and Mangapai. The availability of raw water has been identified as an area of concern during a one in 50 year drought for the Whangarei City, Maungakaramea and Mangapai Water Supply Areas.

Increasing population and industrial growth is placing pressure on Whangarei City's stored raw water, meaning our ability to meet a one in 50 year drought scenario is becoming strained. In other words, if the City's water needs continue to increase at current rates Whangarei will be left exposed to water shortages in times of drought, although activities such as the Hatea Bulk Water Main project upgrade can help alleviate water shortages. The total annual water consumption is expected to increase from 6.9 million to 8.2 million cubic metres annually in 2055. Sustainable water savings can be implemented until 2025 to make up the shortage in supply during a one in 50 year drought. However, as the population continues to grow and the climate is predicted to get warmer, a new water source remains a vital requirement for the Whangarei Water Supply Area.

Figure 20: Whau Valley Reservoir



There will also need to be a significant investment in water infrastructure in rapidly developing areas, such as Bream Bay and other parts of the coast. It will be difficult and expensive to continue the water reticulation system in some inland rural areas and coastal areas if the current widely dispersed development continues without connection to the town supply, thus creating an artificial barrier to the growth of the water supply system. Climate change may also impact on both reticulated and on-site water supply systems by reducing supply at certain times of the year and increasing frequency of droughts.

### Wastewater Disposal

Major pressure is evident on the wastewater system as a result of growth in the district. The pressure is most evident in the Ruakaka area where major planning work is in progress to build a new wastewater treatment plant and reticulation systems to cater for in excess of 20,000m<sup>3</sup> per day of waste, compared to present day flows of around 600m<sup>3</sup> per day. The pressure, however, extends throughout the district in terms of growth in coastal areas (e.g. Tutukaka and Oakura), and the City catchment. The Whangarei Heads wastewater system will relieve some of this pressure north of the Whangarei Harbour.

In Whangarei City centre sewers were laid during the early 1900s. These pipes have an estimated average design life of 50 to 80 years. Comprehensive condition data on these pipelines is not available although the available inspection and maintenance records indicate that a number of sewers are at, or near, design capacity. This has been exacerbated by overloading of the sewerage reticulation system during peak wet weather resulting in overflows during extreme events. In short, an upgrade to the City sewer and wastewater treatment plant is needed to cope with high rainfall events and projected population growth within the catchment.

Council has commenced such an upgrade. A new pipeline from the Okara pump station to the Kioreroa Road Wastewater Treatment Plant, along with new pumps at Okara, should reduce spills to the harbour caused by high rain fall events to one in five years. The next stage will upgrade the wastewater treatment plant to treat the storm flow wastewater to a higher standard using improved filtration and ultra violet radiation. Council also has an on-going programme to reduce storm water infiltration into the sewerage reticulation system.

### Stormwater Disposal

There are ongoing issues with disposal of stormwater. The focus on stormwater management has moved over recent years from Council provision of infrastructure to focusing on development managing stormwater treatment and disposal on-site. It has long been recognised that the CBD area is vulnerable to flooding, and Northland Regional Council has recently commenced a strategic review of the options identified in earlier Whangarei District Council work. Stormwater disposal remains a problem throughout the district, largely as a result of historic development. Many areas are prone to flooding and land instability.

High intensity rainfall and small deforested catchments tend to increase flooding problems and slip damage. Erosion and sedimentation of waterways is problematic, and pollution from both agricultural and urban sources is also an issue. Whangarei District Council Engineering Standards promote the use of low impact design techniques to provide treatment and disposal facilities for stormwater, and more riparian plantings are needed to address natural waterway and open drain issues. Projected growth in development in both urban and rural areas is addressed through continual revision of detailed catchment management plans which have been completed for most urbanised areas within the district.

## Solid Waste

Solid waste generation is closely linked to population growth and industrial development which means more development will result in greater waste generation without efforts to reduce, reuse, recycle and recover waste. Despite population growth, over the last five years there has been a 42% reduction in the total waste tonnage and a 23% reduction in waste to landfill. This has been achieved through reduction, reuse, recycling, and recovery of waste. In 2007 around 10% of the total waste tonnage was recycled.

Council currently transports all residual waste out of the district to the Redvale Landfill located in Silverdale, north of Auckland, under a five year contract. This contract expires in October 2010. Council has formed a Council Controlled Trading Organisation, in conjunction with a private operator, to own, develop and operate a new regional landfill at Puwera, south of Whangarei, along with the recycling centre (Re:Sort) in Kioreroa Road. The Puwera landfill is due to open in November 2010. Curb-side collection of plastics, cans, paper/cardboard, and glass will continue as will efforts to reduce the amount of waste generated in the district. Council has adopted a target of a 4% per person per annum reduction in total waste generation over the next 30 years and a 1% increase in recycling per annum.

## Electricity and Telecommunications

Other infrastructure services such as electricity and telecommunications will be able to cope with the growth demand given these services are installed at the time of land subdivision and development. However, further work at a national level may also impact on Council such as a proposed National Environmental Standard on telecommunication facilities in road reserves. Fast broadband connection remains an issue in Whangarei District (and Northland) although this may be addressed by the planned upgrade of infrastructure by Northpower. Security of power supply remains an issue for Northland. Expansion of the Ngawha geothermal station and planned tidal generation in the Kaipara Harbour may assist in this regard. There is also potential, particularly in the Far North and on the West Coast, for wind generation.

## 3.4 Natural Environment

Given the scale and spatial distribution of recent development (together with further development in the future) there is the potential for significant cumulative effects on the natural environment. The scattered nature of recent development, including ribbon development along the coast and along transport corridors, sporadic development on the urban fringes, and scattered rural residential development throughout the rural and coastal areas poses challenges when managing environmental effects, particularly cumulative effects over the long term. Some of these effects are described below:

### Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes

Around 20% of the district is designated as either outstanding or notable landscape in the District Plan. These landscapes are regionally and, in some instances, nationally significant. These are our iconic landscapes that distinguish the district and make it unique. Approximately 10% of lots subdivided over the last 10 years have been in either outstanding or notable landscape areas, and there will be on-going demand for residential development in these areas. Growth must be managed to ensure that these special and often vulnerable landscapes are protected from over development. The alternative is that, over time, the cumulative effects of development will overwhelm these landscapes and the very values that made them significant will be lost. The district's unique identity as a consequence diminishes, and those traits that made the district special are lost forever.

## 26: Whangarei District Growth Strategy

## Natural Character of the Coast

The Whangarei District coastline is one of the most beautiful in the world. For this reason demand for residences and holiday homes along the coast is high. This demand will continue. In addition, until recently, capital gains on coastal property have been significant. This also has increased demand. Around 10% of the district is in the coastal area yet approximately 30% of the lots subdivided over the last 10 years have been in coastal areas. Bream Bay in particular has experienced intensive subdivision, both in the north around Ruakaka and One Tree Point and in the south around Waipu and Langs Beach.

There are very real dangers of development along the coast adversely affecting the natural character of the coast. Ribbon development and sporadic development can result in over development that diminishes the very values that attracted people to the coast. Inappropriately located dwellings can significantly affect natural character. Adverse effects can accumulate over time so that eventually the natural character is all but lost forever. Development (residential, commercial, and industrial) along the coast must be managed to prevent this.

Figure 21: Mt Manaia



### Indigenous Biodiversity

The Whangarei District has a unique biodiversity, yet much of it is threatened. For example, there are 201 threatened species within the district. Of these, 120 are threatened animals, and 81 are threatened plants. In addition, 12% of the district's land area is classified as acutely threatened environment, and 13% is chronically threatened environment. Less than 5% of the district's wetlands remain as a result of drainage and disturbance. Some wetland types are now close to being lost forever. Remaining wetlands are under pressure from drainage, invasion by pest plants, reclamation for urban development, grazing and trampling of littoral vegetation by stock.

Over the last 10 years, 62% of lots subdivided have been in acutely or chronically threatened land environments. In addition, 20% of the lots subdivided over the last 10 years have intersected a Protected Natural Area of ecological significance. The scattered nature of recent development

has caused widespread impacts on natural habitat and biodiversity. These impacts are difficult to manage across such a dispersed area. If the loss of indigenous biodiversity and the destruction of natural habitats of indigenous flora and fauna is to be halted, a much more proactive response is necessary. Development must take account of, and protect and/or enhance, biodiversity and natural habitat.

### High Class Soils

The Whangarei District possesses some highly fertile and versatile soils but they are extremely limited in area. These are often of volcanic origin, although there are some highly productive alluvial soils in Bream Bay. There are approximately 12,000ha (or 4%) of high class versatile soils within the Whangarei District. Yet these same soils are often highly desirable for residential or rural residential development. Over the last five years around 15% (almost 2,000ha) of these prime soils have been subdivided. The average lot size is 2.2ha, effectively removing them from productive use in the future. In addition, 14% of the total lots subdivided over the last 10 years were located on high class soils. With widespread rural residential development occurring throughout the rural area these soils are being removed from productive use. Given that only 1.5% of the land area of the Whangarei District is comprised of high class soils (those with few impediments to intensive arable use) subdividing these soils for residential or rural residential development is not a sustainable use of a highly valuable and limited natural resource.

### Rural Amenity/Reverse Sensitivity

Another consequence of widely dispersed rural residential development is the effect on rural amenity and reverse sensitivity. Scattered residential development in the rural area often results in adverse effects on rural amenity in the sense of changing the visual characteristics of a rural landscape. An open vista becomes built-up, there are increased traffic movements, increased noise, and often an increased demand for improved infrastructure (roading, sewerage, water, etc.). At the same time, reverse sensitivity becomes an issue. People attracted to the rural environment often complain about farming activities taking place alongside them. Noise, dust, spray drift, animal movements, etc. become cause for complaint. Productive use of the land is further diminished. Development must be managed to avoid adverse effects on rural amenity and reverse sensitivity issues if it is to be sustainable.

### Air Quality

Overall, the air quality in the Whangarei District is good. Some parts of Whangarei City have poor air quality on occasions during winter months when during periods of cold, calm weather pollutants can build up to levels which may affect human health. National Standards for particulate matter and carbon monoxide have been exceeded in the past. In Whangarei City the major contaminants are from domestic fires, vehicle emissions and, to a lesser extent local industry. Future development in the City, both residential and industrial, will need to be managed so that air quality does not diminish further and that national standards are not exceeded.

In the Marsden Point area, future constraints may be more complex, given the potential for large scale increase in both population and industry. At present, particulate matter, sulphur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide are emitted from the Marsden Point Oil Refinery and the Carter Holt Harvey Laminated Veneer Lumber (LVL) Plant. Monitoring has shown that the airshed may be close to capacity for sulphur dioxide, while particulate matter and nitrogen dioxide levels presently meet national standards. Given the potential for significant residential and industrial development, air quality may well become a serious constraint in the Marsden Point Airshed, particularly in relation to particulate matter and sulphur dioxide.

### Water Quality

Water quality has been affected by development in the Whangarei District both along the coast and inland waterways. Ribbon and sporadic development along the coast, particularly in unserviced areas, has the potential to adversely affect coastal water quality. Harbours and estuaries are especially vulnerable to stormwater runoff and seepage from septic tanks. Sediment input from erosion caused by forestry, farming, and earthworks associated with development can also have significant impact in some areas.

Sewage spills in Whangarei Harbour are causing concern for residents and marine users. After heavy rain, water quality is often not suitable for shellfish gathering or swimming due to bacterial levels. Water quality is especially poor in the upper harbour near the Town Basin. The upper harbour sampling sites exceed the 130 enterococci per 100ml guideline on between 20-35% of sampling occasions. As mentioned earlier, there are planned upgrades of the wastewater system to reduce sewage spills into the harbour to one in five years.

Water quality in inland waterways is affected by farming activities in the rural areas and stormwater discharge in urban areas. Both contribute to a deteriorating quality of water in streams and rivers. Some streams and rivers are unsafe for swimming or as a source of potable water. Few freshwater lakes remain within the district. Three lakes receive some form of monitoring within Whangarei District: Lake Waro is oligotrophic (i.e. low in nutrients) and in moderate-high condition; Ruakaka is hypertrophic (i.e. very high in nutrients) with unknown condition; and surveys indicate that Lake Ora has a low condition.

### Natural Hazards

Risks from natural hazards including land instability, flooding, coastal hazards, volcanism, earthquakes and climate change pose challenges to development. Flooding and other weather-related hazards (landslips) are the most common natural hazards in the district followed by coastal erosion and inundation. Land instability is a threat in parts of the district. Development must take into account the risks presented by natural hazards. The scattered nature of recent land development makes avoiding or mitigating risks from natural hazards difficult. Over the last 10 years, 24% of the lots subdivided throughout the district have been in flood susceptible areas. In addition, 0.5% of the lots subdivided over the last 10 years have occurred within a coastal hazard zone. Development, to be sustainable over the long term, particularly given the potential for climate change, must avoid or mitigate the risks presented by natural hazards.

Figure 22: Flood Damage Near Hikurangi, July 2007



### 3.5 Social and Cultural Well Being

Growth - both its scale and its spatial distribution – presents challenges (and opportunities) to social and cultural well being. For development to be sustainable over the long term it must ensure social and cultural well being for the residents of the district. In other words, development must move towards a sustainable society and culture. Often these essential aspects of development are not accorded adequate recognition and the provision of social and cultural infrastructure is relegated in importance. Yet the timely and efficient provision of social and cultural infrastructure, such as health care, education, civic and cultural amenities, arts and leisure facilities, open space, entertainment and recreation, is essential to ensure the social and cultural well being of the community. Residents must also be housed in healthy and affordable homes and must feel safe in their homes and communities.

#### Education

There is a strong link between educational achievement, employment, income, and socio-economic well being. Whangarei District has a higher proportion of people with no formal qualifications compared to New Zealand as a whole. It also has fewer residents with tertiary qualifications compared to the rest of New Zealand. Young people in our district are more likely to leave school with no qualifications than the rest of the country. To raise living standards and increase self esteem amongst our citizens, particularly amongst the young, educational achievement needs to be improved.

As the population of the district increases, there will most likely be a need for more educational institutions. Trends in local population statistics will influence the provision and location of new schools – primary and secondary – along with the ongoing viability of existing schools. Planning for the provision of new schools, in concert with the Ministry for Education, will be required over the next 30/50 years to ensure schools are located appropriately to best serve local needs and take advantage of existing infrastructure including recreational facilities and transportation links.

The role and potential growth of the tertiary sector in Northland and Whangarei, especially with regard to Northland Polytech and other tertiary institutions, such as the Auckland University campus in Whangarei, needs to be assessed and planned for over the next 30/50 years. A new university in Whangarei is unlikely over this time period, but there is considerable potential to expand the Auckland University campus, increase the presence of other university campuses in Whangarei, and further develop Northland Polytech as the preeminent tertiary institute in Northland.

There is also on-going need for vocational training for our school leavers. In today's world there is a pressing need for all young people to develop a set of marketable skills so that full time, rewarding employment is achievable for all. Trends in local skills shortages need to be matched with initiatives to provide training in areas of skill shortage (perhaps in collaboration with Northland Polytech and other training providers). The Future Trades Training Centre established by the Northland Polytech in conjunction with local businesses is a good example of such an approach.

#### Healthcare

Life expectancy in Northland and the Whangarei District is lower than for New Zealand as a whole and life expectancy for Maori is even lower (64 years for Maori males in Northland compared to 78 years for all New Zealand males). The rate of premature death in Northland and Whangarei is higher than for New Zealand as a whole, with 47% of deaths in Northland occurring before the age of 75 years compared with 39% for New Zealand. The incidence of poverty related diseases in Northland and Whangarei are among the highest in New Zealand, for example, meningococcal disease, rheumatic fever, pneumonia, lung infections, ear infections, dental disease and skin

infections. Infant mortality in Northland is 8.1/1,000 births compared to 5.4/1,000 for New Zealand as a whole.

Poor health is best lowered by increasing income levels and improving housing conditions, which in turn are linked to improved educational achievements and increased employment opportunities. Greater access to health care, together with increased affordability, can also improve health in the community. Health impact assessment - how environmental and non-environmental factors impact health - will assist in determining the causes of ill health and how health can be improved. The provision of primary and secondary health care in the district, including the future status of Whangarei Hospital as the primary regional healthcare facility, needs to be continuously assessed to ensure access is readily available to all residents. Future needs, including the recent assessment undertaken by Northland District Health Board on future health needs in Northland as a whole, and within Whangarei District in particular, must be analysed and used in future health planning.

Figure 23: Whangarei Hospital



#### Ageing Population

The population of the Whangarei District has been ageing over the last decade or more with an increase in the proportion of the population over 65 years from 13% in 1996 to 15% in 2006, and a decrease in the proportion of the population under 15 years from 25% in 1996 to 23% in 2006. The current population of the district is older than in New Zealand as a whole, with a median age of 38.4 years compared to 35.9 years for New Zealand. This ageing of the population is projected to continue over the next 30/50 years. The median age for the district is projected to rise to around 44 years by 2041 and could be as high as 46 years by 2061. People over 65 years are projected to make up around 28% of the population by 2041 and 33% by 2061.

The ageing population raises a number of issues that will need addressing over the next 30/50 years. These include specific healthcare needs for the aged, housing requirements, future demand for retirement and aged care facilities, transportation needs including public transport, access to shopping and business services, provision of community, cultural and recreational facilities, and so on. Of equal concern is the diminishing number of younger working age cohorts in the

population. If Whangarei District is to retain a sustainable population profile over the long term, the 20 to 35 year age cohorts need to be attracted to, and retained in, the district.

## Housing

Adequate affordable housing is essential for social well being. The cost of housing has increased significantly throughout the district over the past 10 years (171% increase between 1996 and 2006) putting home ownership out of reach for many in our community. Owner-occupier home ownership has decreased by 17% between 1996 and 2006. Housing affordability - household income versus housing costs – has fallen consistently over the past 10 years or so and New Zealand now has one of the lowest housing affordability ratings in the developed world. The result has been declining home ownership, overcrowding, sub-standard housing, and less engagement in society that follows such trends. Affordable housing and increased home ownership are serious issues that must be addressed if the district is to develop sustainably.

As the population ages, the housing needs of the community will change. Suburban housing may be unsuitable for some older people, resulting in increased demand for affordable and appropriately located housing. This includes low maintenance homes/units on smaller sections that are energy efficient and close to services (e.g. doctors, pharmacies, supermarkets and public transport). Infill housing may be an option, as existing infrastructure may need little expansion for utility and other services. In addition, inner city housing intensification could help protect natural heritage and productive farm land from urban sprawl.

Whangarei District Council currently owns 165 pensioner units, located at 16 separate sites throughout the district. With our ageing population there will be more demand for pensioner units, retirement villages and rest homes in the future. Council will need to liaise with the Positive Ageing Advisory Group to remain aware of changing needs, as well as the Ministry of Housing and other relevant agencies. The housing needs of families, disabled, unemployed and disadvantaged people will also need to be considered.

Papakainga is a form of housing development that occurs on multiple-owned Maori or ancestral land. The increasing cost of living has already resulted in some Maori moving out of urban areas and returning to their ancestral land. Currently there are no rules in the District Plan relating to this type of housing. However, new policies are currently being developed by Council to provide special provisions for Papakainga housing developments.

## Public Safety

People need to feel safe and secure in their homes and communities, particularly the more vulnerable members of society such as children and the elderly, if development is to contribute to increased social well being. Development that results in increased wealth for a few and increased crime for the majority is not sustainable. Inequitable distribution of wealth has been directly linked to increased crime and other social dysfunctions in an increasing number of international studies. Over the last 20 years in New Zealand, income disparity between the top and bottom 20% of the population has widened faster than in any other OECD country. Concurrently, we have seen an upsurge in crime and other social dysfunctions.

The effects of crime can be far reaching, not only to the victim, but to the victim's family and friends, and sometimes a whole community may be affected. The fear of crime, although not always linked to the actual risk of crime, can also cause distress and seriously affect the quality of people's lives. A recent New Zealand Police survey showed that only 40% of Northlanders feel safe in their city or town centre after dark, and 15% of Whangarei residents feel safe in the CBD after dark. In their own neighbourhood 91% of respondents felt safe during the day, but after dark only 67% felt safe. It's a disturbing indictment on our present society when 60% of citizens feel

their safety is threatened when they visit their town centre after dark. This not only affects quality of life but can lead to people avoiding the CBD at night, which in turn can have negative effects on local businesses, access to entertainment, and a general sense of community well being.

Crime and safety are issues for the whole of society to address from central government, government agencies and service providers, social welfare agencies, churches, the police force, the justice system, communities, schools, families and individuals. Local government, including the Whangarei District Council, also has a role. Much criminal activity is linked to alcohol consumption and gambling, both of which Council has a direct influence over through its regulatory functions. Council can also assist in making the built environment safer through planning and building for safer urban spaces, improved lighting, better surveillance, and other crime prevention practices, along with public safety programmes, such as 'City Safe' and 'Neighbourhood Support'. Council can also assist in providing alternative activities for disaffected youth and young people to engage in.

## Parks and Recreation

Provision of adequate open space and recreational opportunities is integral to social and cultural well being. It also contributes to environmental and economic well being. Existing open space needs to be protected and well managed while the future provision of parks, reserves and recreational facilities needs to be planned to meet the needs of a growing population. Future provision of these community assets must be of sufficient quantity and quality whilst located appropriately to meet growth demands.

Council presently manages around 3,000ha of open space land. This includes forest remnants and regenerating bush, pine forests, wetlands and mangrove estuaries, coastal areas and esplanade reserves, city parks and street gardens, cemeteries, former quarries and landfills, areas reserved for water supply, waste treatment and other public utilities, sports fields, swimming pools, playgrounds, walking tracks, boat ramps, wharves and jetties.

Figure 24: Laurie Hall Park



These are managed for a number of purposes including the maintenance and enhancement of conservation values, landscape values, recreational values, amenity values and cultural values. There are many benefits to the community from open space and recreational facilities. These include improved health and individual well being, community development and cohesion, improved urban and rural amenity, protection of natural and cultural heritage, the attraction and retention of residents and visitors to the district, and economic benefits from major sporting events and increased tourism.

### Historic and Cultural Heritage

Whangarei District contains much historic and cultural heritage from both Maori and European settlement of the district. This heritage includes both tangible and intangible aspects. Tangible objects include historic buildings, structures, precincts, stone walls, heritage trees, archaeological sites, and sites of significance to Maori such as pa sites, terraces, pits, middens, gardens and so on.

Intangible heritage includes the stories and myths embedded in landscapes rather than in individual items or sites, and certain landscapes are infused with cultural and spiritual significance. Unseen, but in many ways the root of heritage significance, the histories and myths embedded in the landscape provide the richness of association with the land, and are often fundamental to a sense of belonging, or attachment to a particular place.

Whangarei District has a wealth of heritage that helps define the identity of the district and provide residents and communities with a sense of place and belonging. This historic and cultural heritage, along with natural heritage, is what makes the district special and distinguishes it from other parts of New Zealand. Sense of place assists in attracting new residents to the district and retaining current residents. It helps create strong bonds between people and places. Such bonds assist in developing community cohesion and resilience.

Historic and cultural heritage can also play a significant role in economic development as an integral part of tourism. Historic and cultural heritage attractions are an essential element to growing Northland's tourism industry. The history and culture of Northland is unique and has considerable potential for further development as a tourist attraction. Maori cultural tourism in Northland, likewise, has high potential to increase the economic and social well being of tangata whenua. Northland's unique history and culture, together with its outstanding natural and physical environment, can play an increasingly important role in the sustainable development of Northland and of Whangarei District.

### Arts, Culture and Civic Amenities

Arts, culture and civic amenities are important to people's quality of life and it is essential that a district of Whangarei's size offers a level of cultural amenities and range of entertainment facilities that meet the needs of its growing population and the wider needs of the Northland Region. If the Whangarei District is to improve as an attractive place to live, work and play, and a desirable destination to visit it needs a diverse range of cultural attractions, civic amenities and arts facilities. These include museums, art galleries, libraries, conference facilities, cultural centres, and venues for the arts such as music, dance and theatre.

The arts, cultural and creative industries play an important role in creating a vibrant, diverse and stimulating community for residents and visitors alike. The sector also plays a significant role in economic development through employment, attracting new residents and businesses, and encouraging tourism. Whangarei has considerable potential to enhance its arts, culture and civic amenities, perhaps based around specific cultural precincts or hubs, such as Forum North as an

arts and culture generator precinct, the Town Basin as an arts and culture experience precinct, and the Whangarei Museum and Heritage Park as a heritage and culture recreational precinct.

Figure 25: Claphams Clock Museum in the Town Basin



Night time activities in the centre of a city play a significant role in shaping the image and liveability of that city. They can also have a major impact on the local economy. Restaurants, bars, taverns, hotels, night clubs, cabaret and concert venues, cinemas, music halls, shops and markets can all contribute to a vibrant, exciting night life that makes a place a more attractive place to live or visit, particularly for younger people. At present Whangarei has a limited night time economy and there is an absence of a coherent and integrated night specific, place-making strategy to improve it. As a consequence, Whangarei's current night life is rudimentary, incoherent, largely alcohol based, and often perceived as unsafe. However, there is considerable opportunity for Whangarei to develop its night time economy to create a more diverse and sophisticated night life based on a range of indoor and outdoor entertainment.

### Ethnicity

The Whangarei District has low ethnic diversity. Seventy-two percent of Whangarei residents identify as European, 12% as other (which includes the new category New Zealander), 25% as Maori, 2% as Pacific people, 2% as Asian and 0.3% as Middle Eastern/Latin American/African. Thus, Whangarei's population is largely a European/Maori mix with a small (but increasing) mix of other ethnicities. The European group includes New Zealand European, British, Irish, Dutch, German, French, Yugoslav, Australian, South African, American, and others. The minor ethnic groups have experienced the greatest relative population increase over recent years. For example, population growth for Asians averaged 6.6% per annum between 2001 and 2006, Pacific people 5.5% per annum and Middle Eastern/Latin American/African 10% per annum.

Increasing ethnic diversity is likely to contribute positively to the district - socially, culturally and economically. An ethnically diverse society tends to have a more diverse, cosmopolitan social and cultural structure, and is often perceived as more exciting and stimulating, particularly to the younger age groups. Cuisine is enhanced by greater ethnic diversity leading to more restaurants, cafes, shops and markets. Greater ethnic diversity leads to an increase in arts and cultural experiences such as music, dance, literature and theatre. Economically, ethnic and cultural diversity can result in increased dynamism, enhanced innovation, more entrepreneurial activity, increased business development, greater diversity of business activities and increased employment opportunities.



Whangarei can expect an increase in ethnic diversity over the next 30/50 years, given current trends and immigration policies, including increased internal migration from Auckland's growing ethnic populations. This will necessitate a greater mix of social and cultural infrastructure, such as religious and cultural facilities, and on-going assistance for migrant settlement support. Long term strategic planning will need to take into account such requirements.

### Sense of Place

Sense of place is an important, multifaceted concept that attracts, retains and enriches communities in relation to a particular locality. A number of aspects contribute to a sense of place and can be improved to enhance that sense of place. These include historic and cultural heritage, local character and amenity, neighbourhood identity, and urban design.

Urban design describes the physical features that define the character or image of a street, neighbourhood, community, city, or the district as a whole. Urban design is the visual and sensory relationship between people and the built environment. The built environment includes not only buildings and streets, but also the natural environments which are incorporated into the urban framework. Good urban design can create a sense of place where there was none, and will build on the assets of an inherently well located site. Mixed use, higher density, walkable neighbourhoods encourage local services and community interaction, making safer, healthier, more attractive places to live, work, play and visit.

Urban design is increasingly recognised as an important facet of urban planning, but has only recently achieved widespread attention in New Zealand. An Urban Design Protocol was instigated by the Ministry for the Environment in 2005 as part of the Government's Sustainable Development Programme of Action. Whangarei District Council has signed up to the protocol and is committed to improving urban design across the district.









Developing a strong sense of place, through good urban design incorporating those values (both natural and historic/cultural) that currently exist, will enhance the district and its varied settlements (from Whangarei City to coastal villages) as places to live, work and play. A sense of place also serves to attract visitors and tourists, thereby contributing in economic terms to employment and social development. A strong sense of place contributes to economic well being, and economic prosperity contributes, in turn, to a positive sense of place. Both contribute to the sustainable development of the district over the long term.

### 3.6 Background Reports

The Growth Strategy has been formulated using a sustainable development approach. It attempts to integrate the four sustainability criteria contained within this concept – a sustainable economy, sustainable environment, sustainable society and sustainable culture. This is in recognition that if development is to be beneficial to the district over the long term it must be founded upon enduring economic growth that is cognisant of its natural, social and cultural environment.

In keeping with this approach, background research for the Growth Strategy has been structured around the four sustainability criteria comprising the concept of sustainable development. These sustainability criteria have been aligned with the community outcomes identified in the Whangarei District Council Long Term Council Community Plan. A number of background research reports have been produced under each of the sustainability criteria. These examine issues that have been identified as important to the long term development of the district. The reports are listed in Table 9 in relation to the four sustainability criteria and associated community outcomes.

Table 9: Sustainability Criteria/Community Outcomes/Data Sources

Sustainability Criteria	Community Outcomes	Background Reports
 <b>SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT</b> Sustainable Environment Environmental well being	 A sustainable, environmentally responsible district which values its natural uniqueness.	Land Use Natural Hazards Biodiversity Landscape/Natural Character Climate Change Ecosystem Services Air Quality Water Resources Contaminated Sites
 <b>SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY</b> Sustainable Economy Economic well being	 A vibrant and growing local economy.	Historical Performance of Northland Economy Drivers of Economic Growth in Northland Economy Summary of Economic Performance of Whangarei District Development Strategies Infrastructure and Services Whangarei Airport Whangarei Port Telecommunications Energy Resources Minerals and Aggregates
 <b>SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY</b> Sustainable Society Social well being	 A community which is healthy and educated, a district which is safe and crime free.	Demographic Profile Socio-economic Profile Health, Education and Safety Sense of Place/Urban Design
 <b>SUSTAINABLE CULTURE</b> Sustainable Culture Cultural well being	 A community which values its culture and heritage, a district with community programmes and facilities for all.	Ethnic Diversity Iwi/Hapu Report Historic/Cultural Heritage Arts, Culture and Civic Amenities

## 4. Tangata Whenua

From the settlements along the coast to the river valleys in the interior, Northland (including Whangarei) was one of the first major settlement areas for Maori, and remains rich in historic sites and cultural meaning. It is also home to a great number of Maori (around a third of the population of Northland identify as Maori) comprising numerous iwi and hapu. These include iwi such as Ngapuhi, Ngati Hine, Ngati Whatua, Ngatiwai, Te Rarawa, Ngati Kahu, Ngati Kuri, and others.

Maori are a significant proportion of the Whangarei District's population, and demographic trends suggest that this will grow over time. In 2006 17,604 people (25% of the district's population) identified as Maori. The proportion of Maori has increased by 4% since 1991, from 21% to 25% of the district's population. The proportion is expected to continue to increase over time as the Maori population grows at a projected 2.9% per annum to reach a total of 25,000 by 2021, making up around 30% of the district's population (Statistics New Zealand, 2006).

### 4.1 The Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi)

Maori are also an important component of the population by virtue of their status as tangata whenua and co-signatories (with the Crown) of the Treaty of Waitangi. The Treaty of Waitangi is now enshrined in much of New Zealand's legislation, and of particular relevance to the Whangarei District Council Growth Strategy are the references to the principles of the Treaty in the Resource Management Act 1991 and the Local Government Act 2002. Section 4 of the Local Government Act states:

*In order to recognise and respect the Crown's responsibility to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, as well as to maintain and improve opportunities for Maori to contribute to local government decision-making processes, Parts 2 and 6 of the Act provide requirements for local authorities that are intended to facilitate participation by Maori in local authority decision-making processes so as to give effect to the Crown's Treaty obligations.*

Section 8 of the Resource Management Act states:

*In achieving the purpose of this Act, all persons exercising functions and powers under it, in relation to managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources, shall take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi).*

The principles of the Treaty of Waitangi reflect the underlying importance of the Treaty as the source of constitutional authority in New Zealand, and as the guiding document in the relationship between Maori and the Crown.

The principles of the Treaty do not supersede the Treaty, rather they derive from the Treaty and assist practical application of it. The Court of Appeal has defined these principles, noting that they must be capable of adaptation to new and changing circumstances (social and historical). Consequently, additional principles may be developed and existing principles redefined over time.

The following principles have been recognised by Council as being a current reflection of the purpose and intent of the Treaty as interpreted by the Courts, and which are relevant to the activities of Council and the management of natural and physical resources in the district. The following extracts are from the Whangarei District Plan:

#### **The Principle of Kawanatanga**

*Kawanatanga, as ceded by Maori under Article I of the Treaty, gave the Crown the right to govern and to make laws applying to everyone.*

#### **The Principle of Rangatiratanga**

*Rangatiratanga (full chiefly authority) over resources including lands, forests, fisheries and other taonga was guaranteed to Maori under Article II of the Treaty. Rangatiratanga includes elements of management, control and tribal self-regulation of resources, in accordance with their own customary preferences.*

#### **The Principle of Partnership**

*The Treaty signified a partnership between iwi and the Crown. The exchange of promises under Articles I and II of the Treaty is seen as an exchange of gifts. The gift of the right to make laws, and the promise to do so in such a way as to accord the Maori interest an appropriate priority, is an example of this exchange. The principles of the Treaty require the Treaty partners to act toward each other reasonably, and with the utmost good faith. Reasonable cooperation and compromise, through effective, early and meaningful consultation by both partners, is also fundamental to this concept of partnership.*

#### **The Principle of Active Protection**

*The guarantee of rangatiratanga, given in Article II, is consistent with an obligation to actively protect Maori values and interests in their lands, water, wahi tapu and other taonga, to the fullest extent practicable, and to give a priority to these when they may be adversely affected. In the context of resource management, the various elements which underlie and are fundamental to the spiritual association of Maori with the environment (including mauri, tapu, mana, tikanga and wairua), may be described as taonga that have been retained by Maori, in accordance with Article II of the Treaty. The principle of active protection therefore extends to the spiritual values and beliefs of Maori.*

#### **The Principle of Hapu and Iwi Resource Development**

*Article III of the Treaty gave to Maori the same rights and duties as other New Zealand citizens. The Treaty guaranteed to Maori retention of their property rights under Article II, and the choice of developing those rights under Article III. To Maori, the efficient use and development of what are, in many ways, currently under-utilised hapu and iwi resources is a very important component of the Treaty. The Treaty recognises the right of Maori to develop those resources in accordance with their own needs and aspirations in a manner that achieves the purposes of the RMA.*

It is acknowledged that Maori may recognise the articles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi as distinct from these principles. On-going communication between Council and Maori may resolve any differences, and/or develop additional principles or redefine these principles over time, as the Court envisaged. However, the principles represent an agreement between the Crown and Maori as to how each partner relates to the other in a practical way over time.

It has been claimed historically, and continues to be argued, by some iwi and hapu that Maori did not cede sovereignty to the Crown under Article I of the Treaty. This question has recently been raised again by Ngapuhi at their hearings before the Waitangi Tribunal. Central Government will need to address this matter and decide its outcome in view of any subsequent Waitangi Tribunal decisions.

## 4.2 Engagement with Tangata Whenua

The term ‘tangata whenua’ denotes a relationship between Maori and the land. Generally, Maori use the term to convey their affinity to a particular rohe (area within which iwi or hapu claims mana whenua), and derive their identity from their genealogical ties with that land. The land boundaries of these rohe can be defined or recognised by features such as rivers, lakes, mountains, headlands or islands. The claim to the status of ‘tangata whenua’ in a particular rohe is based on their long-time association and genealogical ties with that land. Tangata whenua are those who have ‘mana whenua’ over their land.

Many different iwi and hapu have rohe which take in parts of the Whangarei District. These include Ngapuhi, Ngatiwai, Ngati Hine, Patuharakeke, Ngati Kahu Ki Torongare, Te Parawhau, Te Waiariki, Ngati Korora, Taiharuru, Ngati Hau, and Ngati Te Rino. Rohe of the different iwi and hapu are shown on Figure 30 along with the location of marae and associated iwi and hapu groups. The location of Maori land in the district is also included.

Developing a partnership with tangata whenua and widespread engagement with iwi and hapu were seen as essential to the success of the Growth Strategy. Direct input of tangata whenua concerns into the Growth Strategy was also seen as critical. To enable this, an engagement process was established with iwi and hapu within the district to provide specific tangata whenua input to the Growth Strategy. These iwi and hapu included: Ngapuhi, Ngatiwai, Ngati Hine, Patuharakeke, Ngati Kahu Ki Torongare, Te Parawhau, Te Waiariki, Ngati Korora, Taiharuru, Ngati Hau, and Ngati Te Rino. A number of hui were held around the district and an Iwi/Hapu Report produced.

The report represents a collaborative effort by iwi and hapu to present an agreed position (as far as possible) on iwi and hapu input to the Growth Strategy. The report provides a vision for the Whangarei District for the next 50 years from an iwi and hapu perspective. It identifies the issues that are important to iwi and hapu over the next 50 years and how these issues can be addressed to assist the sustainable development of the district. The report is structured around the four sustainability criteria: sustainable culture, society, environment and economy. The following vision statement was set down in the Report to provide guidance for future development of the district:

### The Vision of Tangata Whenua

*“Ko te paetawhiti o Whangarei he mea hanga i nga whakaute me nga wawata,  
kia nui ake te tikanga kia mau,  
kia tini nga mea angitu,  
kia whakanui nga ahurei,  
kia whakatinanatia nga momoewa o nga tangata me nga iwi whanui.”*

*“The future of Whangarei is built upon mutual respect and shared aspirations,  
where its rich culture is embraced,  
where opportunities abound,  
where uniqueness is celebrated  
and where the dreams of our people and communities are realised.”*

### Elements of the Vision

The Vision is comprised of the following elements:

- **Tikanga:** The correct way.
- **Manaakitanga:** Trust and respect, actively contributing towards developing a positive relationship.

- **Kaitiakitanga:** Guardianship.
- **Kawanatanga:** Recognise the need for law.
- **Rangatiratanga:** The right to self-govern.
- **Kotahitanga:** Unity in purpose and vision in moving forward.
- **Tauutuutu:** Reciprocal support in building a strong foundation for the future.
- **Te Ao Maori:** The world around us (physical, spiritual and cultural) is intrinsically interlinked and must be considered in its entirety.
- **Maramatanga:** Understanding and consideration.
- **Whakapapa:** Learning from the past, in order to move into the future.
- **Mana Whenua:** Authority over land based resources.
- **Mana Moana:** Authority over water based resources.

In providing input into the Growth Strategy process, tangata whenua also recognise the overlapping relationship between the four well beings; cultural, social, environmental and economic. They insist that the growth of Whangarei is not limited to physical elements, economic drivers, land use patterns or infrastructural requirements, but also encompasses cultural and spiritual growth components as well. To tangata whenua, “we are the caretakers of today, for the benefit of future generations”.

Based on the Iwi/Hapu Report, feedback from the numerous hui undertaken as part of the consultation programme on the Growth Strategy, and other consultation with Maori on recent policy and structure plan initiatives a number of common threads can be discerned. These issues need to be incorporated into Council processes and policy initiatives if the district is to develop sustainably over the long term from a tangata whenua perspective. The issues are grouped below under the vision statements for the four sustainability criteria contained within the Iwi/Hapu Report.

Figure 26: The Four Well Beings as Envisaged by Tangata Whenua



Source: Iwi/Hapu Report, 2009, Repo Consultancy Ltd.

### 4.3 Sustainable Cultural Growth

#### *A STRENGTHENED CULTURAL IDENTITY, ENTRENCHED AS A POSITIVE INFLUENCE THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT*

There is a strong message from tangata whenua that the Whangarei District does not celebrate its cultural diversity nor its cultural identity. This is seen as both a dereliction of Treaty obligations and a failure to recognise and capitalise on a unique historical and cultural heritage. In many ways, the community turns its back on its history and its cultural heritage and thus does itself a disservice. More than this, there is a perception (and at times a reality) that the district's cultural heritage has been denigrated and that for too long Maori and Pakeha cultures have worked against each other rather than collaboratively.

As Northland moves from a 'grievance' socio-cultural milieu to a 'post-settlement' era there is a unique opportunity to move to a new way of thinking about our historical and cultural identity. Under this new way of thinking, cultural diversity would not be seen as a challenge but as an opportunity and indeed an advantage. In this view, a thriving Maori culture has a vital role to play in creating a culturally vibrant, spirited and unique district, proud of its history and cultural heritage. This view would recognise and respect the special 'sense of place' that Maori culture and values can contribute to creating the unique identity of the Whangarei District.

Such a paradigm change would provide a myriad of benefits, including improvements to the cultural, social, environmental and economic well being of the district and its communities. Improving Maori cultural, social, environmental and economic well being would not detract from the well being of others but rather would contribute to the cultural, social, environmental and economic well being of the district as a whole. In this way, celebrating diversity benefits all, and collaborative efforts to recognise and benefit from cultural diversity would increase the well being of the Whangarei District as a whole. This approach can be termed 'collaborative diversity'.

One such initiative, and one that could act as a catalyst for a renaissance of Maori art, culture and performance in the district, would be the development of an iconic cultural centre at a prominent location in central Whangarei. This is seen as an essential initiative in terms of enhancing and supporting Maori cultural practices, assisting Maori economic development and adding value to the district as a whole by encouraging tourism and associated business development. Both international and domestic visitors have a strong desire to experience Maori culture and learn about local history, and there is a real opportunity for the community and Council to assist in providing a unique historic and cultural experience in Whangarei.

A cultural centre at Hihiaua in the Town Basin has been proposed to provide a landmark cultural experience which contributes to Maori economic development, assists in keeping young people in the district by providing employment opportunities, supports Maori arts, culture and entertainment, provides a memorable experience for tourists, and contributes to the general economy of the Whangarei District. Such a centre could be part of a wider heritage and cultural experience precinct in the Whangarei Town Basin that would act as a cultural and heritage hub or cluster. Such a precinct could provide a significant boost to local culture and heritage and a major attraction for visitors to the district.

There are many other opportunities along similar lines that could be developed, over time, to benefit both Maori and the wider community. These include cultural tourism ventures, cultural performances, celebrations of cultural and historic events, cultural arts, crafts and music, concerts, conferences and many more. Cultural tourism could be integrated with eco-tourism ventures. Whangarei has the potential to become a major 'destination' for visitors seeking cultural experiences. In addition, the Whangarei District could become an integral part of a Northland wide historic and cultural experience for visitors. As the 'birth place' of the nation, Northland,

with its natural and historic/cultural heritage could, in time, rival Rotorua and Taupo as a cultural tourism destination. This would have manifold benefits to the region and the district over the long term by increasing cultural, social, environmental and economic well being for both Maori and the wider community.

Figure 27: Proposal for Cultural Centre at Hihiaua in the Whangarei Town Basin



Source: Moller Architects, 2010.

#### Sites of Significance to Maori and Wahi Tapu

The protection of wahi tapu and sites of cultural significance to Maori has been an on-going concern of Maori throughout the district for many years. Maori have highlighted the cultural importance of preserving and respecting wahi tapu and sites of significance to Maori and have articulated their deep concern over the continuing degradation of both over time. It is clear that this will continue to be a key issue impacting future development within the district. The Whangarei District Plan contains the following issue of importance to tangata whenua:

*Protection of those features, places and characteristics of natural and physical resources of special value to Maori, which may include, but are not limited to waahi tapu, tauranga waka (canoe landing site), mahinga kai, mahinga mataitai (food resource from sea), taonga raranga (plants used for weaving), urupa (cemetery or burial site), ancestral lands, wai whakaheke tupapaku and buried whakairo.*

The following objective is included in the District Plan to address these concerns:

*Within the respective domains of the exercise of rangatiratanga and kawanatanga, ensure that priority is afforded to the act of protection of taonga of tangata whenua, and to the relationship of tangata whenua and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu and other taonga.*

The District Plan contains further policies and rules to meet this objective. However, many sites of significance and wahi tapu are not identified in the District Plan, and the provisions relating to protection need re-assessing as to their effectiveness. The Council has recognised these short-comings and is in the process (working collaboratively with iwi and hapu) of examining the issue of identifying and protecting sites of significance and wahi tapu throughout the district. This initiative should provide a basis for better protection of these taonga in the future. Other sites of significance and wahi tapu will be identified in iwi/hapu environmental management plans.

In addition to specific places of cultural significance, archaeological sites may include signs of Maori occupation within the district, such as pa sites, middens, ovens and caves. Archaeological sites are a connection to past generations and are a source of information on their activities. The Historic Places Act 1993 requires an archaeological authority to be granted for any destruction, damage or modification of an archaeological site. As archaeological sites are defined under the Historic Places Act 1993, in terms of human activity prior to 1900, many will be of significance to tangata whenua. Tangata whenua should be consulted regarding any proposal to modify, damage or destroy such sites.

Lastly, there is an issue concerning the aerial extent of a site of significance or wahi tapu. For Maori, meaning is often embedded in the land rather than in individual items or sites. Certain landscapes are imbued with cultural and spiritual significance. Unseen, but in many ways the root of cultural significance, the histories, stories and myths embedded in the landscape provide the richness of association with the land, and are often fundamental to a sense of belonging or attachment to a particular place. How to identify these concepts of heritage or cultural landscapes is a challenge that Council, in collaboration with iwi and hapu, needs to address.

Sites of cultural significance to Maori and cultural landscapes are often associated with meanings articulated through stories and myths along with actual histories of past events. These stories, myths and histories are part of the history and culture of the district and should be an aspect of our historical and cultural heritage that is more widely recognised and celebrated. It is an essential part of the 'sense of place' that makes Whangarei District special and unique. It also makes the district a much more interesting place to residents and visitors alike. It must be recognised, of course, that some sites of significance to Maori and wahi tapu are of a nature that prevents public access and in some instances public knowledge. But there are many others that add to the richness of the district's historic and cultural heritage, and the public would benefit from wider recognition and knowledge of them.

#### 4.4 Sustainable Environmental Growth

##### *THE ENVIRONMENT IS EMBRACED AND TREASURED FOR THE LIFE SUSTAINING RESOURCES IT PROVIDES*

Protecting and enhancing the environment, together with the sustainable management of natural and physical resources, has been a major concern of tangata whenua in the past and continues to be so. Traditional Maori culture and values are closely linked to the environment. Maori view the environment in a holistic manner encompassing both physical and spiritual dimensions. In Maori cosmology people are genealogically related to all aspects of the natural world through their descent from Ranginui (Sky Father) and Papatuanuku (Earth Mother). It is through Ranginui and Papatuanuku, along with their children, that all parts of the natural world (including people) came into existence. The concept of whakapapa captures this link between cosmos, spirit, nature and humankind.

Thus, Maori believe in a unified cosmos which consists of spiritual/physical interrelated realities. In this view, the material world proceeds from the spiritual world, and the spiritual world (which is

the higher order) interpenetrates the material physical world. The ultimate reality is spiritual, as all things, whether living or non-living, have spiritual essence. The concepts of mauri and hau are rooted in the belief that different aspects of reality are bound together by spirit. Mauri (life force) is a special power which makes it possible for the physical and spiritual to coexist. Everything has a mauri, including people, animals, plants, forests, land, seas and rivers. Mauri has to be respected and protected otherwise the balance (utu) between the spiritual and physical may be disturbed. Humans have to exercise this constraint when interacting with nature.

The Maori world view has much to offer in regard to environmental planning and resource management. It needs to be recognised as a legitimate approach to the sustainable management of natural and physical resources in the district if Maori aspirations are to be realised. Indeed, tangata whenua insist it be incorporated into resource management and development processes and that their role as kaitiaki be recognised and provided for. There is a legislative mandate to do so as many of the concepts are reflected in the legislation relating to environmental planning and resource management. For example, the Resource Management Act requires those exercising powers and functions under the Act to:

- Recognise and provide for the relationship of Maori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, wahi tapu and other taonga (section 6(e)) and the protection of recognised customary activities (section 6(g)) as matters of national importance;
- To have particular regard to kaitiakitanga (section 7(a));
- Take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (section 8);
- To have regard to recognised relevant iwi planning documents, the New Zealand Historic Places Trust Register, and regulations relating to taiapure and mahinga mataitai (section 74(2)(b): section 74(2A)).
- Recognise tikanga Maori where appropriate during resource management hearings (section 39(2)(b)).

#### Environmental Protection and Resource Management

Land is of particular importance to Maori. Indeed the term 'tangata whenua' means 'people of the land'. From a Maori point of view the land does not belong to people, but rather people belong to the land. The intrinsic relationship between people and the land is reflected in the dual meaning of 'whenua' which means both land and placenta (or afterbirth). Similar to a placenta, the land nourishes the people who live on the land who, in turn, have obligations to care and protect the land.

The closeness of people to the land is reflected in the custom of returning the human placenta to the land. The afterbirth is buried in the earth so that the "whenua comes to the whenua". Land is also important as a source of common and personal identity. Tribal, hapu, whanau and personal identity is linked to the land. Land provides a sense of identity, belonging and continuity. Maori land represents turangawaewae. It is the link with ancestors of the past and with generations to come.

The human use of land must be cognisant of the spiritual nature of land and the limits imposed by the concepts of mauri and whakapapa. The idea that land is a commodity to be freely exploited by people for economic gain is the antithesis to this view. Land must be cherished as a source of both physical and spiritual nourishment and the ties between people and land respected. Both the food producing capacity and the spiritual qualities of land must be protected for present and future generations. The alienation of land, particularly into foreign ownership, does not sit well within this view.

Water bodies are of social, cultural and spiritual value to Maori and contain resources important for their well being. Water bodies are areas of mahinga kai, which provide an important source of the traditional food of the Maori, such as the tuna (eel) and kawai (freshwater cray-fish). These traditional food sources are central to economic, spiritual and cultural well being. The mauri of water needs to be respected and protected from degradation due to human discharges. It is of particular importance to Maori to ensure discharges of human waste to coastal, harbour and fresh water bodies are reduced and preferably replaced with other methods of disposal.

Traditional food resources of the district are degraded due to past destruction of habitat, degradation of water quality, discharges from land development activities, water extraction for farming and horticultural purposes, the damming and drainage of the waterways and the introduction of predators. It is therefore important that waters and wetlands are sustainably managed for protection and enhancement of those mahinga kai areas, and the food resources therein, and that access to these traditional food resources for tangata whenua is maintained.

Indigenous biodiversity, flora, fauna and habitats are considered taonga by Maori and, as such, require careful protection from the effects of land development and the intrusion of exotic weeds and pests. Maori brought with them few domestic plants and animals. The mainstay of Maori diet (apart from kumura) was therefore indigenous plants and animals, including birds and fish, shell fish, crustaceans, and marine mammals. In addition, materials for clothing and shelter were all from indigenous plants and animals, as were tools and implements. Waka were constructed from indigenous trees and weapons from a variety of indigenous materials. All of these resources were essential for survival, and required careful husbandry.

The protection of indigenous biodiversity, flora, fauna and habitats remains important to Maori, and the continued loss of biodiversity and modification of indigenous habitat an on-going concern. The loss of wetlands is of particular concern to many iwi and hapu. Repo are of particular cultural and spiritual significance to Maori. They may be an abode of taniwha, a burial place, or a source of resources. Swamps and wetlands contain kai (tuna, taro, watercress), dyes (paru – black mud for dyeing fax fibre) and weaving materials (raupo, harakeke, korari, kuta).

Figure 28: Wave and Waka Sculpture



36: Whangarei District Growth Strategy

General concerns of tangata whenua relate to the maintenance and restoration of indigenous species, habitats and ecosystems; the protection of endemic and endangered indigenous species and habitat; the recognition and protection of the mauri of indigenous flora, fauna and habitat; the enhancement of the life-supporting capacity of indigenous ecosystems including the intrinsic values of ecosystems; and the use of matauranga Maori in managing indigenous flora, fauna and habitat.

### Iwi/Hapu Environmental/Resource Management Plans

There is a strong desire amongst tangata whenua to develop meaningful, workable iwi and hapu management plans to assist in resource management and environmental planning in the district. Such documents are mandated under section 74(2A) of the Resource Management Act, which states:

*A territorial authority, when preparing or changing a district plan, must take into account any relevant planning document recognised by an iwi authority and lodged with the territorial authority, to the extent that its content has a bearing on the resource management issues of the district.*

At present there are three such documents. These are: Te Iwi O Ngatiwai Environmental Policy Document (2007), Patuharakeke Te Iwi Trust Board Environmental Plan (2007), and Ngati Hine Iwi Environmental Management Plan (2008). Each plan is comprehensive and covers a range of issues of importance to the particular iwi. The plans contain statements of identity and whakapapa and identify the rohe over which mana whenua (and mana moana) are held. The cultural and spiritual values associated with the role of kaitiaki over resources within their rohe are articulated. These resources are identified, the cultural values associated with each described, and management options outlined. The resources include land, water, air, minerals, indigenous flora and fauna, landscapes, customary materials, sites of significance and waahi tapu. Management options include both statutory processes and traditional methods such as rahui, tapu, and kaitiakitanga. Customary harvesting of traditional foods, resources and materials is also raised as an issue of importance in iwi/hapu management plans.

There is a perception amongst tangata whenua that the existing iwi planning documents are not being taken into account by Council as required under the Resource Management Act. There is a strong feeling that tangata whenua are not recognised as kaitiaki of resources in their rohe and that the issues, cultural values and management options included in iwi/hapu management plans are not incorporated into district planning documents. There is also an often expressed desire by tangata whenua for assistance from local authorities, including financial assistance, to enable further development of iwi/hapu environmental management plans in the district.

## 4.5 Sustainable Social Growth

### HEALTHY MARAE, HEALTHY HOMES, HEALTHY PEOPLE

According to almost all social indicators Maori in Northland and the Whangarei District are disadvantaged compared to other ethnic groupings and to the New Zealand population as a whole. Maori die younger, they suffer greater ill health, they have lower achievement levels in education, lower employment rates, lower income levels, higher crime rates, higher numbers of prison inmates, and they figure more often in deprivation measures than most other ethnic groupings and the rest of New Zealand as a whole. Economic indicators will be looked at in the following section but it is useful to examine some of the social indicators here. If Maori are to improve their social well being (as they must if they are to take a full and productive part in future development of the district) it is necessary to know what the issues are in order to address them.

For Maori, life expectancy at birth is lower than for other ethnic groups and for New Zealand as a whole. For example, in the Whangarei District, female life expectancy for Maori is 69.8 years, compared to 82.2 years for New Zealand as a whole, and male life expectancy for Maori is 68.6 years, compared to 78.0 for New Zealand as a whole. In other words, on average, Maori in the Whangarei District live 10 years less than the rest of New Zealand's population. The figures for Northland are more disturbing, with life expectancy for male Maori 64.5 years, 13.5 years less on average than New Zealand as a whole. This figure is similar to life expectancy in some Third World Nations, such as East Timor and Indonesia (Statistics New Zealand, 2008).

**Table 10: Life Expectancy at Birth**

	Total Population			Maori		
	New Zealand	Northland	Whangarei	New Zealand	Northland (Manaia PHO)	Whangarei (WDC)
Female	82.2	81.2	81.6	75.1	69.2	69.8
Male	78.0	76.3	77.3	70.4	64.5	68.6

Source: Statistics New Zealand, 2008, Manaia Health PHO and Whangarei District Council.

Overall, the avoidable mortality rate is significantly higher for Maori in Northland than for other ethnic groups and New Zealand as a whole. In some instances it is three or four times higher. The leading causes of avoidable mortality are cardio vascular disease, lung cancer, diabetes, respiratory diseases, and road traffic injuries. The rate of infectious disease mortality for Maori is over three times the rate for European New Zealand people in Northland. The rheumatic fever notifications rate in Northland is significantly higher than the national rate. In Northland, Maori have significantly higher meningococcal disease and tuberculosis notifications rates than non-Maori. The rates of heart disease and diabetes are significantly higher for Maori than non-Maori people. The lung cancer rate for Maori is almost three times the rate for Northland people as a whole. The infant mortality rate for Maori in Northland is over twice the rate for non-Maori and for New Zealand as a whole. The suicide rate for Maori is higher than for non-Maori in Northland, particularly for males where it is almost twice the rate for European New Zealanders (Northland District Health Board, 2008).

Socio-economic conditions are a major determinant of the health of the population. Factors such as deprivation, income, education, employment status, housing and occupational status are all linked to a wide range of health indices and risk factors. Socially disadvantaged and marginalised groups generally have poorer health, greater exposure to health risks, and lesser access to health services than more advantaged sections of society. Northland has large areas of high deprivation, particularly in the Far North. In the Whangarei District high levels of deprivation are present in the west and in the northeast, with pockets in Whangarei City, particularly in Otangarei, Raumanga and Morningside. Maori make up a disproportionate number of those classified as most deprived within the district (Ministry of Health, 2008).

Poor quality housing and overcrowding can be linked to health problems. Many houses are cold, damp and inadequately heated, and health problems such as asthma and other respiratory problems can be exacerbated. Generally, home ownership is associated with better health status. Maori have lower rates of home ownership than other ethnic groups except Pacific people. Home ownership for Maori in the Whangarei District (30.4%) is half that of European New Zealanders (62.3%). Household overcrowding can lead to poorer health status and spread of infectious illnesses, e.g. rheumatic fever and meningococcal disease. In Northland, Maori and Pacific people have more than double the household overcrowding rate of other ethnic groups and these are significantly higher than national rates. Studies show an association between the prevalence of certain infectious diseases and crowding, between crowding and poor educational attainment,

and between residential crowding and psychological distress (Ministry of Social Development, 2009).

Educational achievement has a direct relationship to employment opportunities, future income levels, housing, health status, mental well being and many other socio-economic indicators. Yet, once again, Maori do not compare well with the rest of the population for educational achievement. For example, Maori in Whangarei District are more likely to leave school with no formal qualifications compared to other ethnic groups and New Zealand as a whole. In 2006 43% of Maori over 15 years had no formal qualification, compared with 28% of European New Zealanders, 36% of Pacific people, and 15% of Asian people. Maori in the Whangarei District are also less likely to have university (5%) or other tertiary (22%) qualifications compared with European New Zealanders (10% university and 28% other tertiary) and Asian people (26% university and 29% other tertiary) (Ministry of Education, 2009).

Completion of upper secondary education (Years 12 and 13) is associated with the higher level of skills and knowledge required for effective participation in our knowledge-based society. It is estimated that each year at secondary school on average equates to a 5-10% increase in income later in life. Retention rates for 17.5 year olds have been gradually increasing since 2002, however, marked differences still exist between ethnic groups. Retention rates for Maori students are much lower than for non-Maori. Asian students have the highest retention rates in Whangarei (82.8%) followed by European New Zealanders (50.3%) and Maori (34.6%). There have been noticeable improvements in both retention rates and qualification indices for Maori students over recent years and, should this trend continue, bodes well for future improvements in Maori social well being.

### Improving Social Well Being

Deprivation and ill health are best lowered by increasing income levels and improved housing conditions, which in turn are linked to improved educational achievements and increased employment opportunities. All are inter-related and cannot be addressed in isolation. A common concern emerging from tangata whenua through consultation on the Growth Strategy is the need to address these issues if the development of the district over the next 50 years is to result in sustainable social development for Maori. Although much responsibility lies with Central Government to address these socio-economic inequalities, a concerted effort is required from local government in Northland, in partnership with Maori and education and health service providers, to improve the social well being of tangata whenua.

There are a number of recent initiatives, nationally and in Northland, that seek to address inequalities in health and education for Maori. For example, the Ministry of Health produced He Korowai Oranga: Maori Health Strategy to set a direction for Maori in the health and disability sector. The overall aim of the strategy is whanau ora – Maori families supported to achieve health and well being. Whanau ora is a strategic tool for the health and disability sector to assist them to work together with iwi, Maori providers and Maori communities and whanau to increase the life span of Maori, improve their health and quality of life, and reduce disparities with other New Zealanders. There is an emphasis on community based approaches to primary health care, where communities have a strong voice in determining what and how health services will be provided (Ministry of Health, 2002).

The Northland District Health Board has produced Te Tai Tokerau Strategic Public Health Plan 2008-2011 which outlines a strategic approach to improving health in Northland. The goals are to improve the overall health status of all Northlanders, and to reduce inequalities in health between Tai Tokerau Maori and other Northlanders, disadvantaged groups in Northland and other Northlanders, and Northland and the rest of New Zealand. More specifically, Te Tai Tokerau

Maori Health Strategic Plan 2008-2013 seeks to address the underlying social and economic determinants of Maori health (poverty, employment, education, housing, natural environment and Maori leadership), in order to improve Maori health outcomes and reduce Maori health inequalities (Northland District Health Board, 2008).

To address disparities in educational achievement between Maori and non-Maori, the Ministry of Education produced *Ka Hikitia-Managing For Success: The Maori Education Strategy 2008-2012*. The Strategy sets the direction for improving education outcomes for Maori. It supports Maori self development and self determination and represents a move away from a focus on failure to a focus on making the most of opportunities for success. This means recognition of the potential of every Maori student, that 'being Maori' is an advantage, and that all Maori learners are inherently capable. According to the Strategy, the key to realising Maori educational potential is: Language, identity and culture – knowing where students come from and building on what students bring with them; and Productive partnerships – Maori students, whanau, iwi and educators working together to produce better outcomes (Ministry of Education, 2008).

The Iwi/Hapu Report clearly identified the desire of tangata whenua to improve Maori social well being in the district and to be involved in doing so. Iwi and hapu expressed the need to be intimately part of developing solutions to the social issues affecting Maori. One suggested method was to develop marae as centres for the provision of a range of social, health, educational, recreational and cultural services, along with economic initiatives and the provision of papakainga housing. There was a general recognition that some marae need re-vitalisation and that marae could be used for wider community use including community services such as a library, resource centre, archives, arts and cultural centre and markets. There is a strong desire to provide employment for Maori on marae and housing for kaumatua.

Figure 29: Whangarei City from Mount Parihaka



Te Puni Kokiri has initiated a Marae Development Project 2009 to support the development of marae as community focal points. The purpose of the project is to encourage a reciprocal exchange of knowledge and information between Te Puni Kokiri and marae throughout New Zealand to help identify future development opportunities and aspirations and support the collection of information about marae nationally. In addition to collecting information about the physical and cultural sustainability of the marae and its people, the results of the Marae Development Project will

inform marae communities, as well as government agencies, about future marae development opportunities, resources and programmes (Te Puni Kokiri, 2009).

Whangarei District Council needs to work collaboratively with iwi and hapu agencies, other local authorities in Northland, Te Puni Kokiri, Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Justice, Housing New Zealand, Department of Building and Housing, Department of Labour, Work and Income New Zealand, Northland District Health Board, and other relevant organisations to address the social issues facing Maori in Northland and Whangarei so as to enable tangata whenua in our region and district to enjoy healthy and long lives, reach their full potential, and fully participate in the development of the district over the next 50 years. Most importantly, Maori must enjoy the benefits of that development rather than continue to be excluded.

#### 4.6 Sustainable Economic Growth

##### *TANGATA WHENUA ARE ABLE TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR ECONOMIC GROWTH IN A SELF-SUSTAINING MANNER*

Income is the single most important determinant of socio-economic well being. Generally speaking, the more income you have the more access you have to quality housing, education, healthy food, recreation, healthcare, and so on. The main factor determining adequate income is participation in paid employment. As well as providing income, employment enhances social status, contributes to self esteem, provides social contact, facilitates networking, increases participation in social processes and enhances social engagement. Conversely, unemployment acts as a conduit to poor physical and mental health, low self esteem, disengagement with society, crime, and substance abuse, and undermines individual and societal potential. For Maori it undermines the potential for whanau, hapu and iwi to realise their social, cultural and economic potential.

Employment/unemployment levels tend to match fluctuations in economic activity. Whangarei District's economy has historically been subject to strong fluctuations (boom and bust). In the past, Northland and Whangarei have had similar and much higher rates of unemployment than the national average (9.25% compared to 6.28% over the last 20 years). During the early 1990s, unemployment in Northland and Whangarei reached 15%. Over the period 2000-2008, unemployment levels fell to historic lows (from 10.7% in 2000 to 4.1% in 2008). However, unemployment rates are now increasing under the present economic downturn (9.1% in Northland for the year ending March 2010). This compares to 6.4% for New Zealand as a whole, and is the highest unemployment rate in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2010).

Unemployment rates for Maori in Northland and Whangarei have historically been higher than for non-Maori and continue to be so. In 2006 the unemployment rate for Maori in the Whangarei District was 14% compared to 5% for European New Zealanders and 6% for the population as a whole. Given the fact that unemployment figures for New Zealand and Northland have deteriorated further since 2006 it can be expected that the disparity between Maori and non-Maori has widened further (figures on ethnic differences post 2006 are not currently available). Unemployment in 2006 was highest amongst youth (15-19 year olds) in Whangarei District at 21.2% compared with 17.8% for New Zealand as a whole. The youth unemployment rate for Maori was even higher at 31% (Statistics New Zealand, 2006). Given the deterioration in overall employment figures since 2006 it can be expected that youth unemployment, including that for Maori, has deteriorated further still.

Income levels in Northland and Whangarei are less than those for New Zealand as a whole and income levels for Maori are less than those for non-Maori and for New Zealand as a whole. Median income (personal, family and household) is lower in the Whangarei District than New Zealand as



a whole. In 2006 the median personal income in the Whangarei District was \$22,500 per annum. This compares with the New Zealand median of \$24,400 per annum. Maori are more likely to be in the low income brackets and less likely to be in the higher income brackets than non-Maori. For example, in the Whangarei District in 2006 70% of Maori earned less than \$30,000 per annum, compared to 62% of European New Zealanders and only 9% of Maori earned over \$50,000 per annum, compared to 15% of European New Zealanders (Statistics New Zealand, 2006).

**Table 11: Source of Personal Income by Ethnicity, Whangarei District, 2006**

Source of Income	European	Maori	Pacific Peoples	Asian	MELA	Other	Whangarei District
Wages/Salary	37%	49%	51%	47%	48%	39%	38%
Self-employment	13%	7%	7%	14%	13%	16%	13%
Pension	18%	6%	4%	6%	7%	13%	16%
Benefits	10%	28%	25%	13%	15%	7%	12%
Other	22%	11%	13%	19%	17%	24%	21%

Source: Statistics New Zealand: MELA: Middle Eastern/Latin American/African.

Maori are also more likely to be classified as being on low income (incomes less than 60% of the national median). In 2006, 22% of the population as a whole in Whangarei District were on low incomes. Almost 30% of Maori were on low incomes compared to 19.5% of European New Zealanders. More Maori receive their income from government benefits than do non-Maori (see Table 11). In 2006, 28% of Maori received their income as benefits compared to 10% of European New Zealanders and 12% for the district as a whole. On the other hand, far fewer Maori receive pensions than do non-Maori because of the lower life expectancy of Maori compared to non-Maori (Statistics New Zealand, 2006).

Income inequality is the extent of disparity between high and low incomes. New Zealand now has one of the highest rates of income (and wealth) inequality in the OECD, ranking 23 out of 30 countries. It once had one of the lowest rates of income inequality. Since the 1980s, the gap between high income and low income earners has widened faster than in any other OECD country. At the same time, the progressive tax system has steadily been eroded in favour of non-progressive taxes such as GST. This has resulted in a significant re-distribution of wealth within New Zealand from the poorer sections of society to the wealthier echelons. This re-distribution of wealth has adversely impacted on Maori and Pacific people more than any other ethnic group (Ministry of Social Development, 2009).

The degree of income inequality is often regarded as a measure of the fairness of the society we live in. A high level of income inequality also affects the level of social connectedness across society. We now live in a much less equal society and a much more socially disconnected society than at any other time since the Second World War. Recent research also shows that high income inequality, and resulting social disconnection, has major negative impacts on health, crime, suicide, teenage pregnancy and many other social maladies (Wilkinson and Pickett, 2009). Although social dysfunctions due to wealth and income inequality affect all members of society, Maori are over-represented in the low income brackets in Northland and Whangarei and thus experience higher levels of social inequalities and social maladies.

### Improving Economic Well Being

To address fully these disparities in wealth and income a change in socio-economic policy at a national level is required. There needs to be a political commitment by Central Government to full employment, a reduction in income and wealth disparity, and a desire (and programme of action) to make New Zealand a much more equal and socially connected society. However, in the

absence of national commitment to such goals, both Maori and local government in Northland and Whangarei can have a role in improving the economic well being of the district and influencing economic outcomes over time. Economic development must provide a diversified, resilient local economy, rich in jobs, both skilled and less skilled, that are not at the mercy of boom and bust business cycles. In particular, the local economy needs to provide jobs for young people and for Maori.

High rates of unemployment amongst Maori, particularly young Maori, need to be reduced through training and education. Educational attainment amongst Maori needs to be encouraged and improved. Higher qualifications equate to better employment opportunities and increased income levels over time. Retention rates for Maori students at secondary schools need to be improved. The number of Maori attending tertiary institutions and gaining tertiary qualifications need to be increased. Training for trades and other employment oriented skills needs to be widely available, and young people need to be encouraged to participate. Apprenticeships/trades training, particularly in targeted industries such as engineering, marine industries, forestry, aquaculture, and tourism, need to be encouraged. The development of marketable employment skills amongst young Maori must be a priority.

At a national level, a Maori Economic Taskforce has been established following a Maori Economic Summit held in 2009 to discuss issues and actions that Government and Maori could take to address the recession, create jobs and grow the Maori economy. The Summit identified how the impact of the recession could be mitigated for Maori, including various forms of support for Maori enterprises and community orientated job creation schemes like whanau gardens. Other ideas included a more equitable distribution of funding for Maori providers to deliver services to support whanau in need, greater collaboration amongst Maori asset holders to achieve better returns, and a longer term focus on education and training to alleviate unemployment (Ministry of Maori Affairs, 2009).

Other initiatives for Maori economic development identified by the Maori Economic Taskforce include the Maori Business Network Association, established in 2009 to enhance Maori regional networks and support Maori businesses, and Ha Hapori Whakatapu Matauranga, a Maori research framework set up to identify community needs and development opportunities. Another project provides support to Maori enterprises and communities to advance business growth, employment and sustainability. This project provides targeted support to Maori Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) from start-up at a local level, national delivery and, where appropriate, to export status. Lastly, the Mara Kai initiative assists Maori communities to meet the establishment costs of setting up small mara kai (community vegetable gardens) on marae and in Maori communities. There are 32 such projects presently underway in Te Tai Tokerau.

In Northland and Whangarei District, as Treaty claims are settled, there should be considerable opportunity for economic development that benefits iwi, hapu and whanau. This 'post-settlement' era should be a time of economic, social and cultural renaissance for Northland and Whangarei Maori. As Treaty settlements are reached, significant capital will become available to invest in development initiatives and associated infrastructure, such as cultural/ecotourism ventures, fishing, forestry, agriculture, aquaculture, and many others. Over time, iwi and hapu organisations are likely to become major economic players in the Northland/Whangarei economies. Opportunities for joint ventures between iwi/hapu and other agencies and organisations will likely open up. Council may have the opportunity to work collaboratively with Maori to ensure that adequate infrastructure is in place to facilitate such development and that maximum benefit accrues to the district.

Feedback from Maori on the Growth Strategy emphasised the need to create employment and business opportunities at iwi and hapu level to support tangata whenua returning to their

turangawaewae. The need for self sustaining forms of economic development was identified, including 'green' industries such as organic farming/horticultural clusters, ecotourism, eco-cultural tourism and aquaculture. The need for tangata whenua to develop the skills and capacity to develop, manage and sustain their own economic opportunities was emphasised. Local business networks were identified as a method of promoting development capacity amongst iwi and hapu in Northland and Whangarei. Developing a culture of innovation and creativity to enhance economic development was also considered important for the future well being of tangata whenua.

The development of Maori land and provision of papakainga housing was also an issue of importance identified by tangata whenua in the Iwi/Hapu Report. The current use of Maori land was recognised as not always optimal for the social, cultural, environmental and economic well being of tangata whenua over the long term. The difficulties of developing Maori land and providing housing for tangata whenua on Maori land were often raised as an issue. Obtaining finance and capital for development using Maori land as collateral was one such difficulty identified. The tenure arrangements relating to Maori land are often complicated and multiple ownership creates a range of difficulties both in regard to securing agreement from all owners to a development proposal and in obtaining capital to finance such development.

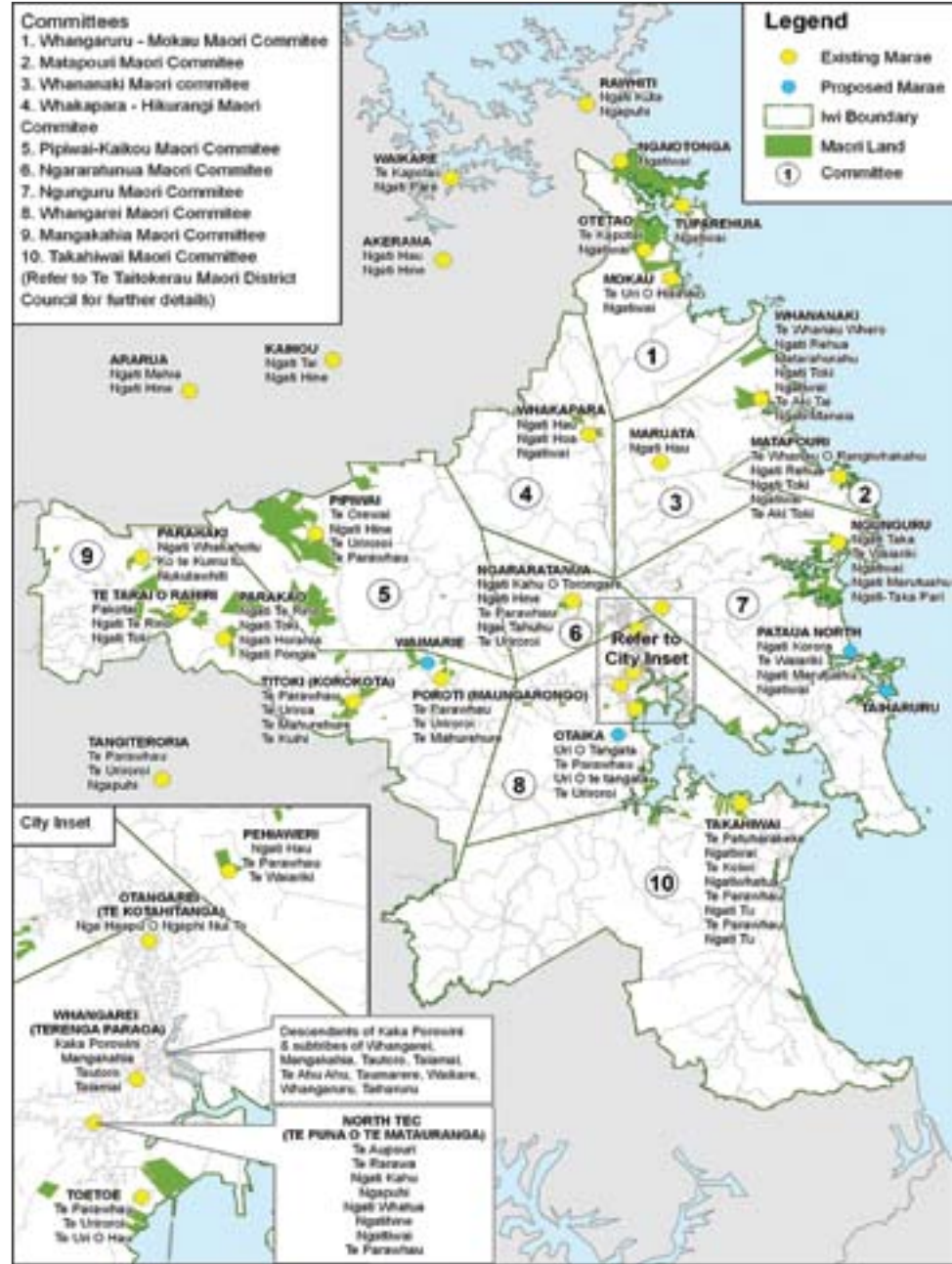
The Whangarei District Council is collaborating with tanagta whenua, the Maori Land Court, Te Puni Kokiri, Housing New Zealand and other local authorities in Northland to provide a consistent approach to facilitating papakainga housing on Maori land across Northland. The focus is on developing provisions in district planning documents to enable papakainga housing in a manner that supports further development including community facilities, marae improvements, and other small business developments such as tourism ventures, visitor accommodation, recreational opportunities, eel farms, markets for arts and crafts, and ventures relating to historic places and events. This work is innovative and holds much potential for facilitating the use of Maori land for housing and economic development.

Developing effective Treaty-based relationships between tangata whenua and Council so as to improve Maori input to, and participation in, Council decision making processes was often mentioned as the most important issue for advancing Maori aspirations in the district. The legislative requirements of both the Local Government Act and the Resource Management Act, together with the Treaty of Waitangi, were seen as mandating a more substantive and effective Maori input to Council decision making processes and to strategic policy development. There was also acknowledgement of past efforts to improve the relationship between Council and Maori, and the establishment of the Maori Liaison Unit and the Te Karearea - Maori Liaison Committee within Council was seen as a significant improvement.

There is much to gain from developing stronger relationships and more effective and productive communication with Maori as envisaged under the Local Government Act and the Resource Management Act. Maori make up a large and increasing percentage of the population of Northland and the Whangarei District. Many iwi and hapu in Northland are moving closer to settling historic claims relating to the Treaty of Waitangi. It is critical for Council to engage with Maori effectively as Northland and Whangarei move into a 'post-settlement' environment. Effective engagement has the potential to bring cultural, social, environmental and economic benefits to the district - both for Maori and the community as a whole.

*Further Information: Repo Consultancy Ltd., 2009, Iwi/Hapu Report*

**Figure 30: Marae, Iwi and Hapu in the Whangarei District**



Source: Hona,T: Nga Marae O Te Taitokerau, pers. comm.