TAURANGA CITY COUNCIL
SUSTAINABILITY STOCKTAKE

Part 1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

May 2021

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Tauranga City Council (TCC) engaged Proxima in early 2021 to carry out a sustainability stocktake to:

- Provide a snapshot of Tauranga city's current state against a holistic set of sustainability themes and to identify and comment upon how council's activities contributed to those themes.
- Provide advice on the applicability of different frameworks and models for assessing sustainability.
- Identify relevant examples of how other councils and cities have approached sustainability.

For ease of reference, the report has been split into three parts:
- **Part 1: Executive Summary**: sets out recommendations with high-level observations and insights.
- **Part 2: Detailed Assessment and Stocktake Findings**: sets out a detailed assessment of all council activity groups against the full set of sustainability themes.
- **Part 3: Appendices**: sets out an overview of relevant sustainability frameworks, the stocktake methodology and a list of TCC officers, experts and stakeholders who contributed to the assessment.

Following an initial TCC workshop to compare possible approaches, the assessment structure drew significantly upon the *Thriving Cities – Creating City Portraits* framework to develop a set of sustainability themes. The Thriving Cities approach was adapted to suit local circumstances and data availability. All TCC groups of activities were then mapped to the identified sustainability themes for assessment. Further explanation of Thriving Cities approach, which is based on Doughnut Economics, Planetary Boundaries and Biomimicry, is set out in Appendix 1 (page 240).

The stocktake assessment involved document review, discussions with council officers and interviews with external experts and stakeholders. We owe a great deal of thanks to the council officers and other people who contributed to the process. They are listed in Appendix 3 (page 261). The overall stocktake methodology is described in more detail in Appendix 2 (page 253).

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on what we've learned through the sustainability stocktake, we make the following high-level recommendations to support TCC's next steps.

1. Develop TCC capability for an integrated response to sustainability challenges

As the stocktake demonstrates, sustainability touches and weaves across every element of the council's activities. Fundamentally, achieving sustainability goals needs to be everyone's job. This will require building a shared level of awareness about sustainability issues, developing knowledge about best practice in different areas of expertise, and building capability to work in more collaborative ways that integrate solutions to tackle complex issues in a systemic way.

There will be many in TCC who are already equipped with good levels of awareness and knowledge about how to take a holistic approach to sustainability; there will be some who think they know what they need to already, but don't; and others who are simply less interested in learning about sustainability. Some care will need to be taken to ensure the capability development approach is accessible, manageable and effective for as many people as possible. As for most organisations, sustainability is in large part a leadership challenge to embrace new ways of addressing old problems. To show the way, those in senior roles will need to lead authentically, inspiring others through example and enabling a culture that may frequently challenge the status quo.

2. Take time to understand the challenges and engage with others who need to be part of the solution

Sustainability challenges rarely fall within the control or influence of just one organisation. They are generally systemic problems that require a new mindset and degrees of system change. We recommend, first, taking some time to digest and reflect upon the stocktake findings internally. Then, take time to listen to the community and important stakeholders to understand the challenges more deeply, assessing their root causes and potential solutions from a wide range of perspectives. This will help provide better shared clarity and build more unity for the best ways to move forward.

Given restrictions on the degree of engagement with tangata whenua for the stocktake assessment, this further review and reflection should include:
- Engaging with tangata whenua to develop relevant principles that reflect a te ao Māori perspective to complete the set of sustainability success measures developed for the stocktake.
- Test the stocktake findings across all themes with tangata whenua to ensure a holistic perspective that takes account of te ao Māori perspectives.

The City Futures Project may provide an ideal opportunity or vehicle for further discussion and engagement about what a holistic approach sustainability really means for Tauranga, with both tangata whenua and the wider community. TCC's co-governance relationship with tangata whenua provides a useful platform to integrate te ao Māori worldviews, which are well-aligned with a holistic approach to sustainability, community resilience and ecological thriving.

3. Make a concrete, comprehensive and enduring plan

Once the most important issues and challenges are agreed and understood, the right enduring strategic priorities and target outcomes can be co-developed with stakeholders. TCC can then formulate more detailed strategy and action plans to guide its own contributions, and to identify which other organisations need to be involved to work alongside local government.

Because of the systemic nature of most sustainability issues, the potential to make progress on a set of strategic priorities should be considered in all relevant council decisions, so that all viable opportunities to improve performance are integrated. This generally requires adapting internal planning, decision-making processes and success metrics to ensure the right questions and issues are considered at the optimal moments.
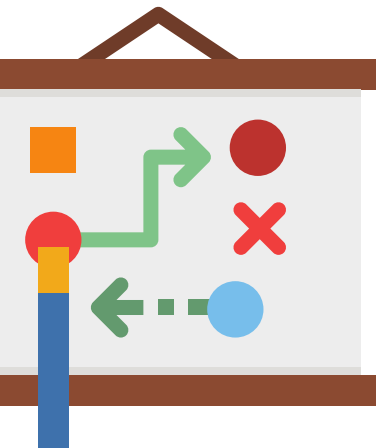
4. Choose the right tools and frameworks to help with the journey

Each organisation's sustainability journey is unique and there is no shortage of tools to help. The challenge is to make a conscious and informed choice that suits the specific needs and situation of the organisation, and what it is seeking to achieve. Measurement tools, like carbon foot-printing or life-cycle assessments; certifications like Greenstar and CarboNZero; and reporting tools like Global Reporting Initiative Standards and Integrated Reporting all have their place and can add value in the right circumstances when an organisation is clear about the value it wants to realise from the chosen tool.

Much can be learned from experience; so we recommend building relationships and networks to find out what has worked for others, and what hasn't. We'd recommend these discussions engage civic *and* business leaders. For example, Zespri has made great progress to integrate sustainability meaningfully throughout its local and global operations over recent years. Leaders of organisations like Zespri will, no doubt, have valuable lessons to share, and are likely to appreciate greater alignment with local government to complement their own efforts.

A sustainability framework may be a useful tool for TCC, but it is not possible at this stage to make any informed recommendation about which approach would suit best, because the council has not yet determined the purpose it would want such a framework to serve. The different framework options and considerations are evaluated in more detail in the section of this report covering assessment of sustainability frameworks suitable for cities (Appendix 2 on page 240). We recommend TCC takes time to reflect on the stocktake and what strategic benefits it seeks from using a sustainability framework as initial steps towards deciding which framework, if any, is best suited to its needs.
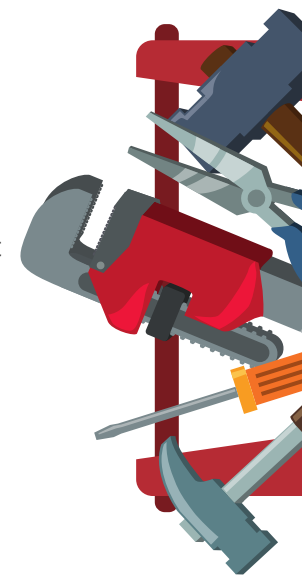
5. Acknowledge and address community relationship challenges

Through talking with a wide range of external stakeholders and council officers, a few clear feedback patterns emerged that will be useful for TCC to acknowledge and address. These issues arose in numerous discussions in slightly different ways and prompt the following questions:

Issue: Low levels of trust and questions about council integrity.
Question: How can TCC adjust its relationship culture with the community to build trust in a way that also helps the city turn sustainability challenges into opportunities for a thriving future?

I**ssue:** Sub-optimal flow of complete information and authentic communication.
Question: What is the real character and personality of Tauranga City Council; what relationship does the council want with its community; and what do the answers to those questions mean for the way the council communicates through its people and media channels?

Issue: Potential to engage and leverage the energy and goodwill of the community.
Question: How can TCC harness the potential of community knowledge, wisdom and goodwill; and what will it take to work passionately alongside the community in pursuit of shared goals that improve wellbeing and sustainability?

Performance snapshot

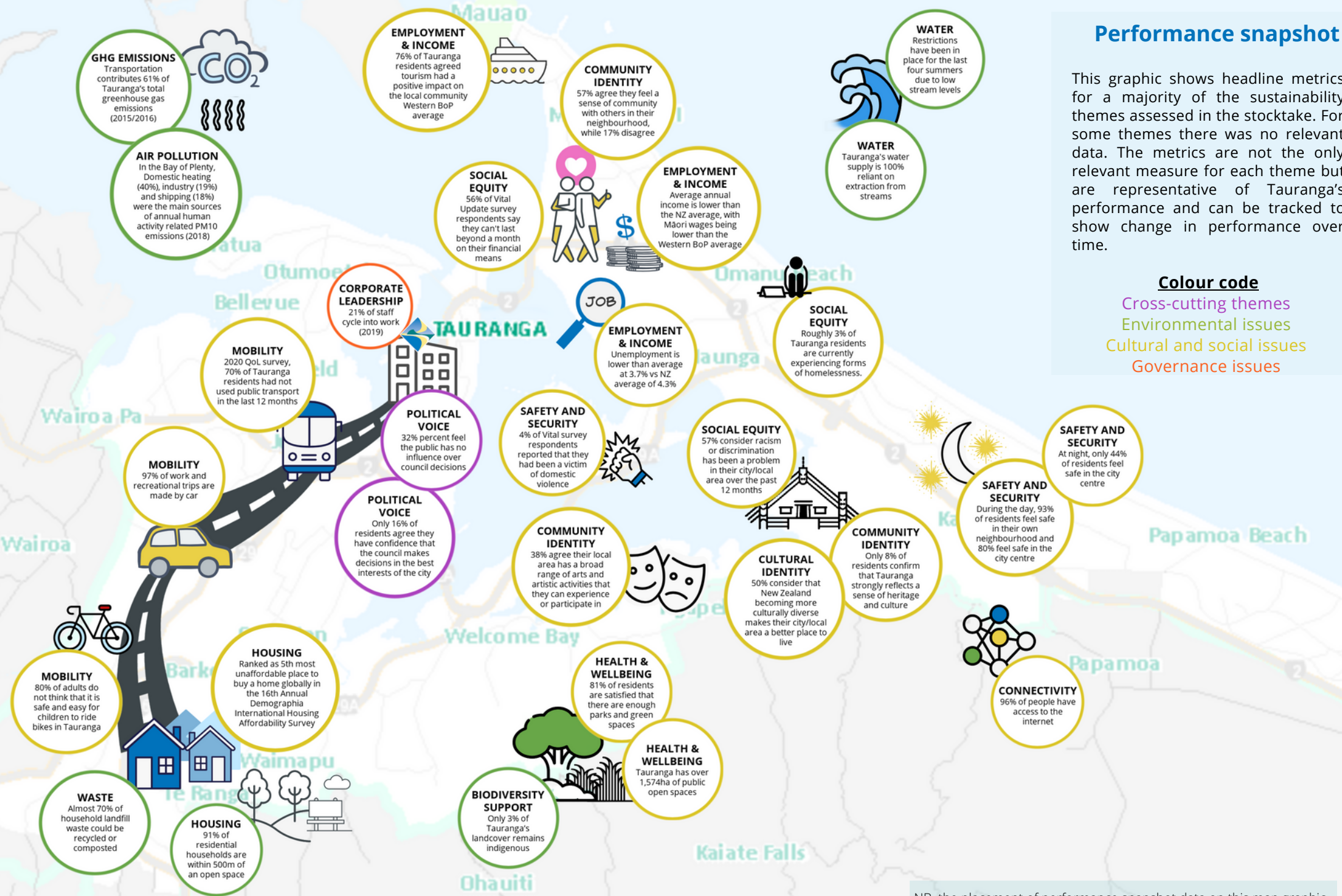This graphic shows headline metrics for a majority of the sustainability themes assessed in the stocktake. For some themes there was no relevant data. The metrics are not the only relevant measure for each theme but are representative of Tauranga's performance and can be tracked to show change in performance over time.

Colour code
Cross-cutting themes
Environmental issues
Cultural and social issues
Governance issues

GHG EMISSIONS
Transportation contributes 61% of Tauranga's total greenhouse gas emissions (2015/2016)

AIR POLLUTION
In the Bay of Plenty, Domestic heating (40%), industry (19%) and shipping (18%) were the main sources of annual human activity related PM10 emissions (2018)

EMPLOYMENT & INCOME
76% of Tauranga residents agreed tourism had a positive impact on the local community Western BoP average

COMMUNITY IDENTITY
57% agree they feel a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood, while 17% disagree

WATER
Restrictions have been in place for the last four summers due to low stream levels

WATER
Tauranga's water supply is 100% reliant on extraction from streams

SOCIAL EQUITY
56% of Vital Update survey respondents say they can't last beyond a month on their financial means

EMPLOYMENT & INCOME
Average annual income is lower than the NZ average, with Māori wages being lower than the Western BoP average

CORPORATE LEADERSHIP
21% of staff cycle into work (2019)

TAURANGA

MOBILITY
2020 QoL survey, 70% of Tauranga residents had not used public transport in the last 12 months

SOCIAL EQUITY
Roughly 3% of Tauranga residents are currently experiencing forms of homelessness.

EMPLOYMENT & INCOME
Unemployment is lower than average at 3.7% vs NZ average of 4.3%

POLITICAL VOICE
32% percent feel the public has no influence over council decisions

MOBILITY
97% of work and recreational trips are made by car

SAFETY AND SECURITY
4% of Vital survey respondents reported that they had been a victim of domestic violence

SOCIAL EQUITY
57% consider racism or discrimination has been a problem in their city/local area over the past 12 months

SAFETY AND SECURITY
At night, only 44% of residents feel safe in the city centre

POLITICAL VOICE
Only 16% of residents agree they have confidence that the council makes decisions in the best interests of the city

SAFETY AND SECURITY
During the day, 93% of residents feel safe in their own neighbourhood and 80% feel safe in the city centre

COMMUNITY IDENTITY
38% agree their local area has a broad range of arts and artistic activities that they can experience or participate in

COMMUNITY IDENTITY
Only 8% of residents confirm that Tauranga strongly reflects a sense of heritage and culture

CULTURAL IDENTITY
50% consider that New Zealand becoming more culturally diverse makes their city/local area a better place to live

HOUSING
Ranked as 5th most unaffordable place to buy a home globally in the 16th Annual Demographia International Housing Affordability Survey

HEALTH & WELLBEING
81% of residents are satisfied that there are enough parks and green spaces

CONNECTIVITY
96% of people have access to the internet

MOBILITY
80% of adults do not think that it is safe and easy for children to ride bikes in Tauranga

HEALTH & WELLBEING
Tauranga has over 1,574ha of public open spaces

WASTE
Almost 70% of household landfill waste could be recycled or composted

HOUSING
91% of residential households are within 500m of an open space

BIODIVERSITY SUPPORT
Only 3% of Tauranga's landcover remains indigenous

NB: the placement of performance snapshot data on this map graphic has no geographic correlation to the occurrence of the issues covered.

HIGH LEVEL OBSERVATIONS AND INSIGHTS

SUSTAINABILITY SUCCESS STORIES

Leadership from economic development agencies
Supported with funding from TCC, Tourism Bay of Plenty has set a national benchmark with its Tāpoi Te Moananui ā Toi | The Love of Tourism strategy focused on developing a sustainable and regenerative tourism industry for the coastal Bay of Plenty region. Current initiatives include developing a regenerative measurement framework for tourism business; and working with hapū to promote Tauranga Moana's unique culture and story of place. Priority One's refreshed strategy explicitly integrates an approach toward economic development that delivers positive social, cultural and environmental wellbeing. Priority One will also refresh the city's State of the Environment report, as well as running a range of other initiatives to support businesses to measure and manage sustainability impacts. Both these organisations stand out in terms of their proactive approach to sustainability and their work supporting the local economy to address and integrate sustainability issues.

Co-governance and cultural identity
Tauranga has made good progress toward greater co-governance with tangata whenua and has begun to integrate elements of cultural identity into the city's growth. TCC has embedded three layers of co-governance structure with the Tangata Whenua and Council committee; the Te Rangapū Mana Whenua o Tauranga Moana Partnership; and the Kaumātua forum. In addition, council Commissioners recently confirmed a new Strategy, Finance and Audit Committee which will include the Chairperson of the Te Rangapū Partnership as well as three other tangata whenua representatives who have voting rights. However, whilst the structures and processes are in place, feedback suggests that there is still some way to go to achieve meaningful and genuine co-governance in terms of decision-making and allocating budget to progress projects that are important to tangata whenua. TCC acknowledges this is a work in progress, but good foundations have been laid.

From a cultural identity perspective, Tauranga has adopted the Tauranga Moana Design Principles to guide future development. Those design principles can be used more widely in future to integrate cultural stories throughout the city. The principles have been incorporated into the Te Papa Spatial Plan - Te Mahere ā-Takiwā o Te Papa, which was developed with mana whenua engagement; and identifies important cultural sites and specific cultural projects.

City centre intensification enablers
Plan change 26 and the Te Papa Spatial Plan - Te Mahere ā-Takiwā o Te Papa set the scene for more intense development in Tauranga's city centre in a way that recognises social amenity and cultural values, as well as shaping a more connected community. This will enable a range of benefits including more efficient use of existing infrastructure and enabling a more diverse range of housing that is within easy reach of all that the city centre and CBD have to offer.

Integrated thinking around waterways

The Kopurererua Valley cycleway project is held out by many as an exemplar of how council teams can work together to achieve positive outcomes across all wellbeings and to enable more development that embeds a holistic sustainability approach. Connected to the Kopurererua wetland restoration (the biggest wetland restoration project in the southern hemisphere), this project showcases Tauranga in its indigenous native habitat. Te Ara ō Wairākei is another similar project, and both provide an opportunity for people to understand and experience the value of restoring Tauranga's native biodiversity and to enhance the community's sense of place. This type of regenerative development is increasingly recognised as the pinnacle of sustainability by positively addressing all four wellbeings simultaneously.

Natural hazards and climate risk mapping exemplar

TCC's natural hazard and climate risk mapping is regarded as exemplary and leading the way in New Zealand. TCC's work in researching, modelling and mapping its hazard risks is impressively comprehensive, particularly its interactive GIS hazard mapping system and viewer that empowers residents to understand and explore their exposure to risks from natural hazards. This is important work to ensure future resilience of Tauranga as a community; and will enable residents to understand how they may be affected by climate change impacts.

Future-proofing resource recovery and waste

Tauranga's new kerbside collection service will help significantly reduce waste to landfill with a four-bin service that includes food-waste and green-waste collection services. As a result of implementing this new service, it is likely the 2030 target for 50% landfill waste reduction will be met early. The system has incorporated RFID tags so that it can move to a pay-per-weight model when the technology is more widely available; and then move further towards optimising resource recovery and re-use.

Tauranga is a Welcoming Community

The Welcoming Communities initiative was consistently highlighted by external experts as work that TCC should be proud of, and which is having real impact. TCC, jointly with the Western Bay of Plenty District Council, achieved accreditation status in June 2020 as an 'Established Welcoming Community' from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment. The Welcoming Communities Action Plan focuses on ensuring newcomers can participate in the local community; and ensures local government, tangata whenua and community leaders are working proactively with residents to create an inclusive community.

Pockets of good work set the tone for further progress

Beachside Holiday Park's strong focus on sustainability is evident from its operations and how it interacts with visitors. It demonstrates how TCC can set an example for others through the way it *walks the talk*. The Holiday Park provides an opportunity to test further sustainability initiatives that can then be shared with and used to inspire a wider group of visitor industry operators.

TCC's upgraded water treatment facility for the Marine Precinct is a positive example of forward-thinking design, shifting from a compliance mindset and moving towards a stewardship approach. It is the only facility in New Zealand to offer all three approved methods of water treatment; and it helps protect the harbour from toxic discharges whilst enabling water recycling.

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES

Mobility, transport and greenhouse gas emissions

Tauranga has the highest reliance on private vehicles and one of the lowest rates of public transport use in New Zealand.There's a general lack of both bus priority and a safe network of connected cycleways on key corridors which would improve options for alternative and active mobility. Congestion and traffic issues have become the number one concern across the community; and the 2015-16 community carbon footprint found that 61% of greenhouse gas emissions come from petrol and diesel vehicles.

It will take time to address these challenges through infrastructure upgrade projects. The approval and acceptance of UFTI by the Waka Kotahi NZTA Board as a Programme Business Case is a critical step forward because it opens the door to funding for improvement projects through the National Land Transport Plan and National Land Transport Fund. The Western Bay of Plenty Transport System Plan (TSP), which has been approved by all SmartGrowth partners, also puts Tauranga in a much-improved position to address transportation and mobility challenges through bus priority, high quality separated cycle lanes and other active / alternative transport modes. TCC has allocated over $1billion in its draft 10-year Long Term Plan for mobility projects. In the short term, however, what seems to be missing is a clear action plan to find ways of using existing infrastructure to encourage different modes of travel in combination with a compelling policy campaign to change travel behaviours.

It remains to be seen whether modelled forecasts for changes in transport modes and greenhouse gas emission reductions in UFTI and TSP will be achieved or even exceeded. Much will depend upon the successful implementation of UFTI's intended land use and urban development concepts; surrounding policy initiatives that encourage and incentivise behaviour changes to adopt public transport and alternative modes of travel; and the speed at which the vehicle fleet moves to decarbonised energy sources. For some, trust in TCC's ability to achieve these goals is low, with a number of key stakeholders expressing their concern that, until results are delivered on the ground, UFTI and the TSP are merely 'words on paper'.

Housing choices and affordability

Housing affordability is an issue across New Zealand that is further exacerbated in Tauranga because of lower-than-average incomes and higher-than-average population growth. The 16th Annual Demographia International Housing Affordability Survey ranked Tauranga to be the 5th most unaffordable city in the world. Housing choice has been affected by zoning decisions in 2004 and 2011, which saw a majority of 3 and 4-bedroom properties developed rather than a wider range of choices that might suit people with different budgets and at different life stages. UFTI, Plan Changes 26 and 27, and the Te Papa Spatial Plan - Te Mahere ā-Takiwā o Te Papa are all part of the solution to enable greater density and choice whilst providing for growth. These documents lay the groundwork foundations but do not guarantee desired outcomes. There is still work to be done to implement the plans in practice through resource management planning processes, and uncertainties about exactly how long that will take.

Whilst TCC recognises the potential sustainability benefits of intensifying existing urban centres; the council states it is compelled to pursue new greenfield development to meet National Policy Statement requirements and its own modelled growth projections. TCC's intention is to rezone identified greenfield development areas to ensure desired density thresholds are achieved in line with UFTI targets; and, simultaneously, to work more actively with partners, such as Kāinga Ora and Accessible Properties, to achieve intensification of existing urban areas.

Whilst TCC's recent work should enable an increased supply of housing, there is less the council can do directly to address affordability issues. Housing affordability creates pressure for people to cover their living costs with an increasing number of people suffering homelessness, energy poverty and food insecurity. TCC has done some good work to help those most in need; and, through the sale of its elder housing portfolio, the council aims to increase the amount of social housing in Tauranga, which is currently at disproportionately low levels compared to other cities.

A CBD that is not thriving

The impacts of COVID-19 have added to existing pressures on the CBD to retain brand name retailers, with many preferring to locate at, or relocate to Bayfair and Tauranga Crossing. At the time of writing there are approximately 30 vacant retail locations on Devonport Road. CBD upgrades at Wharf and Durham Streets and along the Strand have provided welcome glimpses of what the CBD could look like in the future, but vibrancy and a sense of community identity are still lacking. Recent surveys found that only 53% of residents felt Tauranga was the commercial and cultural heart of the western Bay of Plenty area; and only 44% of people feel safe in the city centre at night. Further upgrades and more inner-city living are identified as ways of addressing the challenges, but those will take time.

City centres and CBDs are traditionally the social heart of cities; providing places to meet, work and be entertained, as well as offering a unique flavour of identity that promotes social cohesion and belonging. An international example of leadership in this area is being shown by Stockholm, which is deliberately seeking to foster a sense of meaning and purpose that draws people and investment into the city; and combining that approach with a focus on environmental sustainability.

Long-term water security

Tauranga is dependent upon spring-fed streams to provide the city's water supply. Changes in national policy mean that water allocation from existing sources is likely to reduce in the near future to ensure stream health. Tauranga has had water restrictions in place for the last four summers as a result of extended hot, dry periods; and this year those restrictions have unusually extended into May. Continued growth and climate change are likely to put further pressure on water supply and it is predicted that a new source may be required within the next 30-years. As an early adopter of water meters, efficiency of use improved but has remained roughly constant over the last 10-years. Some stakeholders are calling for a stronger campaign on water efficiency along with more capture and re-use of water. These are both areas where the council could have some influence, with access to water likely to become an increasingly hot topic in New Zealand.

Aging community infrastructure

TCC's draft Long Term Plan recognises that much of the city's community and social infrastructure needs to be replaced or updated including parks, pools, libraries, halls, theatres and sports fields. This affects the city's ability to provide social connection, foster cohesion and provide convenient recreational opportunities that promote social wellbeing. It can also result in people travelling further to facilities, which contributes to congestion and additional greenhouse gas emissions.

OBVIOUS GAPS

Strategic priorities and goals

Whilst there are some relevant targets for specific council activities, TCC does not currently have a comprehensive set of strategic priorities or goals that reflect the city's ambitions to consciously steer towards a sustainable future. These might, for example, set a date for achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions, zero waste to landfill, recycled water use targets, or provide ambitious targets for housing affordability and supply, and indigenous biodiversity and land restoration goals.

A set of high-level strategic priorities could provide overarching objectives to be considered in *every* investment, policy and plan. The priorities and goals would be tailored to Tauranga's specific situation and should describe the outcomes needed for a genuinely sustainable future in the local context. The process of developing these priorities, and relevant targets, could provide a real focal point to galvanise shared commitment and action by a wide group of stakeholders, as occurred through the development of the *Waikato Wellbeing* project's targets. Once they are set, the priorities can provide a more integrated response that is woven into decision-making processes to ensure all opportunities are seized for making progress. The council should also *walk the talk* by ensuring that, as a corporate organisation, it is showing leadership in all aspects of its behaviour that reflect the city's priorities.

Focused strategies and action plans

Given the current absence of strategic priorities to address sustainability issues, it is not surprising that TCC does not yet have identified strategies and action plans that address sustainability in a comprehensive and holistic way. TCC has developed draft plans covering the environment, energy management, wellbeing and corporate sustainability; but none have so far been finalised and adopted. Interviews with TCC officers suggested this absence of clear goals had made it more difficult for them to follow a coordinated and consistent approach to address sustainability issues in their own areas of work; and it also affects the potential for a strategic response across teams or when working collaboratively with stakeholders.

Looking from the outside, there's an obvious lack of coherent governance for sustainability within TCC, for Tauranga as a city and for the western Bay of Plenty region through SmartGrowth. There is no cohesive *story* for Tauranga as a future-thinking and innovative city that is proactively addressing the big issues of our time through integrated planning (though we understand this may be addressed through the City Futures Project). Similarly, despite some fleeting references to sustainability on the SmartGrowth website, there is no cohesive vision or story for the journey towards a sustainable future for the wider western Bay area.

The absence of a committed vision for a sustainable future creates the risk that Tauranga is not achieving its potential to attract the talent and investment that can shape the future of the city and its economy. Although there is evident leadership from the region's economic agencies, aligned understanding and support from TCC and other councils in the district will be crucial to ensure business efforts are complemented by council strategies and investments.

Cohesive climate action

New Zealand has been reasonably proactive in its response to the climate crisis and many councils have developed and adopted strategies and plans with targets to navigate towards a low carbon future. In 2019, sixteen councils declared climate emergencies and the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) now includes a <u>section in its annual review of local government</u> that covers how councils are addressing climate change. The 2019 OAG report notes that in four regions councils are collaborating in their efforts to address climate change, some are appointing dedicated climate change roles, and some are setting specific emission reduction targets which are published in their annual report. We believe this trend will only strengthen because, in terms of practical implementation and progress, New Zealand cities are lagging behind those leading the way globally. Copenhagen, for example, has set the ambitious goal of being a carbon neutral city by 2025 with 75% of all mobility being on foot, by bike or public transport by the same date.

Of nine cities surveyed, Tauranga residents were the least worried about climate change impacts in the recent Quality of Life survey. TCC does not yet have an articulated, comprehensive response for the transition to a low carbon future for the city, or for TCC as a corporate entity itself. The absence of a visible and urgent profile for climate change at city council level may be part of the reason for lower community concern. However, that is not to say that nothing is happening; there is some progress and, in terms of understanding climate risk and adaptation, TCC has done leading work. Significant recent examples of progress include the goal of net-zero emissions being integrated as one of the investment objectives for UFTI; carbon reduction targets for transport are now set in the Western Bay of Plenty Transport System Plan; and a range of energy-saving and carbon reduction initiatives have been implemented by TCC; but, overall, the issue of climate change and the transition to a low carbon future is not addressed at a strategic and overarching level. From an objective outside standpoint, climate change does not yet seem to be a priority for Tauranga or TCC.

The need for a coordinated and strategic response to climate change and the transition to a low carbon future has to be much more than a box-ticking exercise. It is a huge opportunity to prepare and plan for a low-carbon future that will be quite different from the past. Given the amount of new development (and, therefore, investment) that will happen over the coming years, both in existing urban centres and on greenfield sites, Tauranga could model the potential for low-carbon and resource efficient neighbourhoods. The next wave of growth and development is a once in a life-time opportunity that could be used to establish Tauranga as New Zealand's most future-focused and innovative city; or not.

The OAG has noted that councils should be discussing climate change impacts with their communities as part of the 2021 Long Term Plan process. This level of transparent engagement is particularly important because local government decisions can have significant effects for both climate change adaptation and mitigation in terms of land use, transport, waste, water management, natural hazards and emergency management. The credibility of councils is likely to be increasingly judged by the way in which they respond to the challenges of climate change and comply with relevant legislation for carbon reduction targets. The final report of the Climate Change Commission will establish expectations for the future which are then likely to become the benchmark against which all organisations, cites and regions are assessed.

INSIGHTS AND QUESTIONS FROM STAKEHOLDER DISCUSSIONS

STAKEHOLDER DISCUSSIONS

A few clear patterns emerged from discussions with stakeholders that may be useful for TCC to acknowledge. These are issues that arose in numerous discussions in slightly different ways.

Trust needs to be earned back

Both with the community and key stakeholders, there has been a significant loss of trust in the council at the political and officer level. The most recent Quality of Life survey results showed respondents had very low levels of confidence in council decision making. Just 16% agree they have confidence that the council makes decisions in the best interests of the city, while 56% disagree. This finding was reinforced through many of our discussions with stakeholders and external experts. Even some of TCC's key stakeholders and partners question the ability of TCC to deliver on future urban growth and transport plans in a way that reflects current expectations for addressing sustainability issues in a meaningful way.

From the outside, TCC is also regarded by many as having low levels of integrity. Externally, the perception is that the council sees consultation mostly as a box-ticking exercise; and trust has been undermined by the view that TCC has lots of strategies and plans but fails to follow through with action and implementation. There is an external perception that the council can be rather arrogant; that TCC knows better than the community; and engaging with the community is a waste of time. Abandoning the Innovating Streets project in Mount Maunganui was cited by some as a further example of this, with a suspicion that behind-the-scenes lobbying from minority interests may have been a factor.

Question: *How can TCC adjust its relationship culture with the community to build trust in a way that also helps the city turn sustainability challenges into opportunities for a thriving future?*

Communication breakdown?

Having discussions with a range of TCC officers, informed stakeholders and experts revealed an information and communication void. Many questions raised by those outside the council have reasonable explanations; yet those answers do not seem to be shared or communicated effectively.

From our own experience, we found the TCC website led us to a number of strategies, plans and information that are out of date. The website also noticeably describes the world through rose tinted glasses. Tauranga faces many challenges, all of which are possible to address; and perhaps the website could be more authentic in acknowledging those whilst providing useful and frank information about the work that lies ahead.

Question: *What is the real character and personality of Tauranga City Council; what relationship does the council want with its community; and what do the answers to those questions mean for the way the council communicates through its people and media channels?*

Engaging the community for good.

There are many passionate and capable people in Tauranga who are eager to take on more responsibility and to play a more active role in helping the city tackle sustainability challenges. The notion of community-led development and empowered communities has grown significantly over recent years as a means of enabling communities to work alongside councils to achieve shared goals.

Our discussions with stakeholders suggested TCC has a reputation for keeping a tight grip on the reins, rather than looking to empower the community to take more local ownership. This goes against trends in other parts of the country, with many councils seeing the benefits of empowered communities, authentic co-design and working alongside communities to create a greater sense of local stewardship, ownership and accountability. Enabling more community-led development can also help build greater trust and a spirit of collaboration.

Question: *How can TCC harness the potential of community knowledge, wisdom and goodwill; and what will it take to work passionately alongside each other in pursuit of shared goals that improve community wellbeing?*

Understanding the assessment approach

The stocktake assessment analyses 25 sustainability themes largely drawn from the *Thriving Cities – Creating City Portraits* approach. The themes are shown in the map of sustainability themes graphic on the following page. They cover:

- Cross-cutting themes
- Governance themes
- Social and cultural themes
- Local environment themes
- Global environment themes

The nature of the cross-cutting themes resulted in them being addressed slightly differently, because they do not relate to one of the council's defined groups of activities used for planning, budgeting and reporting. For these themes, there is an assessment of the *What good looks like* success indicator followed by general commentary.

For the other sustainability themes, each one has been assessed by considering the groups of council activities which broadly contribute and relate to that theme. Each theme has a summary page which provides a high-level snapshot of performance and overarching observations. Each council activity has then been assessed using a templated approach that covers:

- ***What does good look like?*** – high-level success indicators that reflect truly sustainable performance.
- ***Why is this a relevant benchmark?*** – a short explanation for why the success indicators set a relevant standard to assess.
- ***City performance at a glance*** – a 'thumbs up' or 'thumbs down' to indicate whether, broadly, the city's current performance against the success indicator reflects a genuinely sustainable approach, or not. It's important to note, these relate to the city's performance, rather than the council's performance.
- ***Current TCC focus*** – the areas of work that TCC has been focused on for that particular council activity.
- Most relevant documents – the documents reviewed and identified as most relevant for the sustainability theme as regards the council activity area being assessed.
- ***Most relevant targets and performance*** – targets set and reported against by TCC. Many of these have come from TCC's annual reports, though some originate from other relevant strategies and plans.
- ***Comments on targets*** – brief comments on the targets identified.
- ***Observations*** – assessment, insights and other observations regarding TCC's and the city's performance for the sustainability theme and council activity being considered.
- ***What are others doing?*** – some examples of what other cities and councils are doing in this sustainability area.
- ***Opportunities to improve*** – suggestions based on our research for what TCC and the city might do to improve performance in that area.
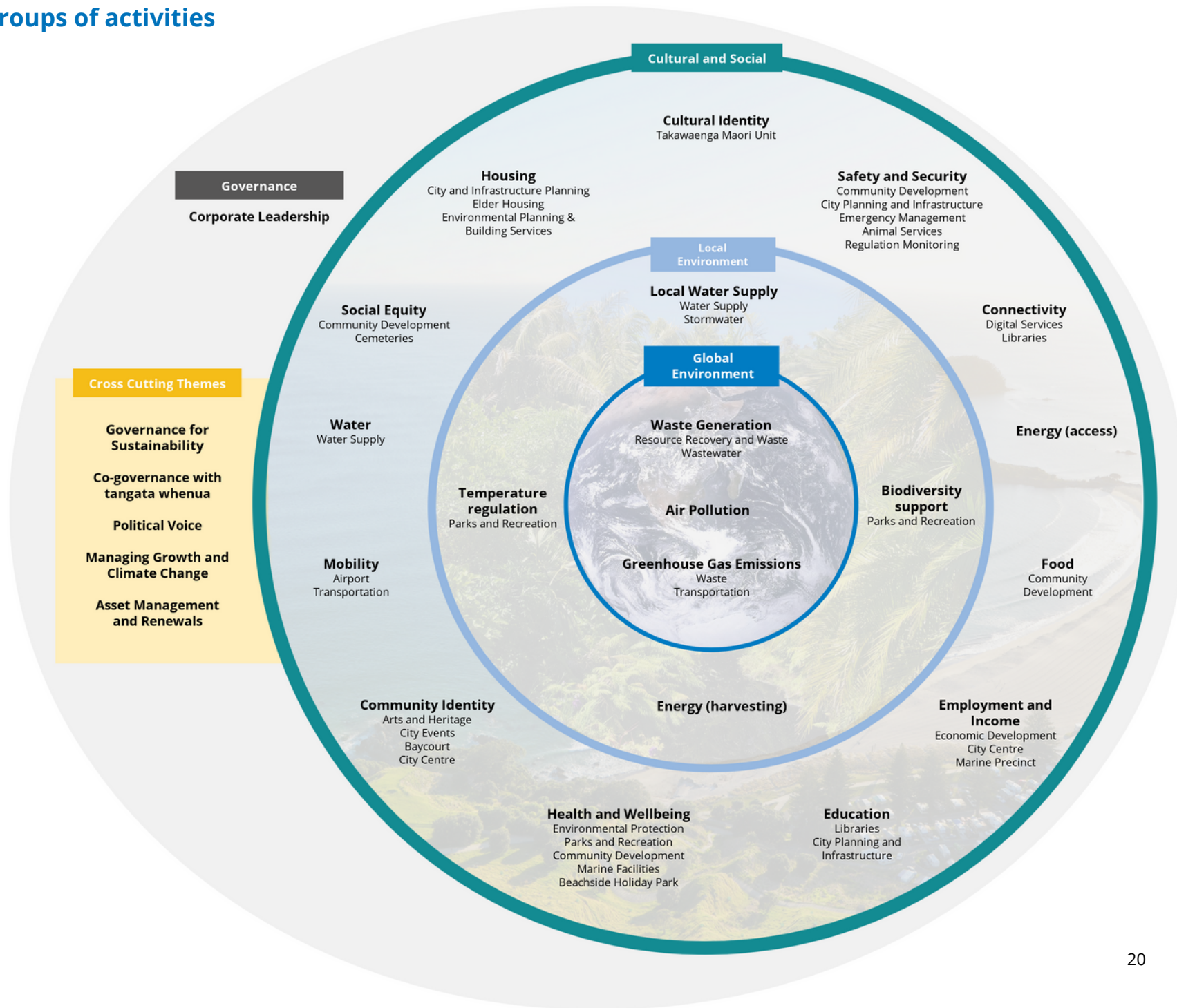
The detailed assessment and stocktake findings are set out in Part 2 of this report (page 23 onwards).

A more detailed description of the methodology used for the stocktake assessment, and how it was developed, is set out in Appendix 2 - which is in Part 3 of this report (page 239 onwards).

Map of sustainability themes assessed and their relationship with council groups of activities

The sustainability stocktake methodology is adapted from the *Thriving Cities – Creating City Portraits* approach. This graphic shows the three broad lenses applied to the stocktake assessment: Global environment; Local environment; and Cultural and social. Within each lens are the sustainability themes that were used for the stocktake assessment; and under each theme are the Tauranga City Council functional activities assessed as the most relevant for that sustainability theme.

It also shows the additional Governance and Cross-cutting themes which are relevant to a broad range of sustainability themes and council activities.

Cultural and Social

Cultural Identity
Takawaenga Maori Unit

Governance

Corporate Leadership

Housing
City and Infrastructure Planning
Elder Housing
Environmental Planning &
Building Services

Safety and Security
Community Development
City Planning and Infrastructure
Emergency Management
Animal Services
Regulation Monitoring

Local Environment

Local Water Supply
Water Supply
Stormwater

Social Equity
Community Development
Cemeteries

Connectivity
Digital Services
Libraries

Cross Cutting Themes

Governance for Sustainability

Co-governance with tangata whenua

Political Voice

Managing Growth and Climate Change

Asset Management and Renewals

Global Environment

Water
Water Supply

Waste Generation
Resource Recovery and Waste
Wastewater

Energy (access)

Temperature regulation
Parks and Recreation

Air Pollution

Biodiversity support
Parks and Recreation

Mobility
Airport
Transportation

Greenhouse Gas Emissions
Waste
Transportation

Food
Community
Development

Community Identity
Arts and Heritage
City Events
Baycourt
City Centre

Energy (harvesting)

Employment and Income
Economic Development
City Centre
Marine Precinct

Health and Wellbeing
Environmental Protection
Parks and Recreation
Community Development
Marine Facilities
Beachside Holiday Park

Education
Libraries
City Planning and
Infrastructure

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Alignment of sustainability themes assessed with the Sustainable Development Goals

This table shows how the most relevant SDG targets align to the sustainability themes assessed in the stocktake where a local government authority can influence progress.

There are no relevant indicators for SDGs 5 (Gender Equality) and 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and it should be borne in mind that the SDGs were designed primarily for implementation and measurement by nation states rather than local governments authorities.

Theme	SDG Alignment
Cross-Cutting Themes	
Governance for sustainability	**8.4:** Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation…
	12.6: Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle
Co-governance with tangata whenua	**16.7:** Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels
	17.17: Encourage and promote effective public, public private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships
Political Voice	**16.7:** Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels
Managing growth and climate change	**11.b:** By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement holistic disaster risk management at all levels
	13.1: Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries
Asset management and renewals	**9.1:** Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all
	9.4: By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, with all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities
Governance	
Corporate leadership	**16. 6:** Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels
	16.7: Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels
Social and Cultural Themes	
Housing	**1.4:** By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance
Food	**2.1:** By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round

Theme	SDG Alignment
Social and Cultural Themes	
Water (access)	**6.1:** By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all
Energy (access)	**7.1:** By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services
Social Equity	**1.2:** reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions
	8.5: substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training
Health and Wellbeing	**11.7:** provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities
	3.4: reduce premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being
Safety and Security	**11.1:** ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services **11.3:** enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanisation and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries
	9.1 Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all
Mobility	**11.2:** provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons
Connectivity	**9.5:** Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors… by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the [proportion] of R&D workers… and public and private R&D spending
Cultural	**10.2:** empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status
Community Identity	**11.4:** protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage

Theme	SDG Alignment
Social and Cultural Themes	
Education	**4.3:** By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university
Employment & Income	**8.5:** By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value
Ecological Themes	
Waste Generation	**11.6:** By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management
	12.5: substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse
	14.1: By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution
Air Pollution	**3.9:** By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination.
	11.6: By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management.
Local Water System	**6.6:** By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes
Energy Harvesting	**7.2:** By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix
GHG Emissions	**13.2 :** Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning, **13.1:** Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries,
Biodiversity support	**15.9:** By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts
Temperature regulation	**13.2:** Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning,