



Te mahere ā-rohe o Aotea / Great Barrier 2026

Aotea / Great Barrier Draft Local Board Plan 2026

**Tāmaki Turuki.
Altogether Auckland.**



Mihi

Ko Aotea te moutere rongonui

Ko Hirakimatā te maunga tapu

Ko Te Moana Nui a Toi te Huatahi te moana

**Ko te Tuatara, te Mauri, rātou ko te Tukaiaia
ngā kaitiaki**

Ko Aotea te kāinga o ngā uri o Ngāti Rehua

**Ānei te whenua e manaakitia tātou. E
whakapiritia tātou. E whakaoratia tātou.**

**Te wāhi o ngā taonga maha, ngā taonga tapu,
ngā taonga matahiapo.**

**Nā ngā whetū i kanapu i te rangi ki ngā
aitenga a punga e kōhimuhimu ana ki ngā
ngāhere.**

**Ko Aotea te taonga motuhake o Te Moana Nui
a Toi te Huatahi.**

Ko Aotea tōku tūrangawaewae

Aotea is the renowned island.

Hirakimatā is the sacred mountain.

The Moana of Toi is the ocean that embraces
our island.

The Tuatara, Mauri, and the Tukaiaia are the
guardians.

Aotea is the home for the descendants of Ngāti
Rehua.

Here is the land that protects us, brings us
together, keeps us alive.

A place of many treasures, sacred treasures,
precious treasures.

From the stars shining bright in the sky to the
insects that whisper in the forest.

Aotea is the prize of the moana of Toi.

Aotea is my standing place.

Ngāti Rehua – Ngāti Wai ki Aotea Trust Board
2023

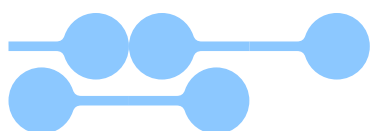
Kawa marae



Ngā upoko kōrero

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He kōrero mai i te Heamana

From the chair

It was an intense start to 2026 with flooding events and fuel crisis warnings. The main challenges identified for the next three years are island resilience and community wellbeing in the face of economic constraint and climate change.

During our recent community engagement on the local board plan we heard that the biggest priority is continued support for community-led services for welfare, health and the environment. We acknowledge how integral our community groups are to the wellbeing of our island, especially given the increasing living costs affecting freight, food and travel.

The flooding events over the past three years, including in January 2026, show us how vulnerable our infrastructure is to climate change. Our road network becomes compromised and supply chains are halted. The strength of our island's resilience is displayed through rapid responses from our stalwart Emergency Response Team, roading contractors and arborists.

Our moana is incredibly important to us; it surrounds us and sustains us. We want to protect it, restore it and enjoy it. We will continue to support mana whenua and the community on joint island-led projects, such as Tū Mai Taonga and Ahu Moana, to protect and enhance our environment and ocean.

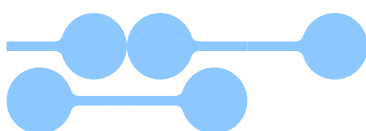
Thank you for engaging with us and helping to create this draft version of our three-year local board plan. We will be consulting with you during July to check we got it right before adopting the plan in October.

Ngā mihi nui,



Izzy Fordham

Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board Chairperson



He aronga poto ki tā mātou mahere

Our plan at a glance



Community

We see a future where mana whenua aspirations are upheld, their role as kaitiaki is recognised and relationships are strong. A place where our community can look after one another, access the services they need to stay well and where our shared spaces are welcoming, fit for the future and connected.



Environment

We see a future where our community works together to manage pests and protect our native species, where our food and water are secure and our waterways are healthy and drain freely. A place that protects and celebrates its night sky and where we reduce waste and lower our impact on the environment. An island where our whenua is restored and thriving and our moana is protected, healthy and full of life.



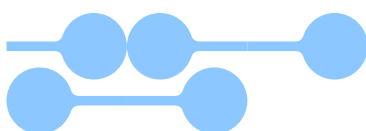
Economy

We see a future where local businesses thrive, an island where people can make a living locally and afford to live well, and a place that continues to attract visitors in a way that supports our way of life.



Transport

We see a future where our transport network is resilient and able to support connection to and from the island, where our wharves and airfields are reliable and meet our needs, and where our roads are safe, well maintained, and shared.



Te tirohanga whānui o Te Mahere a te Poari ā-Rohe

Local Board Plan Overview

He kōrero mō tēnei tuhinga

About this document

This local board plan sets out the vision and priorities for our area over the next three years. It outlines our commitments to our community – shaped by what you've told us matters most, and by the role local boards play within Auckland Council.

Te take kei a mātou te mahere nei

Why we have this plan

Local boards are responsible for decisions on local services and activities, and for representing local views on wider Auckland issues.

This plan guides:

- what we focus on and fund locally
- how we work with mana whenua, partners, and community organisations
- how we make the best use of local assets such as parks, libraries and community facilities
- where we will advocate to others on your behalf.

Te ara i whakaritea ai te mahere nei

How this plan was developed

To make sure the plan reflects local aspirations, we built on:

- public feedback from the previous local board plan, annual plans and other consultations
- surveys like the People's Panel
- community engagement held in 2026 including:
 - New Year Picnic stall on 2 January
 - barbecue events in village areas on 7, 14 and 21 March
 - community group stakeholder hui on 26 February, 4 and 9 March
 - youth hui on 11 March.

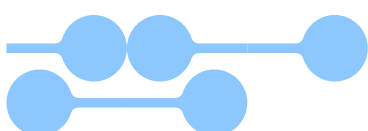
Te ara e tutuki ai ngā whāinga kei te mahere

How the plan will be used

The plan provides direction for the next three years and influences council's wider decision making. To deliver on it we will:

- prioritise budgets and resources to focus on the initiatives in this plan
- work with our partners to deliver on the objectives in this plan.

Visit the [Auckland Council website](#) to find out more about local board

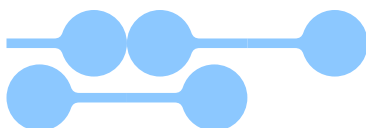


Te Rohe ā-Poari Local board area



MAP LEGEND

-  Local board office
-  Department of Conservation land
-  Marae





Medlands Beach

Tā mātou ki ngā huanga hei painga mō Tāmaki Makaurau

Our contribution to positive outcomes for Auckland

Local board plans connect local priorities and projects with the wider goals for Auckland. In particular, the local board plan connects with the:

- [Auckland Plan 2050](#) – the 30-year vision for how Auckland will grow and change. This includes the Future Development Strategy.
- [long-term plan](#) – the council’s investment and funding priorities over the next 10 years.
- [annual plan](#) – local funding decisions for each financial year.

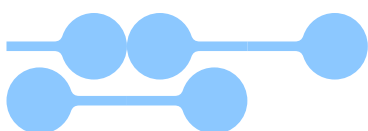
By linking to these wider plans, our local board plan can draw on Auckland-wide opportunities to deliver locally, while ensuring the goals of local communities contribute to Auckland’s shared future.

The **Auckland Plan 2050** sets out six outcomes that describe what Auckland is working towards over the long term. The council’s strategic framework organises all work and spending into **seven investment areas** to show how these outcomes are achieved.

This local board plan focuses on **four** of those investment areas — the ones where the local board make decisions and can have the greatest influence at a local level.

The strategic framework also identifies three considerations for all decisions and investments:

- Māori outcomes: Honouring Te Tiriti and ensuring Māori thrive in Tāmaki Makaurau



- Climate outcomes: Leading urgent action for a low-emissions, resilient future
- Equitable outcomes: Ensuring all Aucklanders have access to what they need to thrive

These three areas are mutually reinforcing. Improving one of the three required considerations is likely to contribute to improvements in the others.

Ngā huanga Māori

Māori outcomes

Māori identity and culture are Auckland’s unique point of difference in the world.

Māori outcomes describe how Auckland Council supports Māori goals — from partnership and participation to visibility and wellbeing. They also reflect the council’s commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, our statutory responsibilities, and our ongoing relationships with mana whenua and Māori communities across Tāmaki Makaurau.

The refreshed [Tāmaki Ora Māori Outcomes Strategy](#) reflects the vision that when Māori are well, Tāmaki Makaurau will also be well. *Tāmaki Ora* guides Auckland Council to focus on seven Ora outcomes (wellbeing areas) that mana whenua and Māori communities have told us are important to them:

- Iwi Ora - Iwi wellbeing
- Te Taiao Ora - Environmental wellbeing
- Tuakiri Ora - Cultural identity wellbeing
- Huatau Ora – Future wellbeing
- Te Hapori Ora – Whānau & community wellbeing:
- Whai Rawa Ora – Economic wellbeing
- Marae Ora - Marae vitality

Local boards play a key role in achieving *Tāmaki Ora*. This can be through:

- partnering with mana whenua and Māori communities

- supporting local initiatives that reflect Māori priorities
- embedding Māori identity, language and values into local spaces and activities.

This work will focus on Mana ki te Mana (authority to authority) engagements between local boards and mana whenua. The aim is to build relationships based on respect, shared priorities and mutual recognition for the mana that we each hold.

Local insights for Māori outcomes

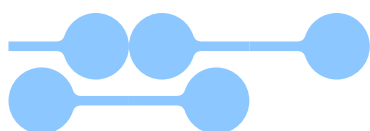
Aotea is the Māori name for Great Barrier Island. The Hauraki Gulf islands were likely among the first places settled by Māori over 800 years ago. Many of the great ocean-going canoes landed at Aotea before travelling further down the coast. One of these was the ‘Aotea’.

Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea are tangata whenua (people of the land) of Aotea, Hauturu (Little Barrier Island), the Pokohinu Islands (Mokohinau Islands) and other outlying islands and rocky outcrops.

There are ten iwi and hapū with interests in the island:

- Ngāti Rehua
- Ngātiwai
- Ngāti Manuhiri
- Ngāti Maru
- Ngāti Pāoa
- Ngaati Whanaunga
- Ngāti Tamaterā
- Te Patukirikiri
- Ngāi Tai Ki Tamaki
- Ngāti Te Ata-Waiohua.

Māori make up 25.7 per cent of the local board population (as per the 2023 Census) which is almost twice the regional average. Mana whenua have a strong presence in the north of the island with Māori land holdings and two marae located in Motairehe and Kawa.



The local board, mana whenua and community have strong relationships and connections, which come from living in a small community. What is important to mana whenua is important for the whole island.

Mana whenua and the local board have been working closely on local projects over recent years. These projects are reflected throughout the local board plan including:

- environmental restoration work through Tū Mai Taonga
- native plant nurseries
- aquatic restoration projects
- marine restoration work through Ahu Moana and in response to exotic Caulerpa
- storytelling projects such as the installation of pou whenua, interpretation signage and visitor information centre.

He huanga āhuarangi

Climate outcomes

In 2019, Auckland Council declared a climate emergency and adopted *Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri: Auckland's Climate Plan* in 2020. Meeting the goals of this plan requires ambitious action to reduce emissions and adapt to a changing climate.

Local boards contribute by including climate action into everything we do – from community investment and transport choices to restoring the environment and local events. We also support regional initiatives and enable community-led initiatives that build local resilience to the effects of climate change. Climate action also connects with the *Ngā Hapori Momoho / Thriving Communities Strategy 2022-2032*, which recognises that social and environmental wellbeing are closely linked – communities thrive when they have healthy environments, green spaces and can respond together to climate challenges.

Tāmaki Ora also recognises Māori goals around climate leadership and resilience.

Local insights for climate outcomes

Aotea is a remote island in the outer Hauraki Gulf. We are at the forefront of resilient living. There is no reticulated water, power or public transport. People are proudly self-sufficient and living 'off-the-grid', running their own power, water and septic and drainage systems.

The main climate concerns for the island are rising sea levels, storm damage, drought and wildfire. Our road network is vulnerable to coastal erosion, coastal inundation slips and flooding.

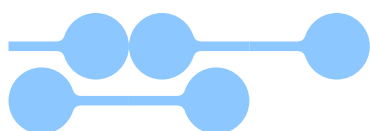
The island has a local Emergency Response Team (ERT) which leads emergency readiness, response and recovery. With more frequent damaging weather events, the team is essential in supporting the island's resilience.

Rising fuel costs have a significant impact on our 'off-the-grid' lifestyle and are driving a move away from combustion engines towards solar-powered systems.

Our community is aware of the environmental impacts of remote living, including the carbon impacts of freight to import supplies and export waste following the closure of the island's landfill. Anamata runs the resource recovery centre and promotes opportunities in Aotea to reduce, reuse and recycle.

Climate change and resilience initiatives are important to the island and the local board has responded by investing in:

- wetland restoration and riparian tree planting along waterways with locally sourced seeds
- food resilience coordinators
- local emergency response support
- low carbon initiatives such as grants for solar power upgrades
- 'buy local' and recycling initiatives.



He huanga tautika

Equitable outcomes

Auckland is one of the most diverse cities in the world, yet not all communities experience the same access to opportunity, wellbeing or resources.

Supporting more equitable outcomes is central to the Auckland Plan 2050. It recognises that the region's success depends on making sure all Aucklanders can be part of and contribute to society, access opportunities and have a chance to develop to their full potential.

Ngā Hapori Momoho | Thriving Communities Strategy 2022–2032 is Auckland Council's regional strategy for a fairer and more sustainable Tāmaki Makaurau where every Aucklander belongs. It reflects what communities say they need to thrive, for Tāmaki Makaurau to be a region where whānau have everything they need to live a good life, where diversity is celebrated, and where all Aucklanders can participate and belong.

At its heart *Ngā Hapori Momoho* focuses on ensuring equitable outcomes for all Aucklanders – guiding Auckland Council to recognise that different groups and communities need different things to fully participate in the life of our region, and to feel valued, included, and that they belong.

Local insights for equitable outcomes

The island is remote and self-sufficient. There are no supermarkets, no public transport and no public health or welfare services.

Remote living can bring with it challenges for social connection especially with economic hardships and high living costs. Access to mental and physical health services is a concern to the community.

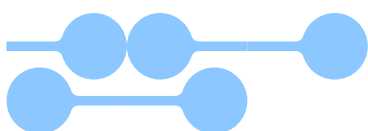
Individual income levels and the median (middle-range) household income are lower than the rest of the Auckland region.

Aotea has a small population with the highest median age of all local board areas of 51 years (2023 Census). Local health and welfare groups support seniors, youth and vulnerable community members with home help, transport and access to services.

Home ownership is high and many people live alone. There is no social or pensioner housing on the island.

The board will continue to work with mana whenua and community trusts to support social investment initiatives such as:

- access to health, education and wellbeing services with grants for our community groups
- looking into initiatives for local housing solutions
- support for local projects and events.





New Years Picnic held at Great Barrier Island Sports and Social Club

Te hāpori **Community**

We see a future where mana whenua aspirations are upheld, their role as kaitiaki is recognised, and relationships are strong. A place where our community can look after one another, access the services they need to stay well and where our shared spaces are welcoming, fit for the future and connected.

The island is home to around 1,250 permanent residents and many part-time residents. People here are self-sufficient and resourceful. A strong sense of community and a willingness to help one another are key parts of island life.

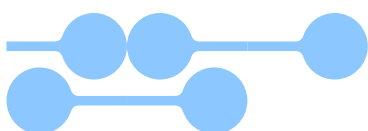
“

It's the most amazing place in the world.

”

Participant at youth hui.

Our marae and community groups provide health, welfare, education and support services. As many of these groups are community-led and rely heavily on volunteers, they are under a lot of pressure which makes it harder to access these services.



“ The same people are doing a lot – we need to support groups to be financially sustainable. ”

Participant at stakeholder hui.

Housing is limited on the island. There are 678 occupied homes (Census 2023), only a few rental options and no aged or social housing. This affects both community wellbeing and the ability to attract and retain workers. Income levels are generally lower than the rest of Auckland, while the cost of living remains high.

Community spaces, including our library and local venues, are important hubs for connection. They, along with our marae, play a key role in bringing people together and supporting resilience.

Our parks, playgrounds and beaches reflect the island’s natural way of life and are an important part of community wellbeing. Arts, culture and heritage are also growing, with local artists and spaces like the Aotea Arts & History Village contributing to the island’s identity.

Education on the island includes three primary schools, one early childhood centre and a playcentre. Secondary school students either leave the island for boarding school or learn through Te Kura (national distance education provider), supported by Te Whare Ako (Aotea Learning Hub).

Aotea also has a high level of self-employment, with many local businesses contributing to the local economy and community life.

Challenges

- Remote living can make it more challenging to stay connected, access services and manage the high cost of everyday life.
- Community trusts and groups are under pressure, with concerns around funding, volunteer burnout and limited capacity to meet growing demand.
- Access to affordable housing and rental accommodation is limited. There is also no aged or social housing on the island, which makes it difficult to attract and retain workers.
- There are limited spaces and places available to run services and support the community.
- The island’s ‘off-the-grid’ systems, including power, water, wastewater and septic, put limits on infrastructure and can make it harder to adopt new technologies like electric vehicles.

Opportunities

- A strong, self-reliant community with a ‘can-do’ approach, where residents come together to support one another, particularly in times of need and emergency.
- The island’s marae sit at the heart of the community in the north and are vital places for connection.
- Our library and community spaces are well used and valued. They provide important spaces for connection and emergency response.



- There is an opportunity to plan for the future in a way that works for Aotea, such as by including the Hauraki Gulf Islands District Plan in the wider Auckland Unitary Plan. This will support future housing and community development that meets local needs.
- The island’s natural spaces, like Glenfern Sanctuary Regional Park and Ōkiwi Park, are important for wellbeing and connection for both locals and visitors.

Our Plan

Our 3-year goals (Objectives)	What we plan to deliver in the next 3 years to make this happen (Key initiatives)
Thriving mana whenua	<p>Partner with mana whenua to restore the mauri (life force) of whenua, moana, awa and taonga species and strengthen climate resilience on the island.</p> <p>Respect rangatiratanga (chieftainship) by investing in by-Māori-for-Māori solutions, such as Tū Mai Taonga and Tai Tū Moana.</p> <p>Build the capacity and capability of mana whenua and mataawaka through grant funding for skill development courses.</p>
Resilient community services	<p>Ensure our seniors, youth and vulnerable communities have access to health and wellbeing services by funding our community-led health and welfare groups including Great Barrier Island Community Health Trust and Aotea Family Support Group.</p> <p>Strengthen capacity within our local trusts and groups by providing governance courses, upskilling advice, succession planning and administration grants.</p> <p>Support the local Emergency Response Team to deliver emergency readiness, response and recovery initiatives to strengthen island resilience.</p> <p>Support Aotea Education Trust to deliver education initiatives including the Early Education Centre, Te Whare Ako (Aotea Learning Hub), rangatahi programmes and to refresh the ‘Life-long Learning’ strategy.</p> <p>Support investigations and initiatives into local housing solutions for kaumātua, pensioners, papakāinga (settlement) and worker accommodation.</p> <p>Develop a long-term vision for Aotea with mana whenua, community and the Department of Conservation.</p>
Flourishing island culture	<p>Support mana whenua aspirations to share storytelling and te reo and protect and recognise wāhi tapu sites.</p> <p>Promote and support local art with grants funding for art, music and events across the island including Aotea Arts & History Village.</p> <p>Support heritage and history initiatives including funding for the Aotea Arts & History Village and Great Barrier Island History Research Group.</p>



Sustainable facilities	Ensure our council facilities like playgrounds, the library and the local board office and service centre are easy to use and access, resilient and fit for purpose.
	Improve our council ‘microgrid’ to help us better capture, store and manage electricity locally.
	Provide grants to support the maintenance of our marae and community-owned facilities like clubs and halls to improve the resilience of their ‘off-the-grid’ systems for everyday use and emergency purposes.
	Support local recreation and sports initiatives and assets including Great Barrier Island Sports and Social Club, Barrier Social Club, Aotea Boardriders Club, Port FitzRoy Boat Club and Great Barrier Island Golf Club.
Well-used open spaces	Ensure our village spaces, parks, reserves and beaches are safe, well-maintained and reflect our natural way of life.
	Partner with mana whenua, Department of Conservation and the community to investigate connecting track networks.

Advocacy

Some local priorities that matter to our community are not part of our direct decision-making role. ‘Advocacy’ is how we influence other governance decision-makers to prioritise the things our community cares about.

What we will advocate for in the next 3 years (Advocacy)	Who we will advocate to
Advocate to keep costs affordable for resource and building consents, and compliance and biosecurity requirements.	Central Government Governing Body
Advocate to improve internet connections and digital connectivity services across the island network.	Central Government Technology providers





Oruawhara Medlands Ecovision

Te taiao Environment

We see a future where our community works together to manage pests and protect our native species, where our food and water are secure and our waterways are healthy and drain freely. A place that protects and celebrates its night sky and where we reduce waste and lower our impact on the environment. An island where our whenua is restored and thriving and our moana is protected, healthy and full of life.

Aotea is a significant ecological area, with a high diversity of native plants and animals and extensive wetlands, salt marshes and dune systems that are unique to Aotearoa New Zealand.

Over 60 per cent of the island is Department of Conservation land and 43 per cent of this is the Aotea Conservation Park. Aotea is also the first island to be recognised internationally as a Dark Sky Sanctuary. Mana whenua and the community play an active role as kaitiaki, working together to protect taonga species and restore the mauri (life force) of the island.

Restoration work is happening right across Aotea, from Tū Mai Taonga in Te Paparahi through to Glenfern Sanctuary, Motu Kaikoura, Ōkiwi, Ōkupe, Oruawhara and Windy Hill Sanctuary. This work is ongoing and relies on the continued effort of local groups, native plant nurseries and volunteers.



“ We want to keep building momentum towards a pest-free Aotea. ”

Participant at stakeholder hui.

The moana is central to island life. Mana whenua and the community are working together to protect and restore coastal and marine environments, including through Ahu Moana and local fisheries management. There is a growing focus on the health of our waterways and on working towards Aotea becoming an aquatic sanctuary.

“ Our ocean should be protected and cared for. ”

Participant at youth hui.

Living ‘off-the-grid’ shapes how we manage our natural resources. Households rely on rainwater, streams or bores - protecting our water is a priority.

The island is also committed to reducing waste, with strong support for Anamata Resource Recovery Centre.

Climate change is being felt on Aotea, with warmer waters and increased pressure from pests and extreme weather. This adds urgency to the work already underway to protect and restore our environment.

Challenges

- Feral pigs, cats and dogs continue to damage our ecosystems through predation, rooting and trampling on native vegetation.
- Aotea is not connected to Auckland’s water network and households rely on rainwater, streams or bores to access water. This creates challenges for water quality and supply, and highlights the need to protect our waterways, including riparian planting along stream edges.
- Climate change is already affecting Aotea with more extreme weather events exposing erosion and flooding risks, warmer waters and the arrival of new marine pests.
- With the closure of the landfill, we need to keep managing waste across the island for residents and visitors, by encouraging innovation and reducing, recycling, reusing waste.

Opportunities

- Keeping the momentum going in restoration work across the island to help achieve our pest-free goals, supported by our ecology groups, native plant nurseries and volunteers.
- Mana whenua and the community are working together to protect the moana, including through the Ahu Moana project and management of local fisheries.
- Work towards becoming an ‘aquatic sanctuary’ by protecting the health of our waterways, natural stream functions, wetlands, flood plains and coastal waters.
- Anamata Resource Recovery Centre is well-loved by the community and a leader in waste reduction and innovation. The island should trial more new sustainable systems and showcase them globally.



Our Plan

Our 3-year goals (Objectives)	What we plan to deliver in the next 3 years to make this happen (Key initiatives)
Treasured and enriched whenua	<p>Support mana whenua and large community-led restoration initiatives like Tū Mai Taonga, Windy Hill Sanctuary, Glenfern Sanctuary Regional Park, and Oruawharo Medlands Ecovision.</p> <p>Support our local native plant nurseries and Ecology Vision groups in Ōkupe, Ōkiwi, Schooner Bay and Whangaparapara, with funding and advice for their biosecurity and biodiversity projects.</p> <p>Support mana whenua and community with projects that improves access to affordable and healthy locally grown and produced food, like funding for food and garden coordinators.</p> <p>Support pet education initiatives to encourage pet owners to desex and microchip their cats and dogs, and bird aversion courses to train their dogs not to chase, harass or harm birds.</p> <p>Support community efforts and innovations to reduce, reuse, compost and recycle waste, and showcase the Anamata Resource Recovery Centre.</p>
Abundant and protected moana	<p>Support mana whenua and community to deliver moana wellbeing projects, like Ahu Moana to protect Aotea’s coastline and taonga species.</p> <p>Partner with mana whenua and the community to find out how to protect local marine waters and sea life.</p>
Clean and secure wai	<p>Improve, monitor and manage stream water quality with mana whenua, residents and community groups for better water supply resilience and flood risk management through local knowledge building and cultural stewardship.</p> <p>Support mana whenua and community-led aquatic restoration projects to improve the health of wetland ecosystems, like riparian planting along stream edges and protecting Inanga spawning sites.</p>
Celebrated and preserved rangi	<p>Uphold our International Dark Sky Sanctuary status with strong leadership and planning, and by setting policies about outdoor lighting.</p>



Advocacy

Some local priorities that matter to our community are not part of our direct decision-making role. ‘Advocacy’ is how we influence other governance decision-makers to prioritise the things our community cares about.

What we will advocate for in the next 3 years (Advocacy)	Who we will advocate to
Advocate to stop bottom trawling and dredging in the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park and encourage sustainable fishing.	Central Government
Advocate for more investment to monitor new and current invasive marine species, such as exotic Caulerpa, Asian paddle crab, sea squirt and Mediterranean fanworm.	Central Government Governing Body
Advocate for increased and aligned investment in the ‘Making Space for Water’ programme to improve our waterways and drainage, reduce flood and erosion risks and improve partnerships with local landowners.	Central Government Governing Body
Advocate to protect kauri on Aotea and support continued monitoring and treatment of kauri dieback disease.	Central Government Governing Body
Advocate for continued council investment into ‘dark sky’ lighting requirements on Aotea and around the Gulf, such as lower lumens and downward-facing lighting, to make sure we protect our Dark Sky Sanctuary status.	Governing Body
Advocate for stronger product stewardship initiatives including takeback schemes, sustainable packaging, and ‘right-to-repair’ legislation to support zero waste.	Central Government
Advocate to reduce council's chemical footprint across Aotea.	Governing Body





Claris Growers and Makers Market

Te whanaketanga ā-ōhanga

Economy

We see a future where local businesses thrive, an island where people can make a living locally and afford to live well, and a place that continues to attract visitors in a way that supports our way of life.

Aotea has a high rate of self-employment, with many people running small businesses (192 businesses, Census 2023), working as sole traders, or working more than one job.

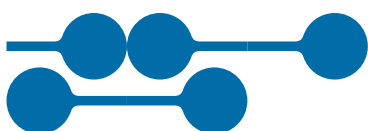
Much of the work on the island is in the construction, tourism and environmental sectors, is often part-time and earns half the median (middle-range) income of the wider region (\$28,500, Census 2023). Local businesses play an important role in supporting the community and providing employment.

“ Small businesses need assistance with succession planning. ”

Community member at community BBQ.

While there is strong support for buying local products, running a business on the island comes with added challenges. The market is small and seasonal, and the cost of freight and fuel is high.

The community and local businesses reuse and recycle products as much as they can. This helps to reduce waste and make better use of resources.



Limited broadband and mobile network coverage can make it harder for businesses to operate. Internet connection is limited in many areas but is slowly improving with equipment (tower repeaters) and satellite technology to boost and extend signals.

Tourism remains an important part of the economy with opportunities to support visitors in a way that respects the island's values and environment.

“ A tourism strategy, please: how do we maximise visitor benefits
and minimise environmental impact? ”

Community member at New Year's Picnic event

We developed the Aotea Great Barrier Island Destination Management Plan in 2022. It sets a direction for tourism that considers the needs of residents, manaaki manuhiri (care to visitors), and the health of the island's ecosystems.

The natural beauty of the island continues to attract visitors, with eco-tourism experiences like 'dark sky' viewing and garden tours becoming very popular.

Transport costs, rules and regulations sit outside the control of the local board but affect the local economy.

Challenges

- High freight and fuel costs make it more expensive to run a business on the island and increases the price of goods and services.
- The island has a small and seasonal economy which can make it difficult for businesses to operate year-round.
- Limited digital connectivity, including broadband and mobile coverage, can make it harder for businesses to operate and grow.

Opportunities

- Strong local interest in supporting island-based businesses that grow food, create products and provide services, such as pottery, skincare products, building trades and tourism experiences.
- A growing focus on managing Aotea as a long-term tourist destination with opportunities to improve eco-tourism and visitor experiences, for example, Dark Sky Sanctuary, Glenfern Sanctuary Regional Park, Auckland Council and Department of Conservation tracks.
- Anamata Resource Recovery Centre and the Growers and Makers markets are well-supported and create opportunities for small businesses and a more 'circular' local economy where we make better use of our resources.



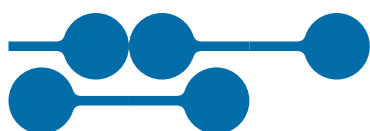
Our Plan

Our 3-year goals (Objectives)	What we plan to deliver in the next 3 years to make this happen (Key initiatives)
Strong local economy	<p>Support business sustainability by promoting and funding courses to help people develop skills in areas like management and finance.</p> <p>Increase opportunities for local employment and local supply sourcing of materials within council contracts to provide stable work for local businesses and reduce carbon emissions.</p> <p>Provide grants to local businesses to help them develop innovative solutions for producing reliable energy and reducing waste.</p> <p>Encourage local economic growth and investment by funding initiatives that encourage residents to buy local goods.</p>
Sustainable destination management	<p>Deliver the Aotea Great Barrier Island Destination Management Plan to guide productive, sustainable, regenerative and inclusive visitor experience.</p> <p>Work with mana whenua and the community to provide a visitor information centre and share visitor information on digital platforms and at main entry ports to the island.</p> <p>Support research into eco-tourism and volunteer-based tourism opportunities that benefit the island and community.</p>

Advocacy

Some local priorities that matter to our community are not part of our direct decision-making role. ‘Advocacy’ is how we influence other governance decision-makers to prioritise the things our community cares about.

What we will advocate for in the next 3 years (Advocacy)	Who we will advocate to
Advocate for regulations that recognise our rural island difference rather than applying regulations designed for urban areas that can make it harder for our local businesses to operate.	Central Government Governing Body





Claris Aerodrome

Tūnuku

Transport

We see a future where our transport network is resilient and able to support connection to and from the island, where our wharves and airfields are reliable and meet our needs, and where our roads are safe, well maintained, and shared.

Aotea is around 285 square kilometres in size, with several village communities spread across the island. It is about 100 kilometres from central Auckland.

You can travel to and from the island by air with a 30-minute flight or by sea with an almost five-hour ferry ride. The cost of travel and freight is high for access to services, goods and connections to the mainland. This adds to the overall cost of living for residents.

“ Cost of travel and freight is very expensive; it’s too expensive for locals. ”

Community member at community BBQ.

The island has three council-maintained wharves in Tryphena, Ōkupe and Whangaparapara, and a community-owned wharf in Port FitzRoy. There are two airfields at Claris and Ōkiwi.

These are critical lifelines for the island and need to be reliable, affordable and able to meet the needs of the community.



“ Wharf and port infrastructure is crucial to the community. ”

Participant at stakeholder hui.

There is no public transport on the island. Most people rely on private vehicles, and roads are shared by drivers, walkers and cyclists. Many roads are narrow and winding, which makes travel challenging and raises safety concerns.

“ We need wider roads for safety when we’re walking to school. ”

Participant at youth hui.

The island’s transport network is vulnerable to severe weather and coastal erosion, which can disrupt access and isolate parts of the island. We need a more resilient network that can respond to changing conditions over time.

At the time of developing this draft plan, the Government is progressing the *Local Government (Auckland Council) (Transport Governance) Amendment Bill*, which, if passed, will change how transport is governed and delivered in Auckland. While the details of how transport is to be governed in Auckland are still to be confirmed, our community has told us that safe, reliable, and sustainable transport remains a top priority. The local board will continue to advocate strongly for these priorities and will adapt this section in response to both community feedback and any changes made to the Bill throughout the Parliamentary process.

Challenges

- The cost of travel and freight to and from the island is high, increasing costs for goods and services.
- Roads are narrow, winding and often unmarked. This makes it difficult for drivers, walkers and cyclists to share them safely.
- Severe weather and coastal erosion due to climate change continue to affect roads and wharves, making it harder to access necessities.
- The island has no public transport. Options are limited for those without access to a vehicle.

Opportunities

- Improve road safety through maintenance and better sharing of the road between vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.
- Explore options for a passenger transport service that meets the island’s needs, including demand, limited power and fuel, and geography.
- Plan for the future of our transport network, particularly how we respond to the effects of weather conditions.
- Growing interest in electric vehicles, with opportunities to explore charging options.



Our priorities

Set out below, are the transport priorities for the Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board area. In some instances, implementing these may require Governing Body decisions, under the governance arrangements proposed in the *Local Government (Auckland Council) (Transport Governance) Amendment Bill*.

This proposed legislation change is expected to impact on what things might be a part of our direct decision-making role and what things might be considered as advocacy. Due to this uncertainty, the local board's transport priorities are set out in a single category in this draft plan.

Our 3-year goals (Objectives)	What we want to happen in the next 3 years (Priorities)
Resilient transport network	<p>Review the island's transport network to address coastal erosion and the effects of severe weather events by identifying areas to strengthen and creating alternate route and port options.</p> <p>Advocate for increased investment in our wharves, the Claris Aerodrome and Ōkiwi Airfield to ensure they are easy for everyone to access and resilient to climate impacts and emergency events.</p> <p>Encourage the installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure across the island.</p> <p>Support the introduction of a community passenger transport service.</p> <p>Raise concerns to central government about the growing costs for fuel, transport and freight.</p>
Safe local roads	<p>Ensure our local roads are well maintained with renewal works, road sealing and grading, and by regularly unblocking roadside drains.</p> <p>Make sure our shared roads are safe for walkers, cyclists and drivers by looking into applying road markings, adding more footpaths, and ways to reduce speeding where needed.</p> <p>Look at ways to provide more parking where demand is high, like near recreation areas and community services.</p>





Claris Walkway

He kōrero take pūtea

Funding information

Local board funding is approved through Auckland Council’s budget-setting process. This includes the Governing Body adopting a long-term plan every three years and an annual plan each year.

The Local Board Funding Policy sets out how funding is allocated to local boards for local activities, services and facilities within their decision-making responsibilities.

Funding for local activities, services and facilities is split into:

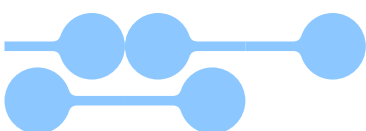
- operating expenditure (opex): to maintain and operate local assets like libraries, pools and parks, and to provide local activities and services
- capital expenditure (capex): to renew and develop local assets.

The priorities in this local board plan will inform decisions about funding that are made through the annual plan process and local board work programmes. This applies to decisions for both operating and capital spend.

Local boards have been allocated decision-making over local levels of service. This means they can prioritise services and initiatives to achieve local objectives, while ensuring costs are managed within the local board’s allocated funding.

The financial and levels of service statements in this plan are based on the information included in the Long-term Plan 2024-2034 and the Annual Plan 2025/2026.

The next long-term plan is due to take effect from 1 July 2027. This could change funding for operating and capital spend in our area and will affect how we achieve the goals set out in this local board plan.



Kaupapa ā-rohe me ngā paerewa ā-mahi

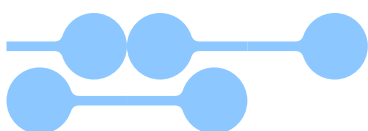
Levels of service

The Long-term Plan 2024–2034 outlines the decision-making responsibilities of local boards, as set out in legislation or allocated to the local boards. These responsibilities are grouped into local activities and described through levels of service statements. The following table summarises the local activities and levels of service for this local board area.

Local Activities	Level of service statements
<p>Local community services</p> <p>We support strong, diverse, and vibrant communities through libraries and literacy, arts and culture, parks, sport and recreation, and events delivered by a mix of council services, community group partnerships and volunteers</p>	<p>Enable a range of choices to access community services and recreation opportunities.*</p> <p><i>Provide opportunities for communities to lead and deliver their own initiatives. *</i></p> <p>Provide urban green spaces (local parks, paths and ngāhere) and access to the Coast*</p>
<p>Local planning and development</p> <p>We support local town centres and communities to thrive by developing town centre plans and development, supporting Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), heritage plans and initiatives</p>	<p>Facilitate economic development opportunities and promote Auckland as a destination.</p>
<p>Local environmental management</p> <p>We support healthy ecosystems and sustainability through local board-funded initiatives such as planting, pest control, stream and water quality enhancements, healthy homes, and waste minimisation projects.</p>	<p>Protect, improve and minimise risks to the natural environments and cultural heritage. *</p>
<p>Local governance</p> <p>Activities in this group support the local board to engage with and represent their communities and make decisions on local activities. This support includes providing strategic advice, leadership of the preparation of local board plans, support in developing the local board agreements, community engagement including relationships with mana whenua and Māori communities, and democracy and administrative support.</p>	<p>Lead Council Group response to partnership and participation of Māori in decision making and deliver Māori outcomes</p> <p><i>Respond to the needs and aspirations of mana whenua and Māori Communities. *</i></p>

* Levels of service statement from Local Board Agreement.

The statement of service provision, default levels of service statements, performance measures and performance targets from our last long-term plan can be found in section 2.6 in [volume 2 of the 10-Long-term Plan 2024-2034](#). The local board’s performance measures and performance targets, can be found in the Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board Agreement 2025/2026 which is available as part of the [Annual Plan 2025/2026](#).



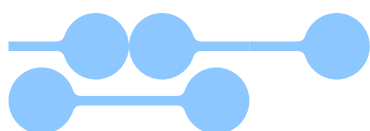


Anamata waste workshop

Setting priorities and making ‘trade-offs’

The local board will use this plan to inform how it prioritises resources, services and activities in the local area over the next three years. In doing so, it will take into account rising costs, limited resources and changing community needs. When making financial decisions, the local board will:

- prioritise actions that most strongly contribute to achieving the intended outcomes and goals of this local board plan
- consider value for money when making decisions about local services and assets within its decision-making responsibilities
- consider advice on ways to increase funding for services, activities and facilities from sources other than rates where appropriate
- consider advice on opportunities to work with other local boards and external partners, where this supports shared goals
- consider advice on the ongoing suitability, performance and community value of local assets.



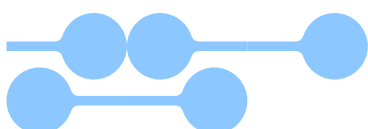
Tirohanga take pūtea whānui

Financial overview

The estimated costs shown in the table below for major service priorities are high-level, indicative only, and subject to change. These figures should not be relied upon as final and will be reviewed and updated through the Long-term Plan and Annual Plan processes.

\$ 000	2026/2027	Indicative 2027/2028	Indicative 2028/2029	Indicative 2029/2030
Operating funding				
General rates	3,704	3,804	3,905	3,971
Targeted rates	0	0	0	0
Fees and charges	0	0	0	0
Other revenue	1	1	1	1
Total operating funding	3,705	3,805	3,906	3,972
Operating expenditure				
Community services (Community)				
Libraries	99	99	99	99
Pools and Leisure	0	0	0	0
Maintenance	798	814	830	847
Utilities	5	3	3	3
Other community expenses	1,886	1,955	2,000	2,045
Local Environmental Management (Environment)	220	225	230	235
Local Planning				
Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)	0	0	0	0
Local Governance				
Total operating expenditure	3,705	3,805	3,906	3,972
Net operating funding	(0)	0	0	0
Capital funding				
Increase in debt	1,631	1,637	1,670	1,704
Total capital funding	1,631	1,637	1,670	1,704
Capital expenditure				
Community services (Community)	1,631	1,637	1,670	1,704
Total capital expenditure	1,631	1,637	1,670	1,704
Net capital funding	0	0	0	0

The local board's latest funding impact statement can be found in the Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board Agreement 2025/2026 which is available as part of the [Annual Plan 2025/2026](#).



Ngā Mema o tō Poari ā-Rohe o Aotea

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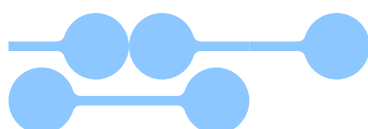
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