

18 December 2025

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Chair
Tātaki Auckland Unlimited
[Via email:](#)

Tēnā koe Vicki

Letter of Expectation for Statement of Intent 2026-2029

This letter of expectation sets out the council's priorities and expectations to inform the development of the draft Statement of Intent (SOI) 2026-2029 of Tātaki Auckland Unlimited (TAU).

It sets out common expectations across all council-controlled organisations (CCOs), and expectations specific to TAU.

The content of this letter was approved by the Budget and Performance Committee (the Committee) on 15 December 2025, with delegation to the Mayor, Chair of the Budget and Performance Committee and your Lead Councillor to finalise and issue this letter of expectation.

The Committee also approved extensions of the statutory deadlines for the SOI process, as is allowed in the Local Government Act 2002, Schedule 8, section 4. This means the due dates for the process are:

- date of submission of the draft SOIs is on or before 1 April 2026
- date for final submission of SOIs is on or before 31 July 2026.

Please liaise with CCO Governance staff about ensuring these dates can be met. The Committee would also like to invite you to present your draft SOI 2026-2029 at a meeting on 21 April 2026. Council will likely consider its shareholder feedback on draft SOIs (except for Auckland Transport) at the Committee meeting of 19 May 2026.

Part 1. Expectations of all CCOs

i. Delivering year three of the Long-term Plan 2024-2034

CCOs are expected to work positively and collaboratively with the council to deliver against the LTP investment commitments. Overall financial settings are being maintained. This includes the group savings target of \$20 million, on top of other savings targets agreed through previous plans and decisions as well as delivering on work programme commitments.

The council will commence public consultation on the draft Annual Budget 2026/2027 in late February 2026. Following consultation and deliberations, the final Annual Budget 2026/2027 will be adopted in June 2026. Once this occurs, final SOIs (including financial information and performance measures) should be aligned with the final annual budget and the strategic priorities contained within.

ii. Preparation for the Long-term Plan 2027–2037

CCOs are expected to provide updates to their draft asset management plans (AMPs) to inform the Long-term Plan 2027- 2037 and input as requested on strategic advice and options development (as applicable to their CCO) for the next Long-term Plan, including assessing strategic alignment and spatial investment priorities.

CCOs deliver on the AMP requirements outlined in the 2025/2026 letters of expectations, and AMPs are updated alongside the Long-term Plan 2027-2037 (as appropriate). CCOs are expected to continue to work with the council's Infrastructure Strategy and Asset Management System teams on the development of asset management plans.

iii. Accelerating Group Shared Services

As previously communicated, CCOs are expected to actively support the Group Shared Services (GSS) board in accelerating the transition of functions to the GSS model to achieve strong financial and other benefits. Transport reform will be a key lever to achieve this. It is particularly important to have a group view of new technology platforms and arrangements of all entities to ensure that Aucklanders are getting the best value from digital investments.

iv. Planning, delivery and paying for growth

Coordinating investment in infrastructure across the council group is important to ensure we can deliver for Auckland's growth. CCO plans and investment should be aligned with the Future Development Strategy, and CCOs are expected to work with the Auckland Urban Development Office on coordinated and effective group planning and delivery and the achievement of the council's urban development outcomes.

Advice from CCOs will be required to support integrated decision-making and the council's consideration of Plan Change 120 and the government's resource management changes.

v. *Effective spending*

CCOs are expected to continue to focus on value for money initiatives, deliver better value projects and collaborate with the council on reviewing design standards, increasing the focus on benefits and place-based investment, and group procurement rules.

vi. *Upholding te Tiriti o Waitangi derived obligations*

The council group is committed to upholding its obligations derived from te Tiriti o Waitangi and to achieving better outcomes for Māori. CCOs are expected to share this commitment and contribute to its delivery, including through (but not limited to):

- aligning with Tāmaki Ora Māori Outcomes Strategy and Performance Measurement Framework 2025 – 2027, particularly Achieving Māori Outcomes (AMO) plans
- reporting on the delivery of their AMO plans as part of the quarterly performance reports. The reporting should include key performance indicators (KPIs) to track progress over time
- building strong partnerships with mana whenua and mataawaka, and advancing Iwi Ora (iwi wellbeing) and Te Hapori Ora (whānau and community wellbeing). This includes aligning with the council's Mana ki te Mana approach to Māori engagement, where relationships take precedence over issues or projects. This approach respects the unique mana motuhake of each iwi and mataawaka entity by prioritising their needs and aspirations
- working collaboratively with Ngā Mātārae to progress the shared outcomes across Auckland Council namely Whai Rawa Ora (economic wellbeing and focus on sustainable procurement), Te Hapori Ora (opportunities for young people particularly rangatahi Māori), Tūāpapa Hononga and Tūāpapa Hāngai (mana ki te mana approach to engagement with Māori, and Māori Outcomes staff engagement and connections)
- working collaboratively with Ngā Mātārae and other Māori Outcomes specialists across the council group to take a whole of-council-group approach to delivering outcomes for Māori. This includes continuing to participate in council-led activities and hui such as the Tāmaki Ora Programme Delivery Board (or any internal governance equivalent).

vii. *Quality advice*

CCOs should provide timely, delivery-focused, quality, concise advice to all elected members, and ensure local boards are engaged early on projects and decisions directly impacting their local area. This supports the 'More Empowered Local Boards' approach, consistent with the council's shared governance model.

viii. *Climate change*

CCOs should continue to be guided by Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri: Auckland's Climate Plan by incorporating climate change considerations (whole of life greenhouse gas emissions and resilience), adaptation and mitigation into work programmes and decisions.

ix. City centre

CCOs are expected to work with the council and partners to support a vibrant, clean, safe, and welcoming city centre and maximise opportunities arising from the City Rail Link and the New Zealand International Convention Centre openings in 2026, as well as any refresh of the City Centre Master Plan.

CCOs are also expected to comply with the [‘Statement of Expectations for Substantive Council-Controlled Organisations’](#).

Part 2. Key expectations of Tātaki Auckland Unlimited

In summary, the council’s key expectations of TAU are as follows:

i. Support council's strategic direction for destination and major events

The council’s Economic Development Office will be leading the progression of a new economic development strategy, which will include destination and major events, and will provide direction on the council group’s role in this area. While council will lead this work, TAU expertise will be sought and valued in the development and implementation of this strategy.

Council is proposing an increased focus on economic growth this term, of which a vibrant city with increasing visitor numbers is an important part.

ii. Successful implementation of an expanded role in event activity

TAU is expected to continue to implement its expanded role in Matariki and Waitangi Day events, city centre events and activations, venue and booking management (including issues raised about the multitude of agencies involved in the Viaduct Events Centre), programming and content curation of Aotea Square and Te Komititanga. This includes the continued rollout of the recently launched ‘Auckland Council Events’ brand and shared regional events calendar. This is expected to reduce duplication, open up spaces, extend the duration of event programmes, and improve the experience for Aucklanders and visitors. Examples of this could include longer Lunar New Year or Diwali event programmes.

TAU should also contribute to work looking at how the council group approaches public spaces in the city centre, which include opportunities to be more flexible and creative with how we view their use. More immediately, TAU should contribute to investigations of activity to support a vibrant and active city centre, that include activations of public spaces to make a safer and more welcoming environment and increase the number of people visiting and using public amenities.

TAU is also expected to continue to work with the council on the implementation of the City Centre Attraction Programme, which is supported by city-centre targeted rate funding.

iii. Funding major events with a focus on cost-benefit analysis

TAU is expected to continue to utilise and report on cost-benefit ratios in making funding decisions for major events. This includes when utilising the underwrite facility which has been granted by the council to TAU for the next two years, to assist with securing future major events.

When seeking to utilise the underwrite, TAU staff must seek early formal endorsement from the Group Chief Financial Officer, as a prudential check on the council's financial exposure, before seeking approval from the TAU board.

The council will continue to pursue a permanent and sustainable long-term funding solution for funding of destination and major events.

iv. Support council's strategic direction for stadia

Collectively council and TAU seek to enhance the contribution the stadium network makes to Auckland's cultural and economic vibrancy, which includes improving the financial sustainability, utilisation, long-term planning and efficiency of the network. This is reflected in the Stadium Network Investment Objectives adopted by council in March 2025.

TAU is expected to continue supporting council's strategic direction as expressed through these objectives, including earlier council decisions relating to a future single stadium operator.

TAU is also expected to continue supporting the council in developing a draft Stadium Network Investment Plan. High-quality asset management plans will help clarify the baseline renewal requirements for each venue, as well as opportunities for optimisation, which need to be aligned with the network's long-term strategic direction.

In line with earlier work overseen by the North Harbour Stadium Steering Group, TAU will continue to operate North Harbour Stadium while supporting the consideration of the long-term vision for its future (stage 2). Any final decisions will be made through the LTP 2027-2037 process.

While outside the timeframe of this letter of expectation, in early 2026 TAU is also expected to report back to the Governing Body on recommended next steps with Western Springs Stadium. This follows public consultation on three potential options in June 2025 and the subsequent decision by the proponents of one of the options to withdraw their proposal.

v. Continue to lead the Alliance of Council-funded Cultural Organisations

Last term, council's Governing Body endorsed a process for making improvements to the way we engage with our major cultural institutions but progress is still needed on amending or, if necessary, replacing outdated and overly prescriptive legislation. This will be part of a broader package of arts and culture sector changes to progress this term, under the leadership of the Deputy Mayor, with any specific proposals for change to be included in the LTP 2027-2037 (or brought to the relevant committee).

TAU should continue its leadership role in the Alliance of council-funded organisations. This collaboration supports outcomes and efficiencies across the sector by implementing shared metrics for transparency, coordinating programming and marketing, exploring shared services, and aligning strategic direction with the council and other funders. TAU is expected to report regularly to the council on progress with the Alliance's work programme.

vi. Support the Mayor's Tourism and Hospitality Forum

TAU is expected to provide advice and facilitation support to the forum (established in May 2025).

Council looks forward to receiving a draft of the Tātaki Auckland Unlimited SOI no later than 1 April 2026.

Staff are available to expand aspects of this letter if required. Please contact Alastair Cameron, Manager CCO Governance and External Partnerships to discuss.

Ngā mihi



Wayne Brown
MAYOR OF AUCKLAND

Cc:

Deputy Mayor Desley Simpson – Lead Councillor
Councillor Greg Sayers – Chair, Budget and Performance Committee
Nick Hill – Chief Executive, Tātaki Auckland Unlimited
Alastair Cameron – Manager, CCO Governance and External Partnerships
Tamsyn Matchett – Chief of Staff, Mayoral Office