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## Issues Overview

1. The Western Bay of Plenty *sub-region's* environment possesses a warm climate with popular beaches and a harbour safe for swimming and boating. The highly productive coastal margins are ideal for agriculture and horticulture while the rural lowlands and rolling hills are framed by the backdrop of the Kaimai Ranges which have ecological significance.

The *sub-region* has been an area of rapid population growth since the 1950's and it is predicted that the Bay of Plenty will become the fourth or fifth most populated region in New Zealand by the year 2051.

As this rapid population increase is predicted to continue, it is important to ensure that future development is planned in an efficient and effective way. Such planning will mean the sub-region continues to be a desirable place in which to live, while also providing for the economic growth necessary to support the increasing population.

As the *sub-region's* population grows, the current household structure and demographic profile are also changing. It is predicted that by the year 2051 there will have been a seven fold increase in the number of residents over 80 years of age. There are also likely to be three times as many single and two person households and twice as many traditional families.

To meet the diverse and changing needs of the community a range of choices for types and locations of residential development will be required. There will also need to be an increase in the amount of business land, along with appropriate *infrastructure*, to support these communities. In addition, there will be a greater need for effective transportation links, more community, cultural and *educational facilities* and more health care services.

2. Energy is also critical in supporting economic growth and *development*. Secure and reliable electricity supply is essential for peoples social and health needs along with supporting the community's and *District's* economic wellbeing. The demand for energy is expected to grow within the *sub-region* as well as regionally and nationally. Electricity generation from renewable energy resources is encouraged. It is also essential to ensure an adequate transmission and distribution network is available.
3. A sustained supply of aggregate will be required to provide for building, construction and roading projects associated with this growth, but also to maintain and redevelop existing *infrastructure*. This includes completion of the projects forecast by the New Zealand Transport Agency for the Bay of Plenty Region over the next 10 years and to provide improved and additional transport links. As such there is a need to provide for the efficient utilisation of the significant aggregate resources within the *District*.

4. Public transport as well as walkways and cycleways are seen as vital to meet the transportation needs of the *sub-region's* growing population. Corridors will be necessary to integrate transport networks with key land uses and to provide greater efficiency for business land, intensified housing nodes and the hospital.

As well as the roading corridors that link with adjacent regions, there are also the rail corridor and the Port of Tauranga. It is important to integrate transport infrastructure and land use patterns to achieve a land transport system that is affordable, integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable.

5. To address the above issues, the three local authorities having statutory resource management responsibilities within the *sub-region*, being the Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Tauranga City Council and Western Bay of Plenty District Council, have adopted a joint 50 year growth management strategy and implementation plan.

This is known as the SmartGrowth Strategy and consists of a partnership and collaboration between the three Councils, *tangata whenua* and community groups.

The SmartGrowth Strategy itself has limited statutory effect – its findings need to be implemented through the various regional and territorial authority statutory planning documents prepared under the *RMA*. The overriding high level *RMA* planning document is the Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement (the RPS) prepared by the *Regional Council*.

The RPS contains a growth management strategy designed to anchor land use patterns and set development targets (including minimum residential densities) for the western Bay of Plenty *sub-region*.

One of the main aims of SmartGrowth is to ensure that as the western Bay of Plenty *sub-region* grows, it continues to be a desirable place in which to live, work and play. This live/work/play principle emphasises the need for a more compact approach to land use planning so as to limit the 'urban sprawl' which has characterised past development.

The growth management strategy within the RPS incorporates the recommended SmartGrowth sub-regional settlement pattern which identifies areas for future urban development and sets defined urban limits for such growth based on growth projections. This will ensure growth is provided for but does not spread outside of the set urban limit lines for each of the existing townships. Within these areas employment nodes and key transport corridors have been identified to ensure they are protected as growth occurs. Within the Western Bay of Plenty District, it is proposed to confine development of an urban nature to within or immediately adjoining the existing urban areas of Waihi Beach, Katikati, Omokoroa and Te Puke.

Some areas within these urban centres will be set aside for more intensive *development*. These areas will need to be located close to amenities and to employment opportunities to enable residents to live in close proximity to their place of work.

A critical part of SmartGrowth is looking ahead to long term *infrastructure* needs and the identification of principal transport corridors. Such corridors provide important links to settlement areas as well as ensure unimpeded access to the Port of Tauranga and to other regions. Growth is proposed to be staged in a manner which ensures efficient utilisation of *infrastructure*.

Urban design plays an important part in ensuring any new *development* is carried out in a way which creates safe and vibrant communities that are easy to get around in by foot, bicycle and motor vehicle.

Limiting urban growth to within defined areas will result in positive effects on the rural environment which makes up most of the Western Bay of Plenty District.

### **Objective 1 - Targets for Housing Development Capacity – Western Bay of Plenty District**

Provide housing development capacity (i.e. new *dwelling*s) within the Western Bay of Plenty District for the period 2018–2048 as set out in the table below:

<b>Geographical Area</b>	<b>Medium Term July 2018 – June 2028*</b>	<b>Long Term July 2028 – June 2048*</b>	<b>30 Year Total July 2018 – June 2048</b>
Western Bay of Plenty District	5,000 new <i>dwelling</i> s	5,000 new <i>dwelling</i> s	10,000 new <i>dwelling</i> s

\*The targets include an additional margin of 20% capacity for the medium term and 15% for the long term as required by the National Policy Statement for Urban Development Capacity (NPS-UDC).

#### **Explanation**

The NPS-UDC, which came into effect in December 2016, requires that *Council* sets minimum targets for sufficient, feasible development capacity for housing in the *District*. These targets are also included in the Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement. The minimum targets represent development capacity for housing required to be enabled, rather than the amount of housing built in each term. The targets will be reviewed every three years following the completion of scheduled capacity assessments.

The targets reflect the projected number of *dwelling*s required based on projected demand. They also represent the development capacity that the *Council* shall enable through the District Plan, structure plans, infrastructure strategies and growth strategies.

The NPS-UDC requires that medium term development capacity must be feasible, zoned and either serviced with development infrastructure or the funding for the development infrastructure required to service that development capacity must be identified in the relevant long-term plan required under the Local Government Act 2002.

Long term development capacity must be feasible, identified in relevant plans and strategies and the development infrastructure required to service it must be identified in the relevant infrastructure strategy required under the Local Government Act 2002.

*Council* will give effect to this Objective through Plan Changes and the District Plan review as appropriate.

6. As the *District* is predominantly rural, protection of the values and resources existing within the rural environment is essential.

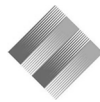
Currently 10% of the *sub-region's* population is employed in the agriculture industry. This is well above the national average of 7.5%. In addition to this, the *sub-region's* most important export industry is agriculture (including horticulture).

As primary production is the main economic base of the *sub-region* there is a need to ensure that productive rural land is not unnecessarily fragmented through subdivision driven by lifestyle demand rather than that for primary production. Urban expansion into rural areas can also have negative effects on *infrastructure*, create increased transportation costs and result in a reduction in rural amenity values.

In the past the rural environment has been predominantly a working one, with most people who lived in that environment also working there. In recent years, liberal rural subdivision rules have enabled many people who are attracted to the amenity values prevailing in the rural environment to live in rural areas whilst continuing to rely on nearby urban areas as their principal place of employment. This leads to the potential for *reverse sensitivity* through management of rural-residential subdivision and activities which is a key issue in the *District*.

Rural production requires a range of attributes to enable the land to be effectively and efficiently managed for rural production purposes. The Western Bay of Plenty District has a range of the attributes that make the land versatile for food production to be undertaken. Such factors include soil, water, climate, contour, location and proximity to labour and services. To ensure that rural production can continue in the *District* provision needs to be made so rural production operations have access and are able to utilise these attributes. The high quality *versatile land* found in parts of the *sub-region* is a scarce and finite resource.

With increasing population this land needs to be protected to ensure the potential use for food production now and into the future is not compromised.



7. The *sub-region* is also home to a significant Maori population which is continuing to grow as more Maori return home to their ancestral lands. The Tauranga Moana region is the ancestral home to five iwi (Ngaiterangi, Ngati Ranginui, Ngati Pukenga, Hauraki and Te Arawa) and approximately 26 hapu.

Since 2001 the Maori population has increased by approximately 12.8%. It is therefore appropriate that provision is made for Papakainga housing on multiple-owned *Maori land* so as to accommodate some of this growth.