

**Joint Regional Economic Development  
Committee**

**Friday 6 March 2026 at 10:00 am**

**AGENDA**

## Joint Regional Economic Development Committee Agenda

Meeting to be held at Whangarei District Council  
Te Iwitahi, Rust Avenue, Whangārei  
on Friday 6 March 2026, commencing at 10:00 am on Friday 6 March 2026, commencing at 10:00 am

**Recommendations contained in the agenda are NOT decisions of the meeting. Please refer to minutes for resolutions.**

### MEMBERSHIP OF THE JOINT REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Chair Geoff Crawford (NRC)

Gordon Lambeth (KDC) Deputy Chairperson	KDC Craig Jepson	NRC Chair Pita Tipene
WDC Mayor Ken Couper	WDC Deputy Mayor Scott McKenzie	FNDC John Vujcich
FNDC Rachel Baucke		

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## **Opening Karakia | Karakia Timatanga**

Tukua te wairua kia rere ki ngā taumata

Hei ārahi i ā tātou mahi

Me tā tātou whai i ngā tikanga a rātou mā

Kia mau kia ita

Kia kore ai e ngaro

Kia pūpuri

Kia whakamaua

Kia tina! TINA! Haumi e, hui e, TĀIKI E!

## **Closing Karakia | Karakia Whakamutunga**

Unuhia, unuhia

Unuhia ki te uru tapu nui

Kia wātea, kia māmā, te ngākau, te tinana, te wairua  
i te ara tangata

Koia rā e Rongo, whakairia ake ki runga

Kia tina! TINA! Hui e! Tāiki e!

**TITLE:** **Confirmation of Minutes - Extraordinary Joint Economic Development Committee Minutes**

**From:** Rae Hetaraka, Executive Assistant to the Chair

**Authorised by** Darryl Jones, Economist, on 03 March 2026  
**Group Manager/s:**

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### **Ngā mahi tūtohutia / Recommendation**

That the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on 22 December 2025, be confirmed as a true and correct record.

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### **Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga**

Attachment 1: Extraordinary Joint Economic Development Committee Minutes [↓](#) 

Extraordinary Joint Regional Economic Development Committee  
22 December 2025

## **Extraordinary Joint Regional Economic Development Committee Minutes**

Meeting held in the Council Chamber  
36 Water Street, Whangārei  
on Monday 22 December 2025, commencing at 9:00 am

### **Tuhinga/Present:**

Councillor Geoff Crawford (NRC)  
Councillor John Hunt (NRC)  
Councillor John Vujcich (FNDC)  
Councillor Rachel Baucke (FNDC)  
Councillor Craig Jepson (KDC)  
Councillor Gordon Lambeth (KDC)  
Councillor Scott McKLenzie (WDC)  
Councillor Tangiwai Baker (WDC)

### **I Tae Mai/In Attendance:**

KDC Jason Marris (as CEO Sponsor)  
NRC Economist  
NRC Governance Specialist  
NRC Administration  
NRC Chief Executive Officer  
NRC GM Corporate Services  
NRC Governance and Corporate Policy Manager  
FNDC Chief Executive Officer  
FNDC Councillor  
FNDC Group Manager for Planning and Policy  
WDC Chief Executive Officer  
WDC Councillor  
WDC Manager District Development  
WDC Economic Development Facilitator  
NINC Chief Executive  
NINC Chair  
NINC Acting Head of Investment  
NINC Communications Specialist

The CEO Sponsor, Jason Marris, declared the meeting open at 9.04 am and welcomed everyone to the first meeting of this Extraordinary Joint Regional Economic Development Committee.

Extraordinary Joint Regional Economic Development Committee  
22 December 2025

### **Ngā Mahi Whakapai/Housekeeping (Item 1.0)**

Attendees present in the room were advised that the lift is currently out of service and were instructed to use the stairwell located at the rear of the building for exiting.

### **Karakia Timatanga – Tauāki ā Roto / Opening Karakia (2.0)**

Darryl Jones

*Secretarial Note:*

*As CE Sponsor for economic development, Jason Marris advised that he will chair the Joint Regional Economic Regional Committee meeting until a Chair is elected*

### **Ngā whakapahā/Apologies (Item 3.0)**

#### **Moved (Vujcich/ Jepson)**

That the apologies from Chair Pita Tipene, Mayor Ken Couper and Mayor Jonathan Larsen for non-attendance be received.

**Carried**

### **Ngā Whakapuakanga/Declaration of Conflicts of Interest (4.0)**

Nil

### **Reports (5.0)**

#### **Election of Chair (Item 5.1)**

**Report from Darryl Jones, Economist**

#### **Moved (Jepson/Hunt)**

1. That the report 'Election of Chair' by Darryl Jones, Economist and dated 15 December 2025, be received.
2. That in the event that more than one nomination for Chair is received, "System A" as specified in Clause 25 of Schedule 7 of the Local Government Act 2002, be used for the election of the Chair.
3. That Geoff Crawford be appointed as Chair of the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee.

**Carried**

*Secretarial Note:*

- *As there were no other nominations, the CE Sponsor declared Geoff Crawford to be elected the Chair of the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee.*
- *Councillor Geoff Crawford assumed the chair from the Chief Executive Sponsor.*
- *The Chair then presided over the remainder of the committee meeting.*

Extraordinary Joint Regional Economic Development Committee  
22 December 2025

## **Election of Deputy Chair (Item 5.2)**

### **Report from Darryl Jones, Economist**

#### **Moved (Vujcich/Lambeth)**

1. That the report 'Election of Deputy Chair' by Darryl Jones, Economist and dated 15 December 2025, be received.
2. That in the event that more than one nomination for Deputy Chair is received, "System A" as specified in Clause 25 of Schedule 7 of the Local Government Act 2002 be used for the election of the Deputy Chair.
3. That Gordon Lambeth be appointed as Deputy Chair of the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee.

#### Secretarial Note:

- *As there were no other nominations, the Chair declared Gordon Lambeth to be elected Deputy Chair of the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee.*

#### **Carried**

## **Whakamutunga (Conclusion)**

**The meeting concluded at 9.12am with a karakia by Darryl Jones.**

**TITLE:** Northland Inc Limited - Impact Report

**From:** Darryl Jones, Economist and Codie McIntyre, Economic Policy Advisor

**Authorised by** Bruce Howse, Pou Taumatua – Group Manager Corporate Services, on 02  
**Group Manager/s:** March 2026

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### Executive summary/Whakarāpopototanga

At its meeting on 26 September 2025, the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee (Joint Committee) directed staff to prepare a benefit report on the Investment and Growth Reserve (IGR), including Northland Inc operational funding. This direction was given in response to a request from Whangarei District Council (WDC) to prepare such a report so that they could review their position regarding their funding contribution into the Investment and Growth Reserve (IGR) for the 2026/27 financial year.

In giving this direction, the Joint Committee also considered that such a benefit study would be helpful to all shareholders in understanding the value and impact of the IGR and Northland Inc. This may be useful for councils when it comes to the development of their respective Long Term Plans (LTPs) 2027-2037, discussions with central government on the role and functions of local government, and negotiations with other possible shareholders.

The purpose of this agenda item is for the Joint Committee to receive the impact report (**Attachment 1**) and to determine the appropriate next steps. Staff recommend that: (1) the report be provided to all four councils to assist with the development of their LTPs 2027-2029, such as activity reviews, and (2) for a specific letter be sent to WDC to continue informal discussions regarding the level of funding they have committed for 2026/27.

Northland Inc will lead the discussion on the findings of the Impact Report.

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### Recommendation(s)

1. That the report 'Northland Inc Limited - Impact Report' by Darryl Jones, Economist and Codie McIntyre, Economic Policy Advisor and dated 2 March 2026, be received.
2. That the Impact Report be provided to each of the four shareholder councils of Northland Inc Limited to assist with development of their respective Long Term Plans 2027-2037.
3. That a letter be sent to Whangarei District Council (WDC) requesting them to use the Impact Report to review their funding contribution to the Investment and Growth Reserve (IGR) for 2026/27 in line with the letter received from the Mayor of WDC dated 15 August 2025.

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### Options

No.	Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
1	That a letter be sent to WDC	Continue good faith discussions among co-shareholders in Northland Inc	Requires further staff effort to advance

<b>2</b>	That a letter not be sent to WDC	Stops further staff work on this issue	Removes any chance of WDC reviewing funding position for 2026/27
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The staff's recommended option is Option 1.

## Considerations

### 1. Alignment to council strategic direction - community outcomes

The matters covered in this report relate to the following community outcomes:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Protected and flourishing native life                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy waters, land and air                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Safe and resilient transport networks                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A sustainable, innovative and equitable economy  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meaningful partnerships with tāngata whenua            | <input type="checkbox"/> Carbon neutral, resilient communities in a changing climate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Efficient, progressive and transparent council systems |  |

### 2. Climate Impact

There are no known climate changes implications that need to be considered in making this decision.

### 3. Environmental Impact

There are no known environmental risks or impacts associated with making this decision.

### 4. Community views

There are no community views that need to be considered in making this decision.

### 5. Māori impact statement

This decision relates to a council administrative matter and therefore does not have a direct impact on Māori.

### 6. Financial implications

Table 1 set out the cashflow balance of the IGR based on current funding commitments, the draft Northland Inc Statement of Intent 2026/27, and the Enabling Investment funding allocations made at the Joint Committee meeting on 25 July 2025. WDC will be deciding on their ongoing shareholding in Northland Inc and funding contribution to the IGR as part of their LTP 2027-2037. The level of funding into the IGR that WDC have agreed to provide for 2026/27 is \$587K, the same as for 2025/26 but \$122K less than they are expected to provide as per the Northland Inc Shareholder's Agreement.

**Table 1. Cash flow balances of the Investment and Growth Reserve, 2021/22 to 2027/28 based on current funding commitments and Northland Inc draft SOI 2026/27, \$000**

Investment and Growth Reserve	LTP 2021-2031			LTP 2024-2034		LTP 2027-2037		
	Actual			Actual	Budget	Northland Inc draft SOI 2026/27		
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27f	2027/28f	2027/28f
<b>Opening Balance</b>	\$533	\$80	\$188	\$159	\$471	\$613	\$855	\$929
<b>Deposits</b>								
Northland Regional Council	\$1,864	\$1,897	\$1,937	\$1,984	\$2,033	\$2,084	\$2,136	\$2,190
Far North District Council	\$82	\$169	\$246	\$335	\$413	\$500	\$513	\$525
Kaipara District Council	\$29	\$61	\$89	\$121	\$149	\$180	\$185	\$189
Whangarei District Council				\$475	\$587	\$587		
Total local government	\$1,975	\$2,127	\$2,272	\$2,915	\$3,182	\$3,351	\$2,833	\$2,904
Other revenue <sup>1</sup>	-\$3	\$9	\$7	\$17	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1
<b>Total deposits</b>	\$1,972	\$2,136	\$2,279	\$2,931	\$3,182	\$3,351	\$2,833	\$2,905
<b>Withdrawals</b>								
Northland Inc CCO Opex	\$1,637	\$1,824	\$1,972	\$2,245	\$2,400	\$2,809	\$2,460	\$2,522
Project Development <sup>2</sup>	\$175	\$144	\$261	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300
Enabling Investment <sup>3</sup>	\$613	\$60	\$75	\$75	\$340	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total withdrawals</b>	\$2,424	\$2,028	\$2,308	\$2,620	\$3,040	\$3,109	\$2,760	\$2,822
<b>Closing Balance</b>	\$80	\$188	\$159	\$471	\$613	\$855	\$929	\$1,012

**Notes:**

1. Other revenue includes interest earned on the IGR.
2. The IGR criteria provides for up to \$300k per annum to be provided for Project Development category. If funding is not used for Project Development, then it remains in the IGR and is available for allocation in future years. The \$300k budget was all spent in 2024/25.
3. Enabling Investment allocations made to date for 2025/26 are \$250,000 for Tuputupu Grow Northland and \$90,000 for International Inward Delegations.

**7. Implementation issues**

There are no implementation issues associated with making this decision. Actions will be taken as part of current council processes. The response from WDC will be reported back to a future Joint Committee meeting when it is received.

**8. Significance and engagement**

In relation to section 79 of the Local Government Act 2002, this decision is considered to be of low significance when assessed against Northland Regional Council's significance and engagement policy. This does not mean that this matter is not of significance to tangata whenua and/or individual communities, but that the Joint Committee is able to make decisions relating to this matter without undertaking further consultation or engagement.

**9. Policy, risk management and legislative compliance**

This decision is consistent with the Northland Inc Shareholders' Agreement and with the terms of reference of the Joint Committee. The major risks associated with this decision are noted in the options table, with the staff recommending the option carrying the least risk.

Clause 17.3 of the Shareholders' Agreement sets out the formal process to be followed if a shareholder fails to provide its expected funding contribution to the IGR.

### 17.3 Not meeting expected contribution

If a Shareholder(s) does not agree to, or fails to, contribute to Northland Regional Council's Investment and Growth Reserve its proportion of the Total Amount expected under clause 17.2 in any Financial Year ("**Non Contributing Shareholder**"), the parties agree as follows:

- (a) Any Shareholder may request by notice in writing to the other Shareholders that the Shareholders meet to discuss in good faith whether an alternative model of contributions can be agreed for the relevant Financial Year(s).
- (b) If the Shareholders are unable to reach agreement under clause 17.5(a) within two months of the relevant request to meet first being made, any Shareholder may refer the matter to mediation as if it was a Dispute under clause 19.2.
- (c) If the Shareholders are unable to reach agreement under clause 17.5(a) or through mediation under clause 17.5(b) within three months, a majority of the Shareholders who have agreed to contribute to Northland Regional Council's Investment and Growth Reserve their proportion of the Total Amount expected under clause 17.2 may at any time within the next three months give written notice to all Shareholders and the Company under this clause and which shall take effect as if the Non Contributing Shareholder was an Exiting Shareholder who had given an Exit Notice under clause 11 and the remaining provisions of clause 11 shall apply accordingly.

The formal process does not happen automatically but requires a request to be made by any of the shareholders. Once initiated, clause 17.3 set out a timeframe for discussion and resolution. Second, clause 17.3 provides the possibility for the shareholder not meeting its obligations to be given an exit notice.

However, nothing within the Shareholders' Agreement precludes informal engagement to resolve the matter, i.e. the shareholders may engage in good faith discussions without initiating the formal process. This is the direction proposed by the WDC Mayor (refer to paragraph five of Attachment 2) and agreed to by the Joint Committee at its meeting on 26 September 2025.

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## Background/Tuhinga

In their Long Term Plan 2024-2034, WDC agreed to be a shareholder on Northland Inc and provide funding into the IGR for a two-year period only, i.e. 2024/25 and 2025/26. At its meeting on 29 April 2025, the Joint Committee agreed to send a letter to WDC requesting them to decide prior to the forthcoming local body elections on their ongoing shareholding of Northland Inc and funding into the IGR. This letter was sent on 5 May 2025.

In response to that letter, WDC agreed at their meeting on 24 July 2025 to remain a shareholder for a further year, i.e. until 30 June 2027, and to provide a funding commitment to the IGR fund for another (third) year being 2026/27. However, rather than provide funding at the level recommended by staff and as expected by the Northland Inc Limited Shareholders' Agreement, i.e. \$709K, WDC decided to commit to funding for 2026/27 a lower amount of \$587K, which is the same level of funding as they are providing in the current financial year 2025/26. The then WDC Mayor followed up their council decision with a letter to the Joint Committee indicating that WDC are open to the possibility of reviewing this position regarding 2026/27 funding when a more detailed benefit study is completed (**Attachment 2**).

At its meeting on 26 September 2025, the Joint Committee agreed to initiate good faith discussions with WDC outside clause 17.3 and use the outcome of the more details benefits study to resolve the matter (**Attachment 3**). While the lower than expected WDC contribution to the IGR for 2026/27 is disappointing, the Joint Committee recognised that the important issue is to secure a long term commitment from WDC in their LTP 2027-2037 to be a shareholder of Northland Inc and make a financial contribution to the IGR as expected in the Shareholder's Agreement.

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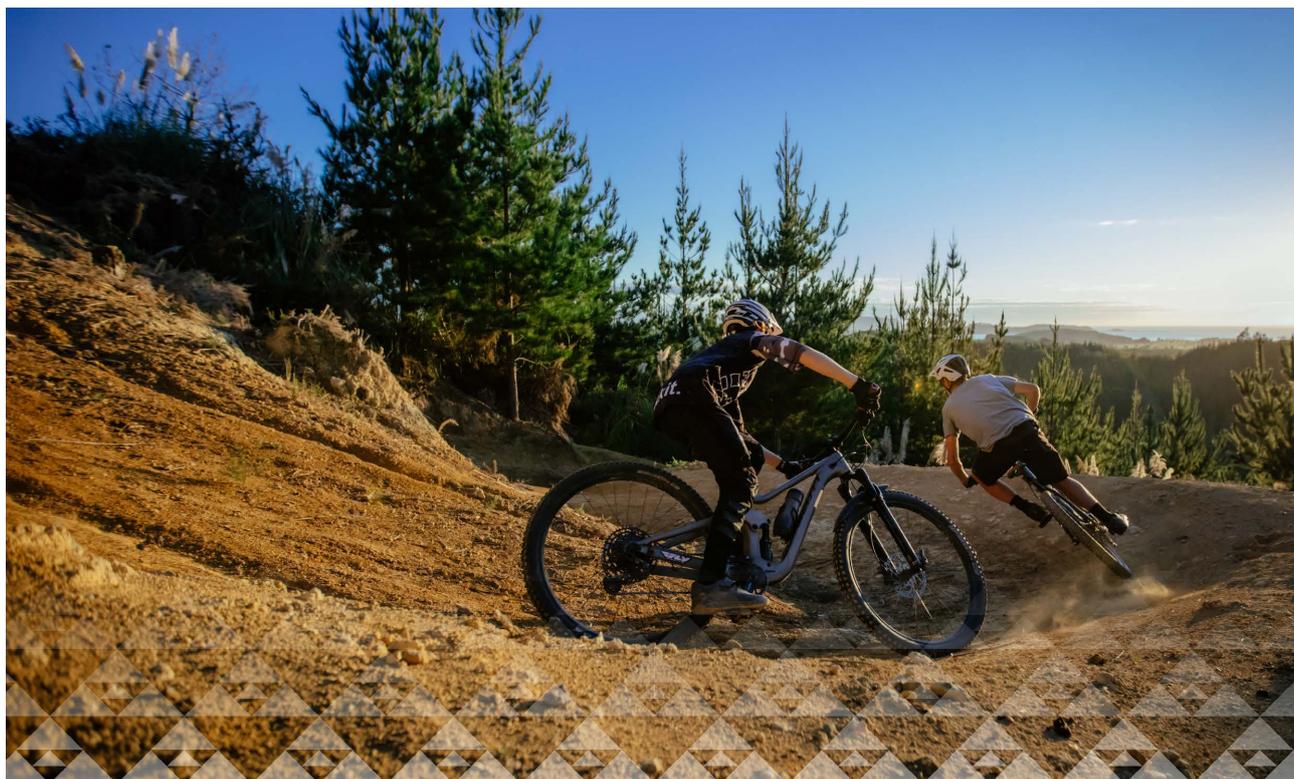
### Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Attachment 1: Northland Inc Impact Report - February 2026 [↓](#) 

Attachment 2: Letter from WDC to JREDC regarding shareholding & request to discuss funding [↓](#) 

Attachment 3: Letter to WDC re decision on shareholding and IGR funding contribution for 2026/27





# NorthlandInc

Growing Northland's Economy  
Kia tupu ai te ōhanga o Te Tai Tokerau

# Impact Report

*February 2026*

This report responds to a request from the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee (JREDC) seeking a clear picture of how the Investment and Growth Reserve, and consequently Northland Inc, have delivered outcomes for the region through coordinated investment, facilitation, and project support.

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# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Regional economic development is about improving the wellbeing and prosperity of Te Tai Tokerau through strategic policies, investments, and actions. Northland Inc plays a central role in enabling long-term economic development outcomes for Te Tai Tokerau by creating jobs, supporting innovation, developing skills, and building infrastructure - ultimately aiming to reduce inequality, promote sustainability, and help people and businesses respond to economic opportunities and challenges.

Northland Inc has achieved a 180% return on investment - Over a ten-year period, shareholder investment of \$16.5 million has allowed Northland Inc to generate \$46 million in total revenue, representing a return on investment of 180%.

Over the past decade, Northland Inc has demonstrated an ability to translate relatively modest public investment into substantial economic returns, private and third-party co-investment, and tangible outcomes for businesses, communities, and the regional economy through analysis of Annual Reporting, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and tracking of the use of the Investment and Growth Reserve (IGR) it can be seen that:

- Customer satisfaction with Northland Inc's services is very positive (including business development, Māori Economic Development);
- Businesses and other organisations co-invest funding, time and resources in business development, destination marketing and sector development initiatives which indicates very strongly that they are receiving value from those services;
- Tourism product and sector development projects have leveraged very significant amounts of funding from non-local government organisations;
- Estimates of the impact of tourism product and sector development projects supported through the IGR suggest they make a large contribution to jobs and economic value, and that some will generate broader social and community benefits.

The investment logic underpinning the IGR is clear and consistently applied Funding is targeted to reduce early-stage risk, source further investment, and unlock opportunities that deliver economic development

outcomes for Northland The intended results include the creation of new and sustainable jobs, increased investment and exports, new business opportunities, financial returns, and broader economic and social impact. The scale of leverage achieved indicates that this logic is working.



Project Development Funding – Over the lifetime of the IGR (2013-2026), 61 Projects have been supported with **\$1.82m invested from IGR and \$9.54m project value**. Most of these projects progressed beyond initial development and secured additional investment. The estimated value of subsequent investment attracted by these projects is **\$400.9 million**, highlighting the catalytic effect of early-stage funding and the role of Northland Inc in helping projects reach investment readiness.



Enabling Investment Funding - Over the lifetime of the IGR (2013-2026), 13 Projects, **\$8.6m invested → \$55.6m project value**. While comprehensive longitudinal data is limited, conservative estimates suggest these investments have contributed to the creation of approximately **1,657 new jobs** and generated more than **\$514.8 million in economic impact**. Enabling investments typically address structural, infrastructure, or system-level constraints, creating the conditions for sustained private investment and long-term regional benefit.



Business, Innovation and Growth activity (over a ten-year period) has engaged meaningfully with over 4,000+ businesses and facilitated **access to over \$7.9m funding**.



Destination management and marketing activity has generated an estimated **\$113 million** in equivalent advertising value over a five-year period, **trained over 700 travel agents** and promoted Northland to India, Australia, UK, Europe the USA over a two-year period. Strategic partnerships with Air NZ are delivering over 3.5million impressions per campaign and the Northland Regional Events Fund has facilitated **\$1.7 million** across 71 events and initiatives.

Taken all together, the evidence demonstrates that Northland Inc's activities are delivering positive, material outcomes for Te Tai Tokerau. This report presents a clear, well-structured summary of Northland Inc's impact over the period of the IGR and integrates both the activity and funding for project development and enabling investments through the IGR (including case studies) and the operational activity undertaken by Northland Inc.

Northland Inc consistently converts modest public funding into outsized regional impact. Public investment is being deployed strategically, leveraged effectively, and translated into real economic value, job creation, and improved regional resilience. This performance provides a strong foundation for continued investment and positions Northland Inc as a credible regional economic development agency.

## 2. WHAT IS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT?

This report is intended to provide evidence of the benefits generated for Te Tai Tokerau Northland from Council investment in economic development services through the Investment and Growth Reserve (IGR).

The report responds to a request from the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee (JREDC) seeking a clear picture of how the IGR and consequently Northland Inc have delivered outcomes for the region through coordinated investment, facilitation, and project support.

In order to understand this question, it is important to provide a foundational level of knowledge around what economic development is, how it is funded and delivered – essentially it is important to understand what good should look like, before being able to draw conclusions on the impacts and outcomes from Northland Inc.

It is equally important to understand the IGR both in terms of its history and its intrinsic linkage with Northland Inc. The IGR is an insightful intervention from Councils in order to lift the economic performance of Northland. The IGR is Councils' mechanism for supporting Northland Inc. Limited – a Council Controlled Organisation – that operates with a mission to make purposeful economic development impact that builds resilience and improves the prosperity, wellness, and equity of Te Tai Tokerau Northland. It is also the mechanism for investing in economic development projects, both in terms of project development funding and making impactful investments into projects.

It is important that the judgement of the delivery of economic development outcomes within the region is not solely focused on the IGR. The IGR is significant in terms of its ability to de-risk activities (project development) and make impactful investments (enabling investment), but the largest portion of funding annually is directed into the operations of Northland Inc via the Statement of Intent. Therefore, any assessment of the impact and outcomes of the IGR and or Northland Inc must be framed in this wider context – the IGR investments being one of several levers that Northland Inc has available to guide and shape the economy in Northland. And equally, the monetary investment in the IGR makes impactful investments and funds operational activity.

Economic development is about creating the conditions that allow people, businesses, and communities to thrive. For regions across Aotearoa New Zealand, this means more than just growing the economy - it is about improving the overall well-being and quality of life for everyone. Regional economic development focuses on lifting living standards by making sure people have fair access to opportunities, whether that is through jobs, training, infrastructure, or support for local businesses. It recognises that prosperity should be shared, and that economic progress must go hand-in-hand with social inclusion and environmental responsibility.

A New Zealand definition of economic development needs to be grounded in place, needs to encompass references to the combination of policies, investments

and actions that improve the ability of organisations and people in a community of interest to access resources more productively and effectively:

**“ Regional economic development is the process of improving a community’s well-being and prosperity through strategic policies, investments, and actions. It aims to raise the standard of living by ensuring fair access to resources, creating jobs, supporting innovation, developing skills, and building infrastructure. Economic development reduces inequality, promotes sustainability, and helps people and businesses respond to economic opportunities and challenges.”**

- Economic Development New Zealand, 2025

There is a general concern right across Northland and in Government about the elevated level of social investment in Northland and the limited resources being targeted towards improving Northland’s economy. There is also an acknowledgement of the complexity of the region – multiple development-actors leading out multiple strategies and the need to bring some coherence to this picture. These are the drivers behind the decision of Northland Regional Council (NRC) to establish the IGR in F/Y 2010-2011 – the goal being to reverse the cycle of under-investment and lead by example through investing directly in projects that deliver real benefits to current and future generations of Northlanders. The aim was to find new ways to bring investment into the region and create rewarding business and employment opportunities.

In establishing Northland Inc as a new Council-Controlled Organisation (CCO), and creating the Investment and Growth Reserve (IGR), NRC outlined its rationale for investing in economic development. Answering the question of why it is appropriate to apply rate payer resources (indirectly through reducing the ‘rates subsidy’) to economic development, it stated:

**“ Economic development is vital for generating the resources needed to address some of the pressing problems affecting Northland such as poor housing, health, and education. In times of economic recession there is a greater need to invest in economic development to give confidence to others so they will invest here to reduce socio-economic disparities and stimulate employment growth. The government’s funding for economic development has been limited severely by the need to divert funds to rebuild Christchurch. Therefore, there are very few sources of funding available to achieve a step change in the economy of Northland. Council has therefore established the Northland Regional Council Investment and Growth Reserve to provide an additional funding source for worthy projects.”**

(NRC 2011 Annual Plan)

A key driver behind the proposal was the Council’s desire to improve Northland’s economic performance and community well-being. This intervention logic has not changed.

The logic is clearly stated throughout the material associated with the IGR, in that investments from the fund provide an economic development return to Northland in the form of increased jobs, business opportunities, investment and exports. The outcomes thus being to:

- Generating ongoing net economic benefits to region
- Creating new jobs
- Increasing exports
- Being innovation based
- Supporting strong communities and environmental sustainability

Investment of the fund is significant in terms of leverage and economic impact.

Leverage in this context means using a small amount of IGR money to attract or unlock a larger pool of external funding, thereby increasing overall impact without bearing the full cost.

### 3. HOW SHOULD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BE ORGANISED AND REVIEWED?

New Zealand's economic development agencies (EDAs) play a vital role in regions. An EDA is a local organisation that seeks to promote economic development within a given geographic area. EDAs seek to identify economic development opportunities and support the implementation and delivery of these opportunities. In New Zealand, EDAs exist at both the regional and subregional level.

#### NATIONAL BEST PRACTICE

Generally speaking, EDAs are either:

- Independent stand-alone agencies, which are legal entities that are separate from local authorities. These include trusts and commercial entities.
- Council-controlled organisations, which are organisations that are majority-owned and financed by a local authority or local authorities.
- Local authorities providing the economic development and business support services themselves.

To help understand what they are – below are some examples of what they do:

- Being relatively unencumbered by other public-sector missions and mandates yet able to make transparent decisions about resource allocations in the public interest;
- Operating from a legal and/or fiscal status that provides independence, integrity, and accountability - an honest broker that can do what's right for the region;
- Partnering, collaborating, facilitating, leading from the front, and/or leading from behind.
- Able to plan, form, coalesce, catalyse, or organise development efforts with multiple partners;
- Share and take on risks and costs (public/ public, public/private partnerships, brokering deals and ED projects, project management) that include or insulate other agencies and organisation;
- A catalyst for projects/programmes operating in-between and with the public and private sectors and local stakeholders;

- Being business like, flexible, entrepreneurial, and responsive;
- Building/encouraging an environment for economic development;
- Promotional; outward-/investor-/visitor-/ market-facing;
- Leveraging local and inward investment for local projects.

Regional Economic Development are organisations that:

1. Focus on **long-term planning** which is **impactful, measurable, and outcomes** driven.
2. Provide clear articulation of **Return-on-Investment** for specific sectors, projects, and stakeholders.
3. Provide **regional alignment and collaboration**, creating **one voice** to speak for regional economic development with central government, and with other regional economic development organisations for inter-regional collaboration and investment.
4. **Improve confidence** from **Central Government**, increasing the access to funding and project investment.
5. Improve **business confidence** in the organisation, having a seat at the table, and clear understanding of how investment decisions are made, reinforcing, and supporting **additional private funding and investment**.

In 2012/13, NRC established Northland Inc Ltd, a Council-Controlled Organisation (CCO) formed through the merger of Enterprise Northland and Destination Northland, to act as the region's single delivery agency for economic development and destination management.

Under this model, operational funding from the IGR provides the stable base required for Northland Inc to maintain region-wide delivery, while additional revenue is leveraged from government and industry partners to expand impact and deliver projects at scale. As a CCO established under the Local Government Act 2002 and a limited liability company, Northland Inc Ltd operates at arm's length from the four shareholder Councils – Kaipara District Council, Whangarei District Council,

Far North District Council, Northland Regional Council - while remaining accountable to them through statutory performance and reporting obligations. This governance model enables Northland Inc to deliver regional economic development and destination management functions on behalf of the four Councils with clear accountability, transparency, and flexibility.

Delivering regional economic development through a CCO structure offers several advantages compared with running such activities internally within Councils. It provides the independence and flexibility necessary to engage directly with business, industry, Māori, and central government partners in a commercially responsive manner. This model allows for a more agile operating environment, better suited to the pace of investment and industry engagement, while maintaining public accountability through annual planning, Statements of Intent, and Council oversight.

The CCO structure also avoids duplication of effort across the four Councils, instead creating a single regional delivery agency responsible for economic development and regional tourism functions. Importantly though, the success of the model still relies on strong collaboration between Northland Inc and the Councils' own staff, as each Council continues to play an essential role in enabling economic development, through local planning, infrastructure investment, consenting processes, and community engagement that create the conditions for business growth and new investment. When Council functions and Northland Inc's regional programmes are well aligned, the region can move quickly and cohesively to attract and support investment. Strengthening collaboration and communication between Councils and Northland Inc will help the region realise the full benefits of its shared economic development model.

## MEASURING ANNUAL IMPACT

**“ Performance measurement is more complex and difficult in economic development than in many other fields. While economic developers play critical roles in the health of their communities' economies, the results of their efforts often are not immediate, or many appear disconnected from their efforts”**

(International Economic Development Council)

Key indicators of economic development include rising income levels, increased employment opportunities, improved education and healthcare systems, and enhanced infrastructure and public services.

Research into the Statement of Intent and Annual Reports of several economic development agencies within New Zealand results in a pattern of consistent Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

### 1. Core KPI clusters recur everywhere:

- Business support and capability (firms assisted, programme completions, satisfaction/Net Promotor Score).
- Investment and growth (leads, deals, dollars secured/leveraged).
- Visitor economy and events (visitor nights/spend, event attendance, media reach).
- Screen/creative economy (productions supported, spend/jobs).
- Regional promotion/brand (reach, engagement, sentiment).
- Organisational health (governance, finance, audit status).

### 2. Attribution approaches:

- **Direct vs. ecosystem indicators:** Most EDAs separate **direct** measures (e.g., Direct investment/Return on Investment from their interventions, deals facilitated) from **macro** indicators (e.g., Gross Domestic Product, employment) where attribution is shared. WellingtonNZ states this explicitly and adjusts measures for “levels of influence.” ChristchurchNZ similarly distinguishes audited KPIs/Level of Service from broader outcomes.
- **Independent assessment/audit:** Major event impacts and LOS/KPIs are often **independently assessed** (e.g., ChristchurchNZ) and audited via Council CCO processes.
- **Wellbeing frameworks:** Trust Tairāwhiti uses a **regional wellbeing framework** to connect project outputs to multi-dimensional outcomes—one of the clearest attribution models in NZ EDA practice.
- **Case studies and leverage ratios:** Many reports rely on **leverage (dollar co-funding attracted)** and **project case studies** for contribution narrative (e.g., Development West Coast, Venture Taranaki).

## MECHANISMS TO REVIEW PERFORMANCE

Quarterly reports, annual reports, and KPIs are essential tools for an EDA to track and demonstrate the impact of its initiatives and investments across its region. Together, these reporting tools enable the EDA to maintain accountability, demonstrate transparency, and communicate the tangible benefits of its work, while continuously improving the effectiveness and reach of its programmes to achieve long-term, sustainable outcomes for its region.

### QUARTERLY REPORTS / WORKSHOPS

Quarterly reports provide a regular, detailed snapshot of economic, business, and community developments, allowing the organisation to monitor trends, respond to emerging challenges, and adjust programmes in real time. They capture the immediate effects of projects such as business growth, tourism performance, or recovery efforts following events like Cyclone Gabrielle, ensuring that progress is measured against planned objectives and regional priorities. By systematically reviewing these updates, the EDA can make evidence-based decisions that optimise resource allocation and strengthen support for local businesses, iwi, and communities.

Quarterly reports, when timed with a workshop with a suitable shareholder representative group provide an opportunity to get into the detail of delivery and activity over the preceding three months. Arguably this is too frequent for a CCO, but given the shareholders direct investment and the significance of the activity the EDA delivers it has historically proven to be an effective process and should be maintained.

### ANNUAL REPORTS / SNAPSHOTS

Annual Reports complement this by providing a holistic overview of the EDA'S performance over a longer period, integrating financial results, programme outcomes, and strategic achievements. They allow stakeholders - including government, investors, iwi partners, and the community - to assess the organisation's contribution to regional economic development, employment, and investment attraction.

### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), meanwhile, establish clear, measurable benchmarks against which the organisation's success can be evaluated, from economic growth and job creation to individual

business support, Māori business engagement, and visitor economy performance.

KPIs are customisable business metrics utilised to visualise status and trends in an organisation. Once a business or, in this case, an EDA, defines its mission or objectives, KPIs can be employed to measure progress toward those objectives. KPIs are advantageous in that they provide a clear description of organisational goals and distil vast quantities of data down to a single value that can be utilised to continuously monitor organisation performance and its progress toward its benchmarks. However, KPIs can only be helpful in organisation management if they reflect key success factors and can be measured consistently with accuracy.

Sharing performance information aligns people around a common set of goals and focuses everyone's attention on how to improve the organisation's performance. Therefore, measuring performance and reevaluating strategies is critical for the ongoing success of an organisation. It is equally important to distinguish between inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes.

### INDEPENDENT REVIEW (S17A)

Section 17A requires Councils to periodically review how they deliver services to ensure they are providing them in the most efficient, effective, and financially sustainable way. These reviews must assess the costs, benefits, and appropriateness of different service delivery options, including things like in-house delivery, shared services, outsourcing, or partnerships with other Councils or organisations. A review is required at least every six years, or earlier if there is a meaningful change in legislation, service levels, or contracts. The intent is to encourage Councils to make evidence-based decisions about how services are delivered, improve value for money, and consider alternatives to the status quo.

## 4. HOW DOES NORTHLAND INC OPERATE IN TE TAI TOKERAU

### NORTHLAND INC STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Statement of Intent is the guiding governance tool and terms of reference for Northland Inc and defines the Vision, Mission, Objectives, Activities and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) as agreed by the Shareholders. It outlines the Directors' accountabilities to the Shareholders for the performance of the business.

#### Northland Inc has four priority areas (Pou):

- Investment and Infrastructure;
- the Primary Sector,
- Tourism and Destination Management,
- Innovation and Enterprise.

Note, the Innovation and Enterprise Pou has previously been referred to as Business Innovation and Growth and Māori Economic Development has been a Pou in previous iterations.

#### There are six enablers:

- Advocacy and Brand,
- Māori Economic Development,
- Environmental Sustainability,
- Partnerships,
- Organisational Culture and Capability and
- Workforce and Education (new in 2024 / 2025)

These enablers are part of Northland Inc's 'business as usual' (BAU) and supports their activities over a range of sectors and initiatives.

Note, the process for assessment of Northland Inc's performance via the Annual Report, KPI reporting and quarterly reporting have been covered in the previous chapter. However, it is worthwhile noting that Northland Inc changed its approach to its Annual Report part way through the ten year period and has separated programme / project outcome reporting from its KPI and financial information within the annual report (for ease of audit reporting) – but, this makes it rather difficult for an external stakeholder to find a simple summary of Northland Inc's Impact and Outcomes.

Equally, it has been a significant challenge to show clear impact over time for several of the key performance indicators as they have been changed a

number of times over the ten-year period. There is real value in a consistent long-term set of KPIs.

### INVESTMENT & GROWTH RESERVE

The objective of the Investment and Growth Reserve (IGR) is to provide a fund that enables shareholder councils to make strategic investments that lift the long-term growth of the Northland economy that support strong communities and environmental sustainability. The logic is clearly stated throughout the material associated with the IGR, in that investments from the fund provide an economic development return to Northland in the form of increased jobs, business opportunities, investment and exports. The outcomes thus being to:

- Generating ongoing net economic benefits to region
- Creating new jobs
- Increasing exports
- Being innovation based

Supporting strong communities and environmental sustainability Investment of the fund is significant in terms of leverage and economic impact.

To date, the IGR funding has been leveraged by a factor of five in terms of direct project costs, with the co-funding being a mixture of central government, charitable organisations, and private sector investment. The economic impact of the investments (where known) is leveraging the investment by a factor of ten.

#### Assumptions:

- The IGR can be invested in viable business/economic development opportunities
- Investments will lead to increased exports and/or regional GDP
- Northland Inc has the expertise and advice available to it to prepare robust investment proposals
- An acceptable Return on Investment is achieved for the shareholder
- Investments are designed to be short to medium term, catalytic and able to be recycled back to the fund
- Funds being made available to the IGR from NRC assets continue as forecast

### **VALUE PROPOSITION: PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FUNDING**

The Project Development Funding (PDF) - formerly called Feasibility and Business Case funding - has been a valuable tool. The PDF is leveraged very well and clears the way for developing investable propositions. The PDF also saves the region costly investments in less desirable projects by revealing the true nature of proposals before they proceed. The belief is that that the PDF will support early-stage concept to feasibility work which is especially needed for Māori economic development moving forward.

In these respects, the IGR is not the only possible investment pathway after PDF work and therefore it has been appropriate that the PDF is not tied to the amount available in the IGR, even though the IGR has a very strong leverage and catalytic effect.

### **VALUE PROPOSITION: ENABLING INVESTMENT**

Enabling investments (EI) - formerly called Impact Investments - are for projects that have the potential to lift the economic performance of Northland, but the projects do not traditional debt or equity funding criteria. Estimates of the impact of tourism product and sector development projects supported through the EI funding suggest that these will make a large contribution to jobs and economic value.

Projects applying for EI funding traditionally focus heavily on wider economic development benefits and rationale for public intervention as they do not have the ability to fund debt or provide shareholder returns. Creation of a cycleway is clear example of this - no direct income (to fund debt) but large flow on benefits to tourism, accommodation, and service sector.

The intention of debt funding is to provide loan funding or directly invested funds for capital expenditure on new ventures or expanding existing businesses, and operating expenditure. The regional community benefits from improved economic activity, employment, and income opportunities. Individuals and individual businesses will benefit directly from specific initiatives.

Whilst no equity deals have been considered to date. This is not considered to be a reason in itself to remove this category of funding. Equity deals are more likely to become available as the investments in the pipeline mature in terms of their investment requirements. It is noted that good progress was being made in preparing debt and equity deals suitable for the shareholding just prior to the Provincial Growth Fund being established and this fund swept up all the available projects in the

region and supported them - which is a positive outcome for the region.

The IGR has sufficient flexibility to consider grants, loans, direct investments or equity investments and is broad enough to take into account the appropriate rate of return, levels of risk, and revenue flows, in order to advance economic development, communities, and the environment.

In our view this is a real strength as it provides a flexible tool kit that can be tailored to the opportunities as they present themselves. Equally it allows the region to engage in conversations with significant opportunities that would not otherwise be available if the region were not able to be an investor.

### **Process for Assessment by Investment Team at Northland Inc**

Northland Inc has developed a process for assessing projects for investment through the Investment and Growth Reserve. This is designed to ensure:

- The investment has value and importance;
- The appropriate form of investment is made, i.e. a loan, direct investment, or equity investment;
- The project will be properly managed;
- The project partner has the capability to deliver the benefits;
- Public money is not being exposed to risk when private money is available for investment in the project;
- Decision makers have the information they need to decide between the relative merits of alternative proposals; and
- Projects with inter-dependencies are undertaken in the optimum sequence.
- A 'public good' return on investment can be achieved.

The process is fundamentally underpinned by requiring a business case assessment of potential projects. The business case process is designed to be:

- Adaptable - tailored to the size and risk of the proposal;
- Consistent - the same basic business issues are addressed by every project;
- Business oriented - concerned with the business capabilities and impact, rather than having a technical focus;
- Comprehensive - includes all factors relevant to the project;

- Understandable – the contents are clearly relevant, logical and, although demanding, are simple to complete and evaluate;
- Measurable – key aspects can be quantified and qualified so their achievement can be assessed;
- Transparent – key elements can be justified openly amongst parties;
- Accountable – accountabilities and commitments for the delivery of benefits and management of costs are clear

Alongside this, Northland Inc has reviewed how a project will be processed through the organisation and developed a consistent methodology. The process steps are clearly defined within the following evaluation process flowchart (reference Appendix B ). This flowchart tracks projects from their initial introduction to Northland Inc right through to the final yes or no decision. There are several key steps within this process, and timeframes have been included where it is Northland Inc's responsibility to progress matters. Two key templates have been developed to support this process. This first is an initial project assessment template and the second is the more detailed investment proposal template. Additionally, Northland Inc has a template for assessment of feasibility and business case projects that are decided by the Northland Inc Board. Further information including the templates is included as Appendix B.

## INDEPENDENT REVIEW (S17A)

In 2017 the four Northland Councils undertook a joint review of their economic development activities, including tourism and destination marketing services. This review, prepared by Martin Jenkins, was done to ensure compliance with the requirements of section 17a of the Local Government Act 2002. A section 17a review must consider three elements: how a service is governed; how it is funded; and how it is delivered. The review involved documentation appraisal, interviews with a wide range of parties in the public and private sector, and analysis of findings, including comparison with economic development activities undertaken by Councils elsewhere in New Zealand.

The review found that a large range of economic development activities are being delivered in Northland, are reaching a large range of organisations, are consistent with identified opportunities and needs facing the region and supported by evidence. There were several opportunities for improvement identified, including the need for greater project prioritisation, improved governance of Northland Inc. and refinements to the operation of the IGR.

It is important to note that this report was scoped as a full review of Councils' delivery of economic development activities and whilst the report included assessment of Councils expenditure *it did not assess Councils performance* – choosing to only focus the performance assessment on Northland Inc – hence a somewhat skewed result is presented in terms of value for money / overall impact that Northland Inc can deliver. If such a report were to be done again it would be important to differentiate between services that Northland Inc delivers and services that Councils themselves deliver – and the associated costs of each of those.

## 5. FUNDING FROM IGR

Northland Inc is allocated an annual baseline level of operational funding by its shareholder councils from the IGR which supports the operational activities of the organisation. Project-based funding is obtained through other public and private agencies, with central government being the next largest funder of Northland Inc.

The IGR was created by NRC in 2011/2012, and it began receiving a share of the Council's investment income, with the share increasing each year. *The original forecast had the contribution increasing to \$7M over a seven-year period* however that was reduced significantly in the next Long-Term Plan (LTP) and NRC has made further refinements in the way NRC has provided the reserve income.

Additionally, post the Section 17a review, each of the district Councils has taken an ownership role in Northland Inc (Kaipara District Council and Far North District Council first and subsequently Whangarei District Council). Each of the Council's funding also goes into the IGR.

### FUNDING PROVIDED

Over the **13-year period** (2011/12 to 2024/25) a total of \$28 million in revenue has been received into the IGR.

- \$300,00 has come from Kaipara District Council
- \$832,000 has come from Far North District Council
- \$475,000 has come from Whangarei District Council
- \$25.3 million has come from Northland Regional Council
- \$1.1 million in other revenue (interest, loan payments etc)

In terms of the NRC contribution, this has been made up of:

- \$16.8 million (72%) has come from NRC investment income and \$5.4 million (16%) from other NRC reserves.
- In the three years since it began in 2021/22, \$3.1 million of revenue has been raised through the NRC Regional Economic Development Rate. This will increase over time so that by 2026/27, the sixth year of NRC 2021-2031 Long Term Plan (LTP), 70% of the NRC contribution will be coming from the Rate.

An average of \$2.1 million has been received annually into the IGR over the 13-year period. This is forecast to continue to increase over time based on the LTP funding commitments by the four shareholder Councils.

### FUNDING ALLOCATION

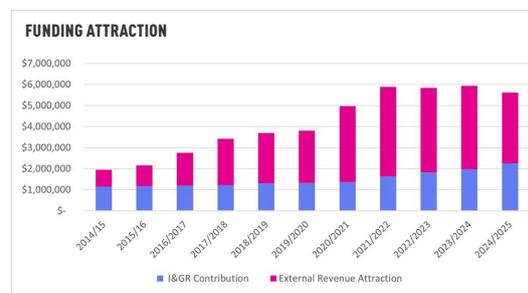
Over the 13 years from 2011/12 to 2022/23, a total of \$27.6 million has been allocated from the IGR across the three available categories:

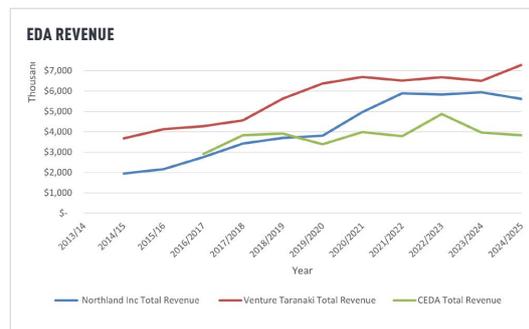
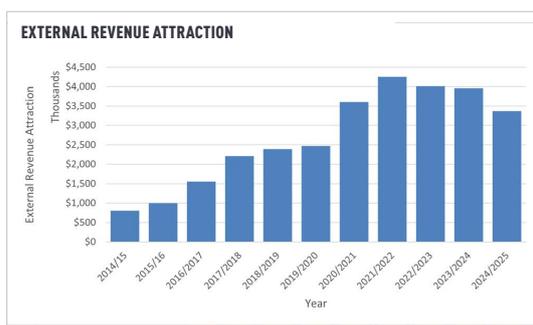
- Project Development funding has been provided with a total investment of \$1,815,633 (7%) million
- Enabling Investments into projects with a total investment of \$8,603,494. (31%)
- Northland Inc operational expenditure has been supported with a total investment of \$17.1 million (62%)

These allocations from the IGR are made by the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee through agreeing to Northland Inc's annual Statement of Intent which contains the operational budget and Project Development Budget and through individual decisions on enabling investments. Further details on the Project Development and Enabling Investment funding is provided within Section 6 below.

In terms of the Operational funding, this increased in 2021/22 and 2022/23 as a result on the move to joint and equal ownership by the three Councils. The increase in funding was allocated to ensure Northland Inc increased the level and visibility of service provided to the two districts.

Northland Inc has sought external funding alongside the funding from its shareholder for programmes such as the regional business partnership and for delivery of projects such as Extension 350. **Over the last ten-year period, shareholder investment of \$16.5 million has generated \$46 million total return, representing a return on investment of 180 percent.**





To provide some context, a comparison has been done with two other EDAs of comparable size, context, and economies – Venture Taranaki and Central Economic Development Agency, Manawatu (CEDA). Venture Taranaki has approximately 25 FTE and one shareholding Council, and CEDA has approximately 19 FTE two shareholding Councils. The graph below shows their total revenue (core Council provided and leveraged external funding).

Venture Taranaki achieves a return on investment for their shareholder funds of 92% and CEDA achieves a return on investment for their shareholder funds of 51%.

## 6. OPERATIONAL DELIVERY

### INTRODUCTION

Regularly reviewing KPIs and reporting on the use of IGR funding is not sufficient to show the impact and outcomes that Northland Inc has provided over the lifespan of the IGR. To do this you also need to analyse the operational performance alongside the use the Project Development Fund and Enabling Investment categories within the IGR. This section is grouped in terms of the operational structure of Northland Inc and starts with the Investment and Infrastructure function, which includes the administration of the Project Development and Enabling Investment funds.

Note: it has been particularly difficult to analyse performance over time as the KPIs have changed regularly – whilst it is understandable to want specific KPI related to the immediate issues of the day, there is also some real value in a consistent set of long term KPIs that no do change. Equally, the style and level of information included within the Annual Report has changed significantly over the ten period.

It is also noted that many of the KPIs have additional data fields that are not reported - typically breakdowns by sector or District Council boundary and the regional outcomes (the macro trends of the economy) have not been included in recent years'

Annual Reports or Annual Snapshots. This information would be particularly useful to include, particularly when looking at long term trends in the economy as economic development activity by Northland Inc is typically a long-term process.

In two key areas it has been difficult to quantify the impact Northland Inc has had through its activities. The first is the support for projects/opportunities looking to raise investment through other sources than the IGR – letters of support, peer review of funding applications and introductions to key contacts are all very important activities that Northland Inc undertakes and do often result in significant funding coming into the region but are not captured by Northland Inc's formal reporting mechanisms.

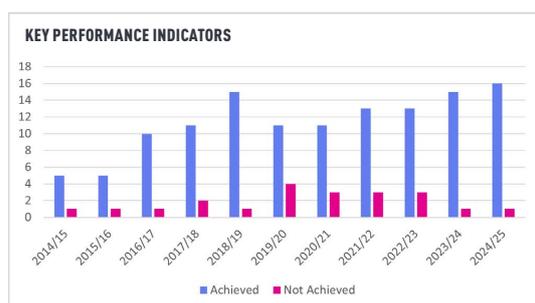
The second is the administration and promotion of funding mechanisms (e.g. Regional Events Fund and other funds, such as that from Transpower) - Northland Inc has facilitated significant funding into the region but has not been able to do any post project evaluation to track how that money has been used or what economic impact the events funded have achieved.

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

KPIs establish clear, measurable benchmarks as one tool against which the organisation's success can be evaluated. For Northland Inc, shareholders have emphasised the need to differentiate between the outcomes and outputs. To assess whether Northland Inc's outputs are contributing to the achievement of desired outcomes, we need to measure the impact of the organisation's interventions.

Northland Inc has created a strong KPI framework. The organisation maintains a well-sized framework. The performance measures are specific, measurable, and relevant, characteristics of high-quality performance measures. Overall Northland Inc has a strong track record of exceeding its KPIs as can be seen in the graph below.

However, the KPIs are currently being tweaked every year which makes long term trend monitoring and analysis difficult. Over the longer term, it would be much easier if KPIs were the same over a 7-10 year period – especially as this would align with the nature of economic development projects and initiatives, in that they take 7-10 years to come to fruition.



## INVESTMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

### INTRODUCTION

The Northland Inc Investment and Infrastructure team is responsible for the selection of appropriate projects to support through the IGR funding tools. The team is required to ensure decision makers understand the risks involved and the detail of the projects and recommend those projects for funding through the IGR. The team has developed comprehensive processes for assessing projects; when and how to involve the board, and a detailed business case assessment process. Northland Inc governance and management have confidence in this process.

Debt deals have been challenging in terms of the security/risk profile required by the Shareholders, nonetheless, in our view there is a clear economic development rationale for supporting projects with debt funding. The obstacle seems to have been, timeliness, appetite for calculated risk, and investment expertise/capacity supporting decision-making.

Equity deals have not been forthcoming and the rationale (regional benefit) for taking an equity stake in a company compared to a debt deal has not been obvious to date. Shareholder equity investments, however, could well provide financial and public good returns in strategic infrastructure investments that support economic development objectives.

Impact investments (grant funding), by comparison, have been strongly supported. Potentially due to the projects having a natural focus on the wider regional economic development benefits and not requiring as complex due diligence. The challenge is that equity or debt deals can provide the potential for a return and re-investment into the IGR which has been a desire of the shareholder but grant funding (which does not provide a return to the IGR) has been supported to date.

The success to date with investment of the fund is significant in terms of leverage and economic impact. In terms of developing a diversified portfolio of investments that make a return to the fund (debt and equity), more time is needed to achieve these, and further discussion needs to be had in increasing timeliness, risk appetite, and investment capability.

Northland Inc has developed a process for assessing projects for investment through the IGR. This is designed to ensure:

- The investment has value and importance;
- The appropriate form of investment is made, i.e. a loan, direct investment, or equity investment;
- The project will be properly managed;
- The project partner has the capability to deliver the benefits;
- Public money is not being exposed to risk when private money is available for investment in the project;
- Decision makers have the information they need to decide between the relative merits of alternative proposals;
- Projects with inter-dependencies are undertaken in the optimum sequence; and
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The process is fundamentally underpinned by requiring a business case assessment of potential projects. The business case process is designed to be: The business case process is designed to be:

- Adaptable – tailored to the size and risk of the proposal;
- Consistent – the same basic business issues are addressed by every project;
- Business oriented – concerned with the business capabilities and impact, rather than having a technical focus;
- Comprehensive – includes all factors relevant to the project;
- Understandable – the contents are clearly relevant, logical and, although demanding, are simple to complete and evaluate;
- Measurable – key aspects can be quantified and qualified so their achievement can be assessed;
- Transparent – key elements can be justified openly amongst parties;
- Accountable – accountabilities and commitments for the delivery of benefits and management of costs are clear.

The process steps are clearly defined within an evaluation process flowchart (see Appendix B). This flowchart tracks projects from their initial introduction to Northland Inc right through to the final yes or no decision. There are several key steps within this process, and timeframes have been included where it is Northland Inc’s responsibility to progress matters. Two key templates have been developed to support this process. This first is an initial project assessment template and the second is the more detailed investment proposal template.

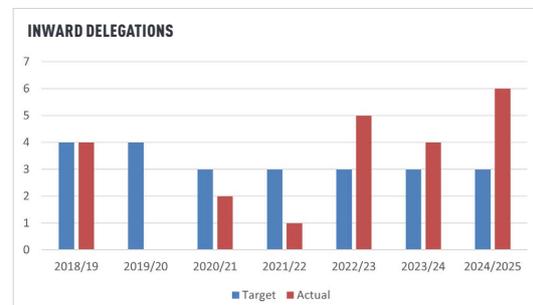
### GENERAL ACTIVITY

The Investment and Infrastructure function played a central role in developing the physical, commercial, and enabling foundations of Taitokerau Northland’s economy. The team provided the analytical, feasibility, and project development capability required to progress major regional initiatives from concept to implementation. Much of this work enabled Councils, iwi, industry, and private sector investors to secure external funding, reduce risk, and advance projects that contribute to long-term regional resilience, productivity, and employment growth.

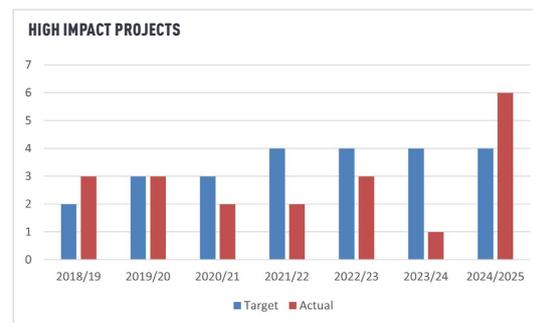
In the early years, the focus was on building a pipeline of evidence-based proposals across transport, digital connectivity, marine infrastructure, water systems, and

sector development. Feasibility studies and early investment assessments supported the region in articulating its needs and opportunities in a structured and defensible way. This included analysis of manufacturing capability, marine servicing infrastructure, freight and logistics challenges, industrial land availability, aquaculture potential, forestry processing opportunities, and the region’s strategic infrastructure gaps.

KPIs for this area have focused on the number of inward delegations as proxy for how strong the pipeline of investment projects is and the number of high impact projects being supported. Inward delegations were difficult to achieve during the early days of Provincial Growth Fund (PGF), and was impacted by the pandemic, but has picked up again post these events as per the graph below:



The number of high impact projects has similarly been affected by both PGF and the impacts of the pandemic, but would appear to be on the rebound as per graph below:



Significant progress was made in digital connectivity planning, including preparatory work that contributed to the establishment of the **Hawaiki Cable landing**, alongside initial stages of digital enablement initiatives that strengthened the capacity of communities and businesses to participate in the modern economy. This foundational work improved reliability, enabled high-speed connectivity, and positioned the region for technological adoption in both business and education.

Support for **NIWA's Kingfish Production** facility at Ruakākā signalled a step-change in Northland's aquaculture capability, combining scientific expertise with commercial ambition.

Tourism and culture-based investments also matured. Projects such as **Manea – Footprints of Kupe** in Hokianga and the **Hundertwasser Art Centre** in Whangārei, represented a new generation of arts culture and heritage focused assets. The team provided rigorous commercial structuring, governance support, and investment attraction activities that helped secure matched funding and unlock multi-year delivery pathways.

The introduction of the PGF from 2017 onwards created a step-change in the scale and volume of investment-readiness activity. Northland Inc prepared a substantial portfolio of proposals aligned with regional priorities, enabling the region to secure funding for a wide range of initiatives. These included water storage (such as Matawii and Te Tai Tokerau Water Trust studies), tourism infrastructure, transport resilience work, construction readiness, skills development, primary sector innovation, and business growth projects. This work ensured that projects had well-researched business cases, robust data, and clear pathways to delivery, providing confidence to central government to invest.

One of the more significant multi-year initiatives supported during this period was the development of the **Ngāwhā Innovation and Enterprise Park**. The Investment and Infrastructure team contributed to early feasibility work, coordinated elements of the investment-readiness process, and worked with partners to progress funding applications and project planning. The team's role included supporting commercial structuring discussions, helping shape documentation required for Crown and Council investment processes, and maintaining collaboration with key development partners.

These contributions helped the project move from initial concept toward staged development and delivery. The opening of the **Mahinga Innovation Centre** in 2023 marked a major milestone within the wider Park. The Centre provides co-working space, meeting rooms, digital conferencing infrastructure, and laboratory facilities used by education providers, natural products companies, business support programmes, and regional organisations. Its establishment reflects a multi-agency effort in which Northland Inc's investment and feasibility support formed one component of a broader regional partnership.

Throughout the decade, the Investment and Infrastructure team also contributed to land-use

diversification projects, including horticulture trials, primary sector feasibility work, and strategic assessments related to natural products and crop diversification. These activities were grounded in economic, climatic, and soil-based research, and enabled iwi, landowners, and investors to make informed decisions about potential commercial viability.

Following Cyclone Gabrielle and its widespread regional impacts, the Investment and Infrastructure team commissioned an **Economic Impact Assessment (EIA) on the closure of SH1 Brynderwyn Hills**. This analysis quantified a \$112.8 million economic impact from 58 days of closure, highlighting the interdependence between transport connectivity and regional economic performance. The findings informed multi-agency discussions and contributed to structured engagement with Waka Kotahi on closure timing, mitigations, and future resilience planning.

Across the decade, the team's work showed a clear strategic leadership function. It connected regional priorities to national programmes, brokered relationships across iwi, government, and private investors, and ensured that Te Tai Tokerau was positioned for opportunities that required readiness, flexibility, and credibility.

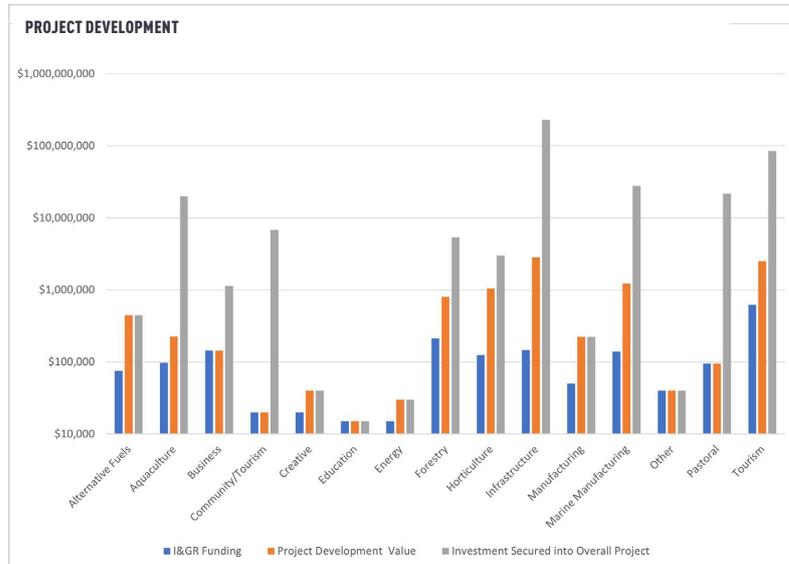
The preparation of investment-grade proposals; feasibility work that underpinned successful regional funding allocations; infrastructure planning aligned with strategic priorities; enabling of high-value precinct development; evidence-informed advocacy for infrastructure resilience; and support for sector diversification. These outputs provided the region with a stronger economic foundation, improved decision-making, and the ability to progress major projects that would otherwise have remained conceptual.

The cumulative investment attracted through these efforts - exceeding hundreds of millions of dollars - demonstrates the value of a regional organisation committed to building long-term economic foundations.

#### PROJECT DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

Over the thirteen-year period a total of 61 projects have been supported with a total investment of \$1,815,633 million allocated by Northland Inc through the Project Development funding. The total value of the supported projects is \$9,641,046. This is a direct leverage of 1:4. Many of those projects continued and secured investment and the value of that investment is \$400,900,513.

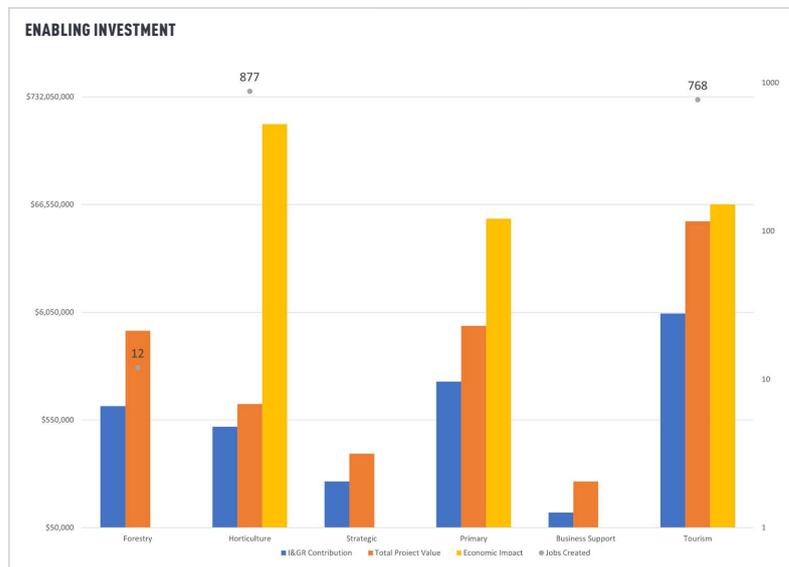
The graph below shows the funding allocations grouped by sector:



A detailed breakdown of the allocation of project development funding is included in Table in Appendix C.

### ENABLING INVESTMENT ACTIVITY

Over the 13-year period, a total of 13 Enabling Investment projects have been supported with a total investment from the IGR of \$8,603,494. The total capital value of the projects supported in \$55,562,746. This means the **Enabling Investment has had a direct leverage of 1:65** These enabling investment projects have very conservatively (limited accurate data is available) **created 1,657 new jobs and have created an economic impact of over \$514,760,000.**



Appendix D provides information on the 13 projects to which the Enabling Investment funding has been allocated. Note that two projects – Extended Regional Promotions and Water storage and use – received two and three allocations, respectively.

## SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES AND NORTHLAND INC INVOLVEMENT

### MANEA FOOTPRINTS OF KUPE

Manea Footprints of Kupe offers a unique 75-minute multisensory cultural experience that brings Kupe's journey and Te Ao Māori to life through guided storytelling, art, taonga, film, performance, and digital interaction. Since opening in December 2020, Manea has become a cornerstone cultural attraction for Hokianga and the wider northern west coast. Northland Inc played a critical enabling role in establishing the project, providing investment support. IGR Business Case funding of \$40,000 which led to an early investment through the Enabling Investment fund – a contribution of \$500,000 which helped leverage the full investment of \$9M. Northland Inc also provided ongoing trade, capability, and tourism-industry assistance. Without this involvement, the project would not have progressed to operation.

The early years were significantly disrupted by COVID-19, limited marketing resources, and the loss of international visitors. More recently, domestic economic uncertainty has also constrained demand. Nevertheless, recovery is underway: domestic visitation is strengthening, international tourism in Northland has returned to around 80% of pre-2019 levels, and forward bookings for the coming summer are positive. Manea has broadened its markets, including education, corporate, and team-building programmes- performing strongly with some government agencies - although funding access is now more challenging under new settings.

Collaboration has been essential. Manea works with Ngā Waiariki Ngāwhā Springs, Kawiti Glow Worm Caves and Te Ahurea in collective marketing, improving visibility for the west coast and supporting its achievement of trade-ready status. These partnerships, alongside Northland Inc's strategic support, have strengthened capability, leadership confidence, and organisational resilience.

Manea generates direct employment (4 FTE, 6 part-time roles including students, and seasonal extensions) and contributes meaningfully to local economic activity. Its presence helps extend visitor stays, stimulates



spending, and has encouraged new tourism ventures and accommodation providers to establish nearby including influencing the redevelopment of the major hotel now known as The Sands.

The venue is also an important community asset, providing a neutral gathering place for events, education programmes, cultural storytelling, and distribution of local goods. Environmental impacts are minimal, supporting like-minded operators and reinforcing strong cultural identity for the region.

Looking ahead, Manea is pursuing growth opportunities: expanding waka-based cultural experiences with a newly launched waka (April 2025), exploring a carving school partnership with Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, and seeking capital to build a Waka Whare. Key challenges include limited financial capacity, rising operating and insurance costs, and upcoming maintenance needs for the theatre. Even so, with continued collaboration and a strengthening tourism outlook, Manea is well positioned to build on the foundations enabled through Northland Inc's early and ongoing support.

## SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES AND NORTHLAND INC INVOLVEMENT

### HUNDERTWASSER ART CENTRE WITH WAIRAU MĀORI ART GALLERY

The Hundertwasser Art Centre (HAC) with Wairau Māori Art Gallery is a nationally significant cultural landmark celebrating the visionary work of Friedensreich Hundertwasser alongside contemporary Māori artists. True to Hundertwasser's philosophy, the building embodies creativity in harmony with nature through organic design, spontaneous vegetation, and an afforested roof. The project's completion in 2021 marked the culmination of 30 years of community effort, drawing on the skill of local artisans, engineers, craftspeople, architects, and an extensive volunteer movement.

Northland Inc played an essential enabling role, facilitating \$1.5M in IGR Enabling Investment funding toward the \$33M project - support that was pivotal in meeting tight fundraising timelines and giving Central Government confidence to commit Provincial Growth Fund investment. This support helped accelerate construction and secure the final pathway to delivery.

The HAC has expanded Whangārei's cultural and tourism offering, smoothing Northland's seasonal visitor curve and acting as a catalyst for broader Town Basin regeneration, including renewed interest in 4-star hotel development. Although current operations run at a deficit (FY25: -\$1.42M; FY24: -\$1.33M), revenue from admissions, retail, Whangārei District Council grants, and central government support continue to underpin operations while the centre grows its market presence. FY25 visitor numbers reached 34,387 despite significant disruptions - COVID-19, reduced international arrivals, and SH1 Brynderwyn closures. Visitor data shows strong engagement: 31% international, 34% Auckland, 16% Northland, 19% other NZ regions.

Employment outcomes are substantial, with 25 roles (12 FTE) at HAC, 1.5 FTE at the Wairau Māori Art Gallery, and additional jobs through the Aqua Restaurant and supporting services. The art centre drives wider economic benefits: it attracts cruise ships (with direct visitor spend estimated at \$420,600 in 23/24 and \$976,400 projected for 24/25), increases demand for accommodation, and boosts foot traffic for Town Basin businesses.



Community and cultural benefits are deep and sustained. A strong partnership with Te Parawhau guides cultural protocols and ensures appropriate recognition and resourcing. The education programme has engaged 9,860 students to date (2,080 in FY24/25), and more than 2,500 people participated in public workshops on art, architecture, and ecology. The centre also strengthens the local creative sector by providing exhibitions, workshops, and professional development opportunities. The Wairau Māori Art Gallery delivers a dedicated national platform for Māori fine art, complementing other regional cultural assets.

Environmentally, the HAC advances Hundertwasser's sustainability ethos and serves as a venue for conservation and climate-focused events. Despite challenges in achieving early visitor projections due to global and regional disruptions, the centre continues to demonstrate its value as a cultural anchor, tourism attractor, and catalyst for economic development—made possible through significant community effort and Northland Inc's critical investment facilitation.

**“ Northland Inc's leadership in the tourism space is essential, not only for marketing Northland as a region but also to promote Whangārei as a tourism destination in its own right. The Northland Inc team have included us in a vast range of campaigns and famils which have led to an increase in visitor numbers.”**

- Dr Joost de Bruin, Director, Hundertwasser Art Centre

## SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES AND NORTHLAND INC INVOLVEMENT

### WAITANGI MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK

Waitangi Mountain Bike Park (WMBP) is a nationally recognised outdoor recreation asset that strengthens Northland's reputation as a year-round adventure tourism destination while delivering economic, health, and community benefits. Since opening in October 2016, the park has recorded more than 167,000 rides and benefited from over 30,000 volunteer hours, reflecting strong community ownership and sustained demand.

The park was developed to attract visitors, improve health outcomes, and celebrate cultural and environmental values. Unlike many comparable facilities, WMBP operates year-round due to consistent maintenance, supporting off-peak visitation and helping smooth seasonal tourism patterns in the Bay of Islands.

Funding of \$400,000 through the IGR Enabling Investment programme was one of the first major commitments to the project and played a critical catalytic role. Early IGR support enabled construction to proceed and provided confidence for other funders resulting in total funding of \$1.6M. The project could not have been delivered without the early investment support from Northland Inc.

WMBP operates on an accessible, donation-based model (recommended \$50 annual or \$10 daily), ensuring broad community participation. This revenue does not fully cover operating costs, with the park running at an annual deficit of approximately \$15,000, covered by Focus Paihia in recognition of the wider benefits delivered.

Economic impacts are significant. An independent assessment estimates WMBP has generated approximately \$13.5M in additional visitor spending since opening (around \$1.5M per year). Adjacent



businesses at the park entrance - Paihia Mountain Bikes and Pikiniki Café - generate a combined annual turnover of approximately \$1.2M. Employment outcomes include eight full-time and four part-time roles, with additional seasonal employment.

The park delivers strong community and health outcomes, supporting schools, youth and women's riding groups, mental health, and rehabilitation programmes, and regular hapū participation. Health benefits are estimated at \$0.5M per year using NZTA methodologies.

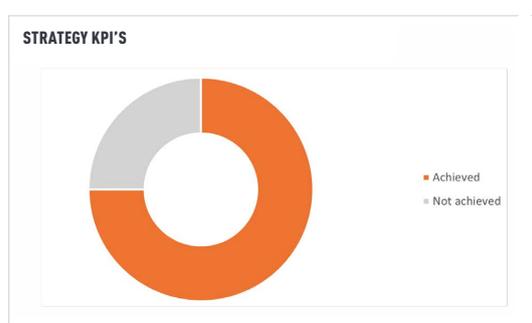
Environmental stewardship is embedded in operations through high standards of track maintenance and native replanting to protect trail assets. Despite challenges including limited marketing capacity and reliance on volunteer effort, WMBP is widely regarded as a top-tier mountain biking destination, with high visitor satisfaction and strong safety performance.

Overall, Waitangi Mountain Bike Park demonstrates the long-term value of early enabling investment, delivering enduring economic, health, environmental, and social returns for Northland.

## STRATEGY AND LEADERSHIP

The Strategy and Leadership function served as a key Pou in Northland Inc’s regional coordination, long-term planning, and collaborative leadership across the decade. This function carried responsibility for regional strategy development, oversight of cross-sector partnerships, monitoring of priority projects, and convening of stakeholders to define direction and maintain momentum. Its role was central to ensuring that regional economic development activity remained aligned, transparent, and based on evidence and engagement.

Key Performance metrics within this section focused on development and implementation of the Te Tai Tokerau Economic Action Plan and were achieved as per graph below. ‘Not achieved’ metrics were related to external delays in finalising the action plan.



A major foundational achievement was the development and ongoing refresh of the **Tai Tokerau Northland Economic Action Plan (TTNEAP)**.

First launched as part of a national regional growth programme, TTNEAP mapped the region’s priority projects and created a shared framework for agencies, iwi, and industry to work collectively. Annual monitoring and reporting cycles provided visibility over progress, challenges, and outcomes. The strategy guided initiatives across digital connectivity, water security, tourism infrastructure, forestry processing, skills and workforce programmes, innovation hubs, and agribusiness development. Through TTNEAP, Northland Inc established processes for cross-agency coordination, ensuring stakeholders operated from a unified direction of travel.

Across the decade, the team’s work evolved into a clear strategic leadership function. It connected regional priorities to national programmes, brokered relationships across iwi, government, and private investors, and ensured that Te Tai Tokerau was positioned for opportunities that required readiness, flexibility, and credibility. The cumulative investment attracted through these efforts - exceeding hundreds of millions of dollars - demonstrated the value of disciplined project

development and a regional organisation committed to building long-term economic foundations.

Northland Inc also led structured responses to major economic shocks during the decade. During the **COVID-19 pandemic**, it played a key coordination role between central government, local Councils, iwi organisations, industry networks, and business support services. Activities included information dissemination, recovery planning, rapid sector engagement, and alignment of support pathways across the region. Similar coordination work occurred following severe weather events and the closure of the Marsden Point refinery, where the function ensured that regional needs were clearly communicated and informed by sector intelligence.

From 2021 onward, the function shifted toward long-term economic transformation work. This culminated in the development of **Te Rerenga – Northland’s Economic Wellness Pathway**. Te Rerenga represents a broad, intergenerational economic strategy reflecting insights gathered from iwi, hapū, Councils, central government agencies, business leaders, industry sectors, and community organisations. Engagement involved hui, sector workshops, online submissions, targeted interviews, and thematic research. The resulting strategy consolidates more than 20 years of previous regional strategic kaupapa and sets out priorities across workforce, transport, environmental resilience, digital access, housing, industry development, and wellbeing outcomes.

Te Rerenga introduced an economic wellbeing framework that considers both the flow (rerenga) of people, resources, investment, and opportunity, and the need for cohesion across districts, coasts, strategies, and sectors. Through this work, Northland Inc provided a structure through which future investment decisions can be assessed, prioritised, and aligned with regional aspiration.

In addition to long-term strategy, Northland Inc contributed to regional advocacy, strengthening Northland’s ability to influence national decisions on infrastructure, investment, and policy settings. This included producing submissions, briefings, strategic analyses, and coordination materials that supported Northland Inc’s role as a regional voice.

Across the decade, this function delivered consistent outputs: cross-sector convening, structured regional planning, evidence-led programme design, interagency alignment, and public reporting. These contributions ensured a coherent regional direction, strengthened collaborative practice, and provided mechanisms for monitoring and adjusting activity in response to evolving economic conditions.

## DESTINATION MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING

The Northland Inc Destination Management and Marketing team delivered a wide portfolio of regional tourism activity across the decade, ranging from marketing and industry capability to long-term destination planning and product development. The team worked to grow a resilient, high-value visitor economy for Te Tai Tokerau. Over the decade, the team's focus evolved from traditional promotion toward a more sophisticated destination management approach - one that balanced visitation and economic outcomes with community wellbeing, cultural integrity, and environmental stewardship.

KPIs for this area have evolved alongside the work programme and available information (visitor spend information ceased being collected nationally) so it is difficult report on long term trends however one example that is useful to report is the **equivalent advertising value** achieved as per the graph below:



A key component of the team's work was the development, launch, and expansion of **Northland Journeys**. The 10 themed routes created structured ways for visitors to explore the region, linking stories, landscapes, and visitor experiences across Taitokerau. Supporting material included maps, signage, digital content, and itineraries integrated into NorthlandNZ.com. This work contributed to increased visibility of sub-regional destinations and strengthened links between operators and local communities.

In the early years, work concentrated on building Northland's profile, strengthening relationships with operators, and supporting emerging products. Campaigns targeted both domestic and international markets, seeking to increase visitor spend, length of stay, and seasonal spread. As the region's offer diversified—particularly through new Māori cultural experiences, adventure products, and coastal attractions—the need for a more integrated and strategic approach to destination development became increasingly clear.

This shift culminated in the development of the **Taitokerau Northland Destination Management Plan** (DMP), launched in October 2021. Co-created through extensive consultation and partnership with Te Au Mārie Sestercentennial Trust, Te Hīringa, Northland Inc, and Te Puni Kōkiri Taitokerau, under the guidance of a Leadership Advisory Group, the DMP set out a vision "to enhance the value of our visitor experiences in collaboration with iwi, hapū and stakeholders, for the benefit of our communities, businesses, the environment, and future generations." It identified 35 actions spanning product development, infrastructure, workforce, sustainability, and cultural storytelling, with implementation beginning in 2022.

Throughout, the team maintained a strong focus on Māori tourism and destination storytelling. Partnership with iwi, hapū, and Māori operators ensured that cultural narratives were embedded authentically across campaigns and itineraries. Support for experiences such as Manea – Footprints of Kupe, Rawhiti-based walking experiences, and other Māori-led ventures reinforced the region's identity and provided meaningful pathways for manuhiri to connect with the history and values of Te Tai Tokerau. The DMP further emphasised the importance of Māori governance and leadership in destination planning, recognising kaitiakitanga as central to the region's long-term visitor strategy.

The **Responsible Tourism Programme** was first delivered in 2022 and has been designed to build the capability of tourism operators in Taitokerau around business sustainability. In addition to a shifting tourism landscape, the programme was born from feedback through engagement on the Taitokerau Northland Destination Management Plan (DMP) including the strong need for:

- Greater environmental protection and environmental sustainability
- Enhanced cultural infrastructure
- Emphasis on lifting quality of product offerings
- More cohesive communication and collaboration across the sector
- The need for action, change and leadership

Since the beginning of the programme over 10 workshops have been delivered across topics spanning from waste management, regenerative storytelling and pricing and packaging. Approximately 180 individuals have participated across the programme and some key results include:

- **25% of businesses have implemented new waste management processes.**

- **Almost 30% of attendees have committed to an environmental cause (such as PF2050 work) or working directly with a local community group on environmental issues.**

The programme continues to be supported by the team with further workshops underdevelopment and a webpage developed for further resources and learning opportunities.

Alongside the DMP, the team led significant work to build Northland's brand presence and market reach. COVID-19 brought significant disruption to the visitor sector, with international travel restrictions and sub-national alert level changes leading to cancellations, uncertainty, and reduced forward bookings. Campaigns such as #NorthlandStyle used radio, digital channels, out-of-home billboards, and partnerships with media agencies to reach national audiences. These campaigns contributed to increased domestic visitation and supported local operators recovering from the impacts of weather disruptions and travel restrictions.

Throughout this period, the team pivoted its efforts toward domestic audiences, working closely with operators to maintain visibility, adapt product offerings, and respond to changing traveller expectations. Northland's appeal to domestic visitors - particularly as a self-drive and outdoor destination - helped underpin a total visitor spend of over \$1 billion in 2021/22, despite the challenging context.

Further shocks followed with Cyclone Gabrielle and associated weather events, affecting access routes, perceptions of safety, and the confidence of both operators and travellers. Tourism electronic card transactions declined in the immediate aftermath, but the sector demonstrated resilience as access was restored and targeted marketing helped rebuild demand. The team worked alongside national agencies and regional partners to provide accurate information, emphasise open and accessible areas, and support operators facing compounding pressures. Funding secured for domestic marketing formed part of a broader recovery package, which also linked to business recovery initiatives delivered through the Business, Innovation and Growth team.

Campaigns such as 'It's Northland Time' used radio, digital, and out-of-home channels to reposition the region in the minds of travellers and counter negative perceptions following weather-related disruptions. In the aftermath of Cyclone Gabrielle, national radio partners delivered promotional coverage beyond contracted volumes, while digital billboards across Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga, and Rotorua achieved millions of impressions. Social media activity grew

steadily, with strong engagement on Instagram and Facebook helping to connect prospective visitors with operators and experiences across the region. These efforts contributed to substantial web traffic, with northlandnz.com receiving over 130,000 user visits in one reporting period and generating high equivalent advertising value from integrated media activity.

**The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE)-funded Tourism Recovery Programme (2020–2023)** enabled delivery of operator capability programmes, sustainability and regenerative tourism training, product development, industry events, and workforce initiatives. Activities such as the Responsible Tourism Programme engaged more than 50 operators in waste reduction, carbon measurement, conservation projects, and adoption of regenerative practices.

The team also coordinated **international education promotion through Study Northland** and engaged in **international travel trade marketing with Tourism New Zealand** across the US, UK, Europe, and Asia. These activities maintained Northland's presence in key markets and supported recovery in international visitation after 2022.

Across the decade, the Destination Management and Marketing function built regional tourism capability, expanded visitor experiences, improved regional branding, and developed long-term frameworks that connect cultural, environmental, and economic outcomes.

The **Northland Regional Events Fund**, established by MBIE in 2021, provided nearly **\$1.7 million to 71 events** across the region. These included cultural festivals, sporting competitions, arts events, and large-scale community celebrations. Events supported through the fund demonstrated measurable economic impact through increased off-season visitation, local spend, and broader participation. Supported events included Matariki Pēwhairangi Festival, Bay of Islands Sail Week, Mangawhai Bowl Bash, Pasifika Fusion Festival, Fritter Festival, and multiple local heritage and sporting events.

Digital transformation was another key feature of the team's work. Investment in content, storytelling, and online platforms helped small and medium tourism businesses improve their online presence, connect with new markets, and manage real-time information flows during periods of disruption. Collaboration with regional and national partners ensured that Northland was well represented in trade, media, and consumer channels, even when physical travel was constrained.

By 2024/25, the Destination Management and Marketing function had developed into a sophisticated, partnership-led capability. It balanced the need to grow visitor spend and support operators with a commitment

to community wellbeing, environmental limits, and cultural integrity. The combination of a living destination management plan, targeted campaigns, events support, Māori tourism partnerships, and coordinated crisis response positioned Te Tai Tokerau as a resilient, values-led visitor destination—one that can continue to evolve as markets, technologies, and conditions change.

**“ Northland Inc has been a solid ally for our business over the years. Their support has gone well beyond ticking boxes – they have actually taken the time to understand who we are, what we do, and how they can help. Whether it’s been funding opportunities, strategic advice, or just good people showing up at the right time with the right insight, they’ve made a real difference. They’ve also been powerful advocates for the Northland hospitality sector at a regional and national level, making sure our voice is heard and that our challenges are understood. That kind of representation is rare and incredibly valuable – especially in an industry as dynamic and exposed as ours.”**

- Nicke Keene, Schnappa Rock and President, Hospitality NZ

**“ Northland Inc is in a space where smaller businesses cannot afford to be, and they fairly represent. This economic benefit feeds into our communities, and without their presence on that world stage, Northland would be lagging behind other regions, as Queenstown, Rotorua and Auckland grab the lions’ share. On a macro level, their individual passion for the district is instrumental in growing ideas, incubating culture and developing tourism businesses that are fundamental in sustaining smaller communities. It all feeds back into the wider picture of putting Northland on a par with other regions and destinations.”**

- Kate Malcolm, Dive! Tutukaka

In 2024 the team partnered with Air New Zealand to deliver a campaign to showcase the amazing experiences Northland has to offer through Air NZ’s Trip Starter tool, as well as showing the ease of access

to Northland through Air New Zealand’s two ports in our region – some highlights include:

- Online video delivered 1.4 million impressions with a strong view through rate of 96.24%, outperforming the benchmark of 90%.
- 96,000 impressions delivered through TVNZ+ Ad on pause.
- Delivered 3.5 million impressions and 3.1k clicks to Air NZ Trip Starter tool
- Social adverts with a Click Through Rate of 0.06%.
- Digital display delivered 6.6 million impressions
- 12.6K unique sessions on the tool and average session duration of 3min 39secs.
- Trip Starter Tool – 15 Northland businesses added to the tool taking total listings to 65
- Air NZ homepage takeover with Northland imagery and messaging, and Kia Magazine full page ad in September issue also reached over 1mil audience.

Audience behaviour change was tracked through Air New Zealand surveys and sales results.

Key message testing showed:

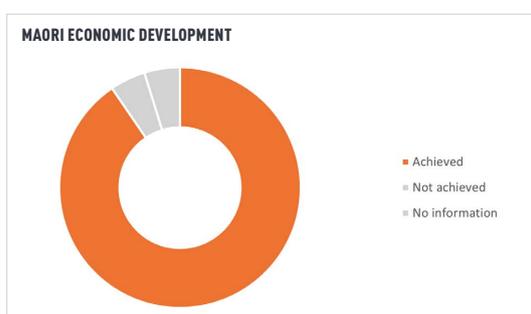
- 95% of people who had seen the campaign say the message, “I can fly to Northland with Air New Zealand” is quite or very likely to stick in their mind, above Air NZ norms.
- 80% of people who had seen the campaign say the message, “Northland has a broad range of experiences I can enjoy” is quite or very likely to stick in their mind, above norms.
- Northland seeing a 61% uplift in passenger ticket sales into the region vs the 4-week average.

A core function of the Destination Team is **International and Trade Marketing**. This activity takes Northland to the world and focuses on key markets. *Most of this work is funded through an International Marketing Group (IMG), a group of operators who are ready to work with international visitors and tourism trade.* This group pay a yearly fee to have their products represented internationally by the RTO. The Northland Inc Trade Marketing Manager travels internationally to events organised by Tourism New Zealand such as Kiwilink and represents Northland and regional operators at New Zealand-based tradeshows events and also hosting international agents on famils. Over the last two years they have trained over 700 agents and visited India, Australia, UK, Europe, and the USA.

## MĀORI ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Māori Economic Development activity evolved significantly between 2014 and 2024, reflecting deeper engagement between Northland Inc, iwi, hapū, and Māori businesses, as well as increasing integration of Māori perspectives into regional economic development. The work undertaken by Northland Inc focused on enabling participation, supporting capability growth, strengthening partnerships, and providing pathways for Māori entities to leverage regional opportunities.

KPIs for this area have evolved alongside the work programme so it is not possible to report on long term trends however collectively the KPIs have been well achieved as per the graph below:



In the early years, programmes concentrated primarily on outreach and capability support for pakihi Māori, with advisory services delivered through the Regional Business Partner (RBP) Network and tourism development initiatives. Engagement grew steadily as relationships deepened and **delivery partners such as Te Hiringa Trust and later Whāriki Te Tai Tokerau** played a more active role in outreach, mentoring, and programme design.

Initially Northland Inc aligned its work with the Tai Tokerau Māori Economic Development Plan (TTMED) – He Whenua, He Tangata, He Oranga. This plan, developed by the Iwi Chief Executives Consortium, set out regional Māori economic aspirations. Northland Inc’s contribution focused on advancing projects within the associated action plan, identifying Māori land holdings and economic activity, working directly with Māori businesses and Ahu Whenua trusts, and helping to coordinate funding provision. While some aspirational outcomes sat more appropriately with direct iwi–Crown relationships, many action plan projects aligned well with Northland Inc’s remit and were actively supported.

Northland Inc also advanced its internal Treaty-based capability through **He Korowai Manawanui**, the

organisation’s Māori Economic Development Framework. This framework strengthened cultural competency, guided engagement with iwi and hapū, and provided a structured approach for ensuring Māori perspectives and Te Ao Māori values were embedded in decision-making, partnership development, and programme delivery. He Korowai Manawanui supported more consistent and respectful engagement practices across all teams and contributed to the organisation’s wider commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

From 2018 onwards, the relationship with Māori businesses strengthened substantially as Northland Inc expanded activity across sector development, land-use innovation, tourism, workforce programmes, and investment readiness. Māori participation rates in business support programmes increased. **During Cyclone Gabrielle recovery grants, 26% of funding was distributed to Māori businesses**, supported by deliberate outreach pathways and culturally appropriate engagement processes delivered with Te Hiringa Trust and Whāriki.

As relationships deepened, the organisation’s Māori economic development portfolio diversified. By 2017/18, Northland Inc was working with more than 50 active Māori businesses across sectors including tourism, agriculture, apiculture, aquaculture, forestry, silviculture, and health. Support ranged from feasibility funding and strategy development to capability programmes and investment brokering. An example is the **Rawhiti 3B2 Ahu Whenua Trust feasibility study** which assessed the tourism potential of walking tracks out to Whangamumu, Deep Water Cove, Rakaumangamanga and the Cape Brett lighthouse, recommending remedial work and creating a pathway for enhanced visitor experiences on Māori land.

A major contribution was made through **land-use diversification and agribusiness innovation**. Māori landowners were active participants in the **Northland Peanut Trials**, which used iwi-owned sites across multiple districts. These trials involved scientific partnerships with Plant and Food Research and Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research and generated data to support future commercial options. Engagement with iwi on crops such as moringa, coffee, and other emerging land-use opportunities further expanded the region’s understanding of climate-resilient horticulture.

Strategic partnerships strengthened the regional ecosystem. A formal relationship with the Federation of Māori Authorities (FOMA) was established for Tai Tokerau, creating a platform for joint advocacy and collaboration. Northland Inc also played a key role in

supporting the World Indigenous Tourism Summit hosted at Waitangi in 2018, providing planning and operational support to New Zealand Māori Tourism and the World Indigenous Tourism Alliance. The summit brought together around 300 delegates from 15 countries and highlighted the potential for indigenous-led tourism to guide the sector in ways that uphold cultural integrity and environmental guardianship.

By the late 2010s, Māori participation was increasingly visible across the wider Northland Inc portfolio. Almost 40 percent of businesses participating in **The Pick Business Accelerator** in one year self-identified as Māori, reflecting both the entrepreneurial energy within Māori communities and the deliberate efforts to ensure programmes were accessible and culturally grounded. Projects such as Manea – Footprints of Kupe received support through the Investment and Growth Reserve, with Northland Inc helping to secure a significant contribution toward construction costs as part of a broader capital raise.

Māori perspectives shaped several regional strategic documents, including the Taitokerau Northland Destination Management Plan (DMP), which emphasised cultural identity, regenerative practices, and iwi-led visitor experiences. Māori governance roles were integrated into the development of Te Rerenga, ensuring iwi and hapū perspectives were central to shaping long-term economic direction.

The signing of the **Waka Hourua Agreement (2023)** represented a milestone in formalising collaboration between Northland Inc and Whāriki Te Tai Tokerau.

The agreement commits both entities to shared delivery activity, capability support, data sharing, and regional network development. It acknowledges the independent roles of both organisations while setting a structured foundation for coordinated activity.

Across the decade, the Māori Economic Development function shifted from programme-based delivery to partnership-based development. This was characterised by a shift from “doing projects for” to “partnering with”. Key outcomes included increased Māori participation in business support services, structured collaboration with Māori development organisations, integration of Māori priorities into regional strategies, and expanded opportunities for iwi and Māori enterprises across land-use innovation, tourism, and entrepreneurship.

## PRIMARY SECTOR – TUPUTUPU GROW NORTHLAND

The Primary Sector function played a critical role in shaping Te Tai Tokerau’s food and fibre economy over the past decade, evolving from discrete project based land-use initiatives into a strategically aligned regional programme grounded in research, partnership, and innovation. The work spanned multiple sectors, including pastoral farming, horticulture, apiculture, crop diversification, water resilience, and emerging high-value products.

Across this period, the team’s approach evolved from supporting individual trials to designing an integrated, region-wide framework for future land use through the Tuputupu Grow Northland strategy.

Much of the early period was defined by **Extension 350 (E350)**, a project launched to lift the performance and resilience of pastoral farms across Tai Tokerau. Operating from 2016/17 through to 2021/22, E350 worked directly with farmers across the region, pairing commercial, iwi, and mentor farms to lift productivity, financial performance, environmental management, and business capability. E350 supported a total of 384 farmers, including 50 target farmers, 63 mentor farmers and 271 associate farmers, working in 10 clusters across Northland. The programme became a cornerstone of Northland’s farm system transformation efforts and produced a cohort of farmers better equipped for future climate, market, and compliance pressures.

Independent research evaluating the economic, environmental and wellbeing outcomes of E350 was completed by Scarlatti Limited (Scarlatti) which determined that for every dollar invested, a return of \$11.60 was generated against measurable financial outcomes alone. **An investment of \$4.1m resulted in a return of \$48.6m, confirming E350 was a good investment** as this represents just one of the three focus areas for the programme. The sustainable and long-term impact of E350 is still to be realised, with farmers describing the experience as ‘life changing’ and others confirming they would have left the industry without the support of E350.

Alongside pastoral sector work, Northland Inc supported diversification and value-creation initiatives. Apiculture remained an important area of engagement, with support for Māori-owned honey enterprises and producer coalitions. Increasing demand for mānuka-based products provided opportunities for whānau businesses and post-settlement entities, and the organisation connected producers to national

programmes aimed at improving innovation, product development, and export readiness.

During this period, the organisation also **supported investigations into water resilience and land-use demonstration projects**. The Water Demonstration Sites initiative tested irrigation, soil management, and crop viability in response to increasingly variable climatic conditions. These trials provided valuable data on performance across different soil profiles and water availability scenarios, forming part of the evidence base later used in strategic land-use planning.

Early crop diversification trials emerged as a response to both climate pressures and changing market opportunities. Northland Inc partnered with landowners and specialist advisers to explore new crops suited to Northland's soils and climate. This early work laid the groundwork for the later Sustainable Food and Fibre Futures (SFFF)-supported **Peanut Trials and investigations into other emerging crops**.

From 2021 onwards, diversification initiatives expanded in scale and ambition. The Northland Peanut Trials became a flagship partnership between Northland Inc and the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) through the SFFF fund. Initial trials demonstrated strong potential for peanuts as a climate-suitable, high-value crop that could complement existing farm systems. Based on promising results, the programme expanded across 2022–2024, with trial sites established on land held by Te Roroa, Ngāi Takoto, Te Aupōuri, and other iwi partners. The trials allowed for the testing of new rotations, improve soil health, and explore commercial opportunities with a trusted processing partner.

The expansion of the trials from farm-scale tests to a wider multi-site programme deepened regional understanding of soil performance, disease resistance, market potential, and commercial feasibility. These trials also created pathways for Māori land entities to explore horticultural opportunities with clear scientific and commercial backing. Media interest and national partner engagement helped position Northland as a genuine contender for a new peanut industry, grounded in both agronomic data and market-led relationships.

Parallel investigations into **moringa and coffee** - also supported through Tuputupu Grow Northland - reflected the region's increasing focus on high-value, climate-resilient crops. Initial scoping suggested both products could provide new opportunities for Northland's growers, processors, and natural products sector. These investigations continued into 2023/24 as part of the wider research and feasibility pipeline.

By 2021/22, it became clear that Northland Inc needed a regionally coordinated, long-term land-use strategy

to capitalise on lessons from E350, diversification trials, and water demonstration projects. In July 2022, Northland Inc secured funding to develop Tuputupu Grow Northland, the organisation's integrated primary sector strategy. The programme was designed to identify Northland Inc's role in bringing iwi, farmers, growers, researchers, and government agencies together to chart a cohesive direction for the region's food and fibre economy.

The Northland Inc team shifted from strategy development into delivery. The focus was on translating future land-use opportunities into actionable projects, strengthening iwi and industry relationships, and supporting landowners to undertake trials, feasibility assessments, and early-stage commercial investigations. This period saw the continued expansion of the Peanut Trials, the development of moringa and coffee assessments, and deeper engagement with iwi entities interested in crop diversification and whenua-based enterprise development.

The programme also enhanced regional coordination. Northland Inc worked closely with Ministry for Primary Industries, Crown research institutes, agricultural advisers, and iwi organisations to align Tuputupu Grow Northland's workstreams with national initiatives in climate adaptation, water management, and innovation. This provided Northland with a clearer system-wide view of investment needs, capability gaps, and high-potential growth opportunities.

By 2024, the Primary Sector function had evolved into a strategic, future-focused programme supporting landowners and iwi to respond to climate change, shifting market dynamics, and national environmental reforms. Its work created a credible evidence base for regional decision-making, helped diversify land-use opportunities, and strengthened the resilience of the region's food and fibre economy.

In recent years, Northland Inc has moved beyond trial-scale crop diversification and framed a broader, evidence-based pathway for new horticultural and arable industries. Under the Pūtake **Whakatupu – Foundation for Growth workstream of Tuputupu Grow Northland**, the organisation commissioned four comprehensive **market opportunity studies** – covering nine candidate crops: banana and pineapple; mango and papaya; sunflower and soybean; moringa; and turmeric and ginger. These studies were completed in September 2025 and released publicly to assist growers, landowners, and iwi with land-use decision-making.

The studies combine market analysis, supply-chain modelling and value-chain feasibility, providing a

data-driven assessment of both niche-scale and larger-scale potential for each crop.

Importantly, the reports help clarify what enabling infrastructure, value-add processing capacity, and support services (e.g. shared manufacturing, logistics, cold-chain, regulatory, and processing) would be needed to turn crop-level potential into sustainable industry. They complement earlier field trials (e.g. peanuts, moringa, coffee), by offering a strategic, region-wide growth pathway — reducing risk for growers, guiding investment, and positioning Northland to move from experimentation toward commercial scale.

Northland Inc’s release of the studies was accompanied by a series of September 2025 workshops across the region (Whangārei, Kaitiāia, Kaikohe), inviting growers, landowners, iwi, processors and investors to explore the findings and help prioritise which crop opportunities should be fast-tracked. This engagement underscores the collaborative, community-led nature of the strategy, and reflects the organisation’s commitment to transparent, inclusive decision-making around land use and regional development.

Through E350, diversification trials, water demonstration sites, and the development and delivery of Tuputupu Grow Northland, the programme provides a cohesive pathway for the next generation of producers and landowners- one grounded in innovation, partnership, and long-term strategic guidance.

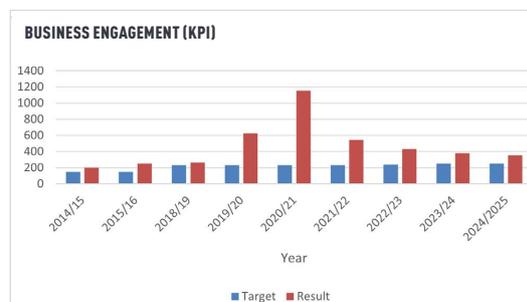
## BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND GROWTH

The Business Innovation and Growth team provided consistent, high-volume business support across the region from 2014 to 2024. Its work focuses on capability development, innovation advice, startup support, and resilience programmes, with core operations funded through the Regional Business Partner Network (RBP). The team maintains a long-standing partnerships with New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE), Callaghan Innovation, local business networks, chambers of commerce, education providers, and sector organisations.

In the early years, the Business, Innovation and Growth team focused on building a foundation of capability across the region. In 2014/15, the team engaged with nearly 200 businesses per annum, facilitating more than **\$1 million** in combined New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) and Callaghan Innovation funding- well above target. This investment supported training and advisory services in business planning, systems, financial management, marketing, and sustainability across a wide range of sectors including agriculture

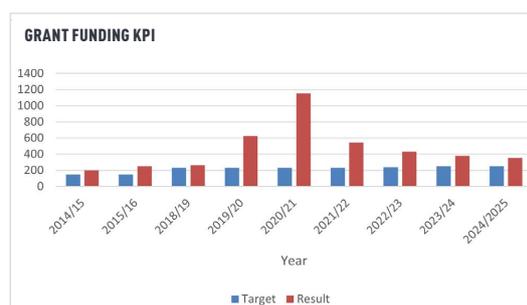
and fisheries, energy, wholesale, and professional services. The aim was to strengthen core business disciplines that would have lasting flow-on effects inside firms and across their networks.

Business Engagement per annum has been a consistent KPI for this work area and the team has consistently met its targets as per the graph below:



Callaghan Innovation funding injected further support into research and development projects, helping land-based and light manufacturing enterprises adopt new technologies and processes. The success of this early work led to Northland Inc securing an extended RBP contract in 2015/16, with a significant increase in annual funding through to 2021. This contract recognised both the region’s growth potential and the organisation’s effectiveness in connecting businesses to national support. Central government funding into this activity significantly reduced post 2021 as government undertook a comprehensive review of the way it supported small business across the country.

Grant Funding per annum has been a consistent KPI for this work area and the team has consistently met its targets in the initial years when funding was available as per the graph below:



Over time, the portfolio expanded beyond one-to-one advisory work into a suite of programmes designed to build innovation, entrepreneurship, and digital capability. Creative HQ funding enabled a five-year early-stage startup plan, including **the Te Tai Tokerau**

**Growth Accelerator, Kickstarter, and The Pick Business Accelerator.** The **Growth Accelerator** was delivered across multiple locations, culminating in pitch events that showcased participants' ventures to regional stakeholders.

**Throughout the decade, over four thousand businesses have accessed services through the RBP Network.** These included capability vouchers, mentoring programmes, innovation grants, and connections to research and development opportunities. Annual engagement volumes were particularly high during periods of economic disruption, including COVID-19 and post-Cyclone Gabrielle recovery, where businesses required rapid advisory services, financial planning support, and connections to recovery mechanisms.

Startup and innovation activity increased steadily through the establishment of The Pick Business Accelerator; Northland Inc's flagship business ideas competition launched in 2017. The programme provided structured learning modules, pitch preparation, mentoring sessions, and pathways to investment networks. Over subsequent years, partnerships expanded to include Whāriki Te Tai Tokerau, Ministry of Social Development, McKay, Northpower, Henderson Reeves, and the Flying Kiwi Angels. Māori participation in The Pick increased significantly, supported by targeted outreach and culturally grounded facilitation.

Over the decade, innovation infrastructure across the region strengthened. The Orchard Business and Event Hub provided a central ecosystem of co-working, events, seminars, and business meetups, supporting a growing community of founders, remote workers, and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs). The later establishment of the Mahinga Innovation Centre at Ngāwhā expanded this capability by providing digital conferencing technology, laboratory facilities, front-of-house support, meeting spaces, and business activator programmes. This enabled more structured delivery of innovation support in the mid-North.

The team also supported sector-based programmes across food and beverage, natural products, technology, tourism operators, and manufacturing. Engagement included capability workshops, networking events, digital adoption programmes, and growth planning.

**During Cyclone Gabrielle, the Business, Innovation and Growth team played a central role in administering Cyclone Gabrielle Business Recovery Grants on behalf of central government. Northland Inc processed 923 applications and delivered grants**

**to 623 businesses, totalling \$8.63M.** This period required intensive business advisory engagement, including financial need assessments, continuity planning, and sector-specific recovery guidance. Data showed 26% of funding went to Māori businesses, supported by partnership-led outreach.

**The Taitokerau Business Resilience Project** was launched as part of the Cyclone Gabrielle recovery effort to strengthen Northland's business community after years of disruption from severe weather, infrastructure failures, and the ongoing impacts of the pandemic. Funded by Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) and delivered by Northland Inc alongside NorthChamber, Whāriki Te Tai Tokerau, the Kaitaia Business Boosters, Te Hiku Iwi Development Trust, and local business associations, the programme provided practical, accessible support to build confidence, capability, and connection across the region. Its design was informed by a regional survey of 270 businesses - conducted one year after the cyclone - which found that 30% felt underprepared for future shocks. In response, Northland Inc developed workshops, mentoring, and resources focused on financial management, business continuity, marketing, and wellbeing, building on its earlier delivery of \$8.67M in direct recovery funding on MBIE's behalf.

Alongside innovation programmes, the RBP Network remained a core channel for business support. In 2021/22, the Business Innovation and Growth team supported more than 500 businesses through RBP and Callaghan Innovation, with around a fifth identifying as Māori. Common areas of demand included strategic planning, marketing, digital capability, and financial management - reflecting both growth ambitions and the need to adapt to rapid changes in operating environments.

By 2023/24 and into 2024/25, Northland Inc continued to be a key partner for businesses navigating change, growth, and innovation. Hundreds of enterprises were supported each year through RBP engagements, workshops, and referrals, with demand strongest in sectors such as manufacturing, construction, and professional services. Many firms sought guidance on strategy, marketing, digital tools, and succession planning - reflecting both opportunities and pressures arising from population change, technology, and workforce dynamics.

Taken together, the Northland Inc has helped lift capability, resilience, and ambition across Te Tai Tokerau's enterprise base. By combining one-to-one advisory work, capability uplift, innovation pathway

development, targeted grants, structured programmes, startup ecosystem growth and crisis response, the BIG team has acted as both a navigator and a navigator-trainer - helping businesses steer through uncertainty while building skills that will serve the region well into the future.

**“ Having a Customer Navigator [via Northland Inc] has been key to the success of Naut.”**

- Fiona Byfield, CEO, Naut

**“ My experience through the RBP was absolutely positive. I’ve actually engaged with the RBP and Northland Inc for two rounds of funding and growth advice.”**

- Matt Guddat, Iron Moa

**“ Without The Pick the idea of Vince may not have been developed into the business that it is today. The workshops, facilitation and networking opportunities ensured I had the base to grow Vince from an idea to a functioning business. Four years on, I’m now working full time on Vince, and moving to a larger manufacturing facility in preparation for our nationwide launch.”**

- Winner of The Pick 2019, Debbie Stowe (Vince, 2024)

**“ I have had the pleasure of being involved with Northland Inc since my inception. During hard times Northland Inc provided funding and business mentoring, without their help being a new business owner would have been much more difficult. Northland Inc go above and beyond to reach out and give help and advice when really needed. Thank you so much for your unbelievable support in helping make my business a success story.”**

- Adele Greatorex, Waipu Horse Adventures

## APPENDIX A: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCY CORE FUNCTIONS

This guidance proposes a set of core functions, roles, responsibilities, and activities for regional economic development in New Zealand. The objective is to enhance consistency and collaboration among central government, local government, iwi, and business, reduce duplication, increase effectiveness, and support consistent reporting on economic development metrics.

Generally speaking, EDAs are either:

- Independent stand-alone agencies, which are legal entities that are separate from local authorities. These include trusts and commercial entities.
- Council-controlled organisations, which are organisations that are majority-owned and financed by a local authority or local authorities.
- Local authorities providing the economic development and business support services themselves.

### CORE FUNCTIONS OF AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCY:



#### **BUSINESS ATTRACTION AND INVESTMENT:**

This function involves promoting a region as an ideal destination for new businesses and investors. Strategies include offering financial incentives, tax breaks, infrastructure development, and regulatory support to make the location attractive for companies.

Economic development agencies also engage in marketing campaigns, international outreach, and public-private partnerships to draw in domestic and foreign direct investment. Business attraction efforts often align with regional strengths and industry clusters to create long term economic growth.

#### **BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION:**

Supporting existing businesses is critical to economic stability and job creation. BRE programs focus on identifying challenges faced by local businesses, such as workforce shortages, supply chain issues, or regulatory barriers, and providing solutions through technical assistance, funding, or policy adjustments. Economic development agencies conduct business visits, surveys, and networking events to facilitate dialogue and prevent business closures or relocations. By nurturing established businesses, communities can strengthen their economic foundation and encourage reinvestment.

### **ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION**

Encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation is key to fostering a dynamic, resilient economy. This function supports start-ups, small businesses, and research-driven enterprises by providing access to incubators, accelerators, grants, venture capital, and mentorship programs. Policies that encourage research and development (RandD), intellectual property protection, and university-industry collaborations also play a vital role in fostering an innovation ecosystem. Successful innovation strategies can lead to the development of new industries and job opportunities.

### **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND TALENT ATTRACTION**

Ensuring that a region has a skilled and adaptable workforce is essential for economic growth. Workforce development efforts include training programs, apprenticeships, vocational education, and partnerships with local educational institutions. Talent attraction initiatives aim to bring skilled workers to the region through incentives, housing support, and quality-of-life improvements. Addressing workforce gaps is particularly important for high-demand industries such as technology, healthcare, and manufacturing.

### **INFRASTRUCTURE AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

A well-developed infrastructure system is fundamental to business operations and economic expansion. This function involves investment in roads, public transportation, broadband connectivity, utilities, and industrial parks. Regional development strategies focus on equitable growth across urban and rural areas by addressing disparities in access to resources and opportunities. Infrastructure projects also include sustainable development initiatives such as green energy investments and smart city technologies.

### **SECTOR DEVELOPMENT AND INDUSTRY CLUSTERS**

Targeted economic growth often involves developing specific industries where a region has competitive advantages. This function focuses on nurturing industry clusters —geographic concentrations of related businesses, suppliers, research institutions, and workforce talent. Economic developers support sector

growth by facilitating networking opportunities, providing specialized infrastructure, and advocating for policies that benefit the industry. Strong industry clusters can enhance productivity, innovation, and global competitiveness.

### **TRADE AND EXPORT DEVELOPMENT**

Expanding market opportunities beyond local and national borders helps businesses grow and enhances regional economic resilience. Trade and export development programs assist businesses in reaching global markets through export financing, trade missions, and international business partnerships. Governments and economic development organizations also work to reduce trade barriers, negotiate favourable agreements, and provide educational resources on global market trends.

### **POLICY ADVOCACY**

Economic development is heavily influenced by government policies at the local, regional, and national levels. Policy advocacy involves engaging with policymakers, business leaders, and community stakeholders to shape regulations, incentives, and legislative frameworks that support business growth and economic prosperity. Key areas of advocacy include tax policies, workforce regulations, environmental sustainability, Regional and District Planning and business-friendly permitting processes. Effective policy advocacy ensures a stable and supportive business environment.

### **DESTINATION ATTRACTION**

Attracting visitors, events, and tourism investments can drive significant economic benefits for a region. Destination attraction involves marketing efforts to promote a location's cultural, historical, and natural assets while improving infrastructure for tourism. Strategies include hosting major events, developing tourism-related businesses, and collaborating with stakeholders in hospitality, entertainment, and retail sectors. A strong destination branding strategy enhances a region's visibility and boosts local economic activity.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Being relatively unencumbered by other public-sector missions and mandates yet able to make transparent decisions about resource allocations in the public interest.
- Operating from a legal and/or fiscal status that provides independence, integrity, and accountability - an honest broker that can do what's right for the region.
- Partnering, collaborating, facilitating, leading from the front and/or leading from behind
- Able to plan, form, coalesce, catalyse, or organise development efforts with multiple partners.
- Share and take on risks and costs (public/ public, public/private partnerships, brokering deals and ED projects, project management) that include or insulate other agencies and organisation.
- A catalyst for projects/programmes operating in-between and with the public and private sectors and local stakeholders.
- Being business like, flexible, entrepreneurial, and responsive.
- Building/encouraging an environment for economic development.
- Promotional; outward-/investor-/visitor-/market-facing
- Leveraging local and inward investment for local projects.

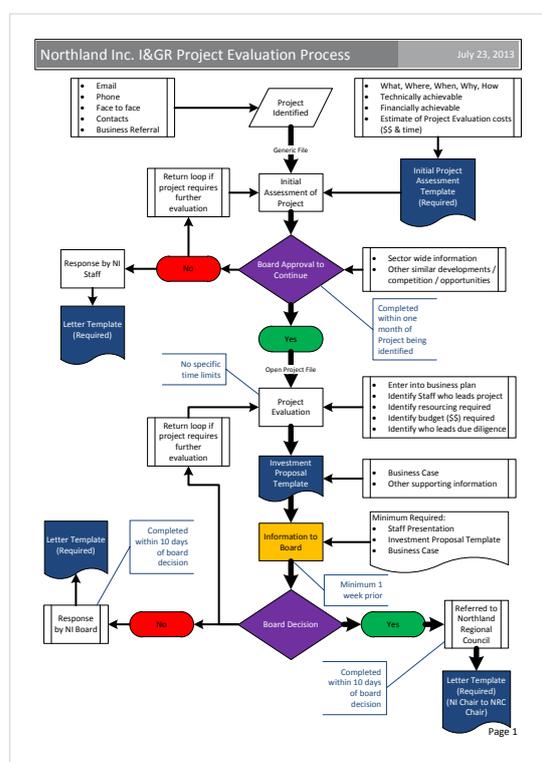
## APPENDIX B: NORTHLAND INC IGR EVALUATION PROCESS

The process steps are clearly defined within the following evaluation process flowchart (see below). This flowchart tracks projects from their initial introduction to Northland Inc right through to the final yes or no decision. There are a number of key steps within this process, and timeframes have been included where it is Northland Inc's responsibility to progress matters. Two key templates have been developed to support this process. This first is an initial project assessment template and the second is the more detailed investment proposal template. [Note references to NORTHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL should be replaced with Shareholder]

also used to identify the size and scope of the assessment required along with potential costs that may be required for external assistance with due diligence.

The Northland Inc board is responsible for approving that further work on a project be undertaken at this point – i.e. that staff open a file begin a detailed investigation of the project.

A copy of the initial project assessment template is included below.



**Initial Project Assessment for (insert name)**

Commercial in Confidence - has an NDA been signed? Y/N Attached Y/N

Northland inc Staff Responsible: (insert name)

**Project Assessment:**

1. What is it:
2. Where is it:
3. When will it begin (and end):
4. Who are the parties involved (background, experience):
5. What is the total investment required for the project (including a schedule of costs): (Ratio of public to private sector funding)
6. Financial Overview: (Total Revenue, Operating Costs, EBITDA, Depreciation, Interest, Net Profit, NPV (over a 25 year period), Cash Flow Positive (Years))
7. Explain why this project needs public sector intervention:
8. Overview of sector (Local, regional and national information on sector that project falls within and its contribution / influence / point of difference)
9. What are the projects outcomes and how are they consistent with the Investment & Growth Reserve Criteria? (High Level (infometrics): GDP, Jobs, Household Income)
10. What funding sources has the project considered? (Callaghan / Angel Investors/banking/private – and ratio)
11. Has a risk analysis been undertaken and are there other approvals required before the project is implemented? (Resource consent requirements? Licensing/patents/other financiers?)
12. What are the exit options available?
13. Estimate of project evaluation costs and timeframes (including both internal and external costs)

The initial project assessment template is designed to provide an initial overview of a project (what, where, when, how, etc.) to evaluate whether a project has merit and is worth spending significant time investigating. This is also an opportunity to provide an early no to projects that clearly do not meet the criteria.

Once a project has approval from the Board through the initial project assessment template, the detailed assessment process is initiated. There are no set timeframes for this process as it can be quite time consuming depending on the complexity of the project and the capabilities and expertise of the client. The minimum requirements to be identified within the investment proposal template below. This also includes the minimum requirements for the associated business case.

The project assessment template is used for the first introduction of projects to the Northland Inc board. It is

Applications must be accompanied by a robust business case that has been prepared at a level commensurate with the quantum of funding being requested. A business case must include the following elements:

- Description of the project – e.g. what is the proposal?
- Strategic case / alignment – e.g. why should Council make the investment? How does it align with strategic economic priorities for the region?
- Sustainability case – e.g. what are the costs and benefits of the project? What other options were considered?
- Financial case – e.g. how will the project be funded, both in the build and long-term operation? What other investors are being sought? What will Council’s funding contribution be used for? Are there profits being made by the private sector and if so by who?
- Management case – e.g. how will the project be undertaken and over what time frame? Do the project proponents have the competence, experience and capacity to deliver the project? What statutory approvals are required (e.g. resource consents)?

### PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FUNDING

The purpose of the Project Development category is to provide funding support to assist with developing, proving and/or planning for the success of projects that will contribute toward economic growth within the region for the purpose of making them investment ready.

Allocation of funding for Project Development will be managed to ensure that the conditions of the Underwriting Guarantee Agreement between Northland Regional Council and Northland Inc Limited for the Ngāwha Innovation and Education Centre are fulfilled.

For clarity, Project Development funding cannot be used to fund:

- the preparation of a strategy;
- design and engineering related work;
- building or resource consent applications or any other approval required for the project to proceed;
- ongoing capability or delivery functions once a project is funded; or
- a project that is determined to potentially have significant adverse impacts on environmental, social, and/or cultural well-being, regardless of the positive economic impacts.

Decisions on funding any single Project Development costing less than \$100,000 is delegated from the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee to the Board of Northland Inc Limited and are assessed using a standard template.

Decisions on funding any single Project Development of \$100,000 or more require a resolution of the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee. These must be accompanied by a Board of Northland Inc Limited recommendation.

A copy of the Project Development Funding assessment template is included below.

**NorthlandInc**  
Growing Northland's Economy  
Kia tūpua ai te āhanga o Te Tai Tokerau

X.X

---

**Subject:**

**From:**

**Dated:**

**Commercial in Confidence:** Yes/No

**Recommendation:**  
That the Board approves the allocation of \$XXX of Project Development Funding to support the (inset project name) from the Investment and Growth Reserve.

**Summary:**

**Project Background:**

**Project Overview:**

**What this feasibility study aims to do:**

**Where is it?:**

**Project Development Funding Application:**

**What part is the feasibility and/or business case funding application for:**

**Estimate of project costs and timeframes:**

**Northland Inc Funding**  
This would be the XX application within the XX/XX financial year. The potential funding available is \$XXX.

Note: The Ngāwha Innovation and Enterprise Park underwrite is in its XX year of implementation and affects the level of allocation available. The underwrite is for up to \$220K per annum. This year we anticipate the the underwrite being requested will be \$XX. Therefore from a total \$300K this leaves \$XX available for project development funding this year.

## APPENDIX C: PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROJECT DETAILS

YEAR OF FUNDING ALLOCATION	PROJECT	PURPOSE / TYPE	ALLOCATED FROM I&GR	TOTAL VALUE OF ASSESSMENT (ALL CONTRIBUTIONS)	PROPORTION OF I&GR CONTRIBUTION TO TOTAL ASSESSMENT COST	SECTOR	DISTRICT	INVESTMENT SECURED INTO PROJECT
2013/14	Kingfish market demand	Market research to assess demand for kingfish produced in land based aquaculture facility	\$10,000	\$20,000	50%	Aquaculture	WDC	\$20,000
2013/14	Northland cruise ship market	Opportunities analysis	\$10,000	\$10,000	100%	Tourism	REGION	\$10,000
2013/14	Bay of Islands ship tender	Business case development	\$10,000	\$5,446	100%	Tourism	FNDC	\$5,446
2013/14	Twin Coast Discovery Highway	Investigation study on improving uptake and visitor experience	\$14,000	\$14,000	100%	Tourism	REGIONAL	\$493,000
2013/14	Totara and kauri timber/wood product	Feasibility assessment	\$10,000	\$125,000	8%	Forestry	REGIONAL	\$125,000
2013/14	Innovation centre for Northland	Pre-feasibility for an innovation centre	\$15,000	\$15,000	100%	Education	REGIONAL	\$15,000
2014/15	Resource Enterprise Limited (REL) sawmill	Due diligence to support loan application	\$17,200	\$17,200	100%	Forestry	WDC	\$4,000,000
2014/15	Ngawha forestry processing	Opportunities analysis of wood processing alternatives	\$20,000	\$51,500	39%	Forestry	FNDC	\$51,500
2014/15	The Orchard co-working network	Investigation study of developing a hub and spoke model of The Orchard in other parts of the region	\$33,000	\$33,000	100%	Business	WDC	\$33,000
2014/15	Totara timber/wood product research	Feasibility assessment (building on initial work)	\$15,000	\$15,000	100%	Forestry	REGIONAL	\$15,000
2014/15	Kingfish commercialisation	Investment advice on developing land based aquaculture (RAS) for kingfish	\$12,500	\$30,000	42%	Aquaculture	WDC	\$19,800,000
2014/15	UFB and Action Plan development	Coordination of regional response and submission of Registration of Interest (RoI) supporting provision of broadband and mobile infrastructure	\$62,300	\$62,300	100%	Infrastructure	REGIONAL	\$107,777,927
2015/16	The Orchard co-working network	Business case development	\$25,000	\$25,000	100%	Business	WDC	\$140,000
2015/16	Ngawha integrated sawmill and mechanical pulp mill	Pre-feasibility analysis	\$50,000	\$41,503	100%	Forestry	FNDC	\$41,503
2015/16	Regional Economic Vitality Extension Initiative (REVEI)	Business case development	\$30,000	\$30,000	100%	Pastoral	REGIONAL	\$4,100,000
2015/16	Kawakawa Hundertwasser Park Centre	Business case development	\$20,000	\$20,000	100%	Community/ Tourism	FNDC	\$6,844,000
2015/16	Cape Brett Walkway	Feasibility assessment and business case development	\$15,000	\$45,000	33%	Tourism	FNDC	\$45,000
2016/17	mySELF (seed funding for small business enterprises in Northland (loan scheme))	Business case development	\$30,000	\$30,000	100%	Business	REGIONAL	\$30,000
2016/17	Kaurinui Tourism Product (Frederick Hundertwasser's home neat Kawakawa)	Investigation study on developing a tourist attraction	\$20,000	\$20,000	100%	Tourism	FNDC	\$20,000
2016/17	Whangarei Marina	Economic impact analysis	\$20,000	\$20,000	100%	Marine Manufacturing	WDC	\$20,000,000
2016/17	Dargaville Retirement Village	Feasibility assessment	\$25,000	\$25,000	100%	Business	KDC	\$900,000
2016/17	Otuhau Cultural Experience	Business case development	\$20,000	\$20,000	100%	Tourism	WDC	\$20,000
2016/17	Northland Indigenous Wood Products	Pilot study	\$50,000	\$50,000	100%	Forestry	REGIONAL	\$450,000
2017/18	Four Star Hotel Development	Vision and design process	\$30,000	\$60,000	50%	Tourism	WDC	\$60,000
2017/18	Manea Footprints of Kupe	Business case update and review	\$40,000	\$90,000	44%	Tourism	FNDC	\$5,150,000
2017/18	Regional Walking and Cycling Strategy	Strategy development	\$20,000	\$20,500	98%	Tourism	REGIONAL	\$250,000
2017/18	Dargaville to Donnelly's Crossing Cycle Trail	Economic impact analysis	\$25,000	\$65,000	38%	Tourism	KDC	\$4,000,000

2017/18	Te Waiariki Ngawha Springs redevelopment	Economic impact analysis and business case review	\$30,000	\$67,500	44%	Tourism	FNDC	\$2,050,000
2017/18	Four Star Hotel Development (additional)	Vision and design process (second tranche)	\$8,100	\$1,308,100	1%	Tourism	WDC	\$1,308,100
2017/18	Oceania Marine	Economic impact analysis	\$15,000	\$30,000	50%	Marine Manufacturing	WDC	\$5,841,855
2017/18	Russell Museum re-development	Business case development and economic impact analysis	\$50,000	\$50,000	100%	Tourism	FNDC	\$50,000
2017/18	Marine Sector - Dry dock facility	Business case development	\$80,000	\$168,000	48%	Marine Manufacturing	WDC	\$1,300,000
2018/19	Te Taro O Te Ora	Business case development	\$4,200	\$4,200	100%	Horticulture	FNDC	\$241,000
2018/19	Inshore Fishing Fleet	Business case development	\$12,500	\$500,000	3%	Marine Manufacturing	REGIONAL	\$12,500
2018/19	Northland Inc regional footprint	Feasibility assessment	\$30,000	\$30,000	100%	Business	REGIONAL	\$30,000
2018/19	Biomass to Fuel (NXT Fuels)	Initial scoping study	\$25,000	\$25,000	100%	Alternative Fuels	REGIONAL	\$25,000
2018/19	Northern Adventure Experience (BoIVRT and TPHT cycleway)	Update of the development plan	\$35,000	\$127,000	28%	Tourism	FNDC	\$6,982,965
2018/19	Kaurinui Tourism Product	Business case development	\$30,000	\$30,000	100%	Tourism	FNDC	\$30,000
2018/19	Inshore Fishing Fleet (additional as significantly expanded scope)	Business case development (second tranche)	\$12,500	\$500,000	3%	Marine Manufacturing	REGIONAL	\$500,000
2018/19	Northland Indigenous Wood Products (additional)	Pilot study (second tranche)	\$50,000	\$500,000	10%	Forestry	REGIONAL	\$650,000
2019/20	Northland Water Storage and Use Project	Feasibility assessment	\$84,334	\$2,750,000	3%	Infrastructure	REGIONAL	\$121,800,000
2019/20	Resilient Pastures	Literature review	\$25,000	\$25,000	100%	Pastoral	REGIONAL	\$17,000,000
2020/21	Oruku Landing Conference and Event Centre	Feasibility assessment	\$30,000	\$60,000	50%	Tourism	WDC	\$60,000,000
2020/21	Extension 350 [E350]	Revision of project	\$40,000	\$40,000	100%	Pastoral	REGIONAL	\$571,920
2020/21	Ipiripi Great Walk	Business case development	\$60,000	\$60,000	100%	Tourism	FNDC	\$60,000
2021/22	Horticulture development opportunity	Feasibility assessment and business case development	\$20,000	\$40,000	50%	Horticulture	KDC	\$1,740,000
2021/22	Commercial peanut growing industry	Business case development	\$99,999	\$998,000	10%	Horticulture	REGIONAL	\$998,000
2021/22	Muriwhenua Incorporation	Investment opportunities analysis	\$25,000	\$25,000	100%	Tourism	FNDC	\$25,000
2021/22	Hihiaua Cultural Centre Stage 2	Business case development	\$30,000	\$30,000	100%	Tourism	WDC	\$4,075,000
2022/23	Hundertwasser Art Centre	Operational review and marketing opportunities analysis	\$25,000	\$25,000	100%	Tourism	WDC	\$25,000
2022/23	Dargaville accommodation	Market demand study	\$15,000	\$15,000	100%	Tourism	KDC	\$15,000
2023/24	FoodNorth (shared food manufacturing facility at Ngawha Innovation and Enterprise Park)	Business case development	\$50,000	\$224,200	22%	Manufacturing	FNDC	\$224,200
2023/24	Toi Te Hiku - Screen and creative hub	Business case development	\$20,000	\$40,000	50%	Creative	FNDC	\$40,000
2023/24	Northland wind farm and high performance computing co-location	Feasibility assessment	\$15,000	\$30,000	50%	Energy	FNDC	\$30,000
2023/24	Turner Centre Revitalisation	Business case development	\$30,000	\$294,000	10%	Tourism	FNDC	\$294,000
2024/25	Igniting Northland's Potential	Coordination of regional response and submission of proposal to government's regional deal initiative	\$40,000	\$40,000	100%	Other	REGIONAL	\$40,000
2024/25	Oceans Resort	Feasibility assessment and Business Case	\$50,000	\$50,000	100%	Tourism	WDC	\$50,000
2024/25	Maui Inc Sustainable Aquaculture Innovation	Business case development	\$40,000	\$40,000	100%	Aquaculture	FNDC	\$40,000
2024/25	NIWA Kingfish Business Plan	Investment opportunities analysis	\$35,000	\$135,000	26%	Aquaculture	WDC	\$135,000
2025/26	LanzaJet	Feasibility assessment	\$50,000	\$419,597	12%	Alternative Fuels	WDC	\$419,597
			<b>\$1,815,633</b>	<b>\$9,641,046</b>				<b>\$401,000,513</b>

## APPENDIX D: ENABLING INVESTMENT PROJECT DETAILS

YEAR	I&GR PROJECT	PURPOSE	I&GR FINAL CONTRIBUTION (\$)	TOTAL PROJECT VALUE (ALL CONTRIBUTIONS)	LOCATION	SECTOR	JOBS CREATED	ECONOMIC IMPACT
2014/15	Water storage and use	Undertake a Strategic Irrigation study of Northland to select areas for further detailed investigation	\$210,000	\$420,000	Region wide	Horticulture	877.0	\$399,000,000
2014/15	Resource Enterprise Ltd (REL) Sawmill	Loan investment for establishment of Sawmill at Marsden Point	\$750,000	\$4,000,000	Whangarei	Forestry	12.0	Not available
2014/15	Twin Coast Discovery Highway Revitalisation	Revitalising visitor experiences, attractions, marketing and other visitor services in Northland signage and infrastructure	\$410,500	\$1,463,000	Region wide	Tourism	200.0	\$20,000,000
2014/15	Twin Coast Cycle Trail (Pou Herenga Tai)	Work to develop a cycle way from Opua to Horeke in the Mid North. The Trail is part of the Government's national cycleways programme.	\$900,000	\$4,800,000	Far North	Tourism	not available	\$5,660,000
2015/16	Extended Regional Promotions	Funding to support a number of tourism related activities/projects undertaken by Northland Inc	\$1,066,150	\$1,066,150	Region wide	Tourism	Not applicable	Not applicable
2015/16	The Orchard Collaborative Business Hub	Fit out of collaborative workspace and business hub in Whangarei	\$70,000	\$140,000	Whangarei	Business Support	Not applicable	Not applicable
2016/17	Extension 350 [E350] [originally named Regional Economic Vitality Extensions Initiative]	Supporting the mentoring of farmers to improve primary production outputs, farmers wellbeing and environmental management practices	\$832,600	\$3,450,000	Region wide	Primary	Not applicable	\$48,600,000
2016/17	Waitangi Mountain Bike Park	"Mountain Bike Park at Waitangi comprised of three stages"	\$400,000	\$1,600,000	Far North	Tourism	not available	\$10,000,000
2016/17	Hundertwasser Art Centre with Wairua Maori Art Gallery	"Support for the HAC project to ensure the project meets its fund raising target"	\$1,500,000	\$21,700,000	Whangarei	Tourism	550.0	\$26,000,000
2017/18	Kawakawa Hundertwasser Park Centre	Funding solely to be used for the construction costs associated with this project	\$500,000	\$5,657,000	Far North	Tourism	1.8	\$0
2017/18	Water storage and use	Demand study [stage 2+] with the purpose to investigate the level of private sector interest in the development of a new irrigation scheme to warrant further investment by the public sector.	\$100,000	\$200,000	Region wide	Horticulture	Not applicable	Not applicable
2017/18	Extended Regional Promotions	Funding to support a number of tourism related activities/projects.	\$600,000	\$600,000	Region wide	Tourism	Not applicable	Not applicable
2018/19	Manea Footprints of Kupe	The Project involved the purchase of the land and construction of the building, external elements and the internal fit-out of the "experience" elements of the attraction. The IGR funding was solely used for construction costs.	\$500,000	\$9,020,352	Far North	Tourism	16.0	\$5,500,000
2018/19	Water storage and use	A two stage project designed to help the understanding of irrigation scheme options in Kaipara and Mid North identifying a small number of schemes to further develop.	\$164,244	\$164,244	Region wide	Horticulture	Not applicable	Not applicable
2022/23	Te Rerenga - Regional Economic Development Strategy	Preparation of a regional economic development strategy.	\$80,000	\$200,000	Region wide	Strategic	Not applicable	Not applicable
2022/23	Grow Northland	Support the continuation of service delivery to the primary sector and the development of a programme business case	\$60,000	\$172,000	Region wide	Primary	Not applicable	Not applicable
2023/24	Tuputupu Grow Northland Initiative	Support the continuation of service delivery to the primary sector and the development of a programme business case	\$150,000	\$600,000	Region wide	Primary	Not applicable	Not applicable
2025/26	Inward Delegations	Support the establishment of an Inward Delegation role at request of Shareholder	\$60,000	\$60,000	Region wide	Strategic	Not applicable	Not applicable
2025/26	Tuputupu Grow Northland programme	Support the continuation of service delivery to the primary sector and the development of a programme business case	\$250,000	\$250,000	Region wide	Primary	Not applicable	Not applicable
			<b>\$8,603,494</b>	<b>\$55,562,746</b>			<b>\$1,657</b>	<b>\$514,760,000</b>

# NorthlandInc

**Growing Northland's Economy**

Kia tupu ai te ōhanga o Te Tai Tokerau

35 Walton Street, Level 1 [entrance],  
Whangarei, New Zealand

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15<sup>th</sup> August 2025

Chair - Joint Regional Economic Development  
[john.vujcich@fndc.govt.nz](mailto:john.vujcich@fndc.govt.nz)

Dear John Vujcich,

Rust Avenue, Whangārei  
Private Bag 9023, Te Mai,  
Whangārei 0143, New Zealand  
P +64 9 430 4200  
E [mailroom@wdc.govt.nz](mailto:mailroom@wdc.govt.nz)  
[www.wdc.govt.nz/ContactUs](http://www.wdc.govt.nz/ContactUs)

### **Confirmation of Shareholding and Request to Discuss Funding Contribution**

As per the request for early confirmation, on the 24 July 2025, the Whangārei District Council passed a resolution confirming its intention to continue as a shareholder in Northland Inc. This decision was made recognising the importance of providing certainty for Northland Inc's long-term planning and operational budgeting.

Council approved a continued funding contribution of \$587,000 to the Investment and Growth Reserve for the 2026/27 financial year. We acknowledge that this amount is less than the amount provisionally indicated in the Shareholder Agreement, while also noting that there is no legal obligation under the Agreement on contributions to the Investment and Growth Reserve.

This funding decision reflects the financial pressures currently facing our district and the Northland region, including the need to balance community expectations with prudent fiscal management. Council remains firmly committed to its role as a shareholder and to supporting Northland Inc's strategic objectives and would encourage exploring a way forward that reflects current financial realities while remaining focussed on regional collaboration.

We also recognise the positive outcomes that have been achieved through collaboration to date, and we remain committed to building on these foundations. Our decision to confirm our shareholding early is a reflection of that commitment and our desire to provide clarity and stability for Northland Inc as it continues to deliver on its regional mandate.

In recognition of this we are seeking to initiate good faith discussions, rather than engaging the potentially protracted and expensive notification and mediation process envisioned under clause 17.3. of the Shareholders Agreement. We are interested in reviewing our position when a more detailed benefit study is completed, before the end of the year.

We welcome the opportunity to meet with fellow shareholders at the earliest possible opportunity to discuss Whangārei's continued participation in Northland Inc.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vince Cocurullo", written over a horizontal line.

Vince Cocurullo  
**Mayor of Whangārei**



9 October 2025

Mayor Vince Cocurullo  
Whangarei District Council  
Private Bag 9023  
Te Mai  
Whangārei 0143

Sent via email: [mayor@wdc.govt.nz](mailto:mayor@wdc.govt.nz)

**WDC decision regarding Northland Inc shareholding and IGR funding contribution for 2026/27**

Dear Mayor Cocurullo

I am writing on behalf of the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee (Joint Committee) and the decisions made at its meeting on Friday 26 September 2025.

The Joint Committee wishes to acknowledge the decision made by Whangarei District Council (WDC) at its meeting on 24 July 2025 to continue as a shareholder of Northland Inc for a further one-year period until 30 June 2027 and to provide a funding contribution of \$587,000 to the Investment and Growth Reserve (IGR) for 2026/27. We appreciate the constructive spirit in which this decision was made and recognise the positive outcomes that have been achieved through collaboration. The response from the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) to our *Igniting Northland's Potential* regional deals light-touch proposal reinforces the strong need for us to continue working together in areas like economic development.

As you are aware, the level of funding allocated by WDC for 2026/27 is less than expected under the Northland Inc Shareholders' Agreement. In this context we also acknowledge your interest, set out in your letter of 15 August 2025, in reviewing this position following the completion of a more detailed benefit study. We welcome the opportunity to continue engaging in good faith discussions with WDC on this matter.

To support this, the Joint Commitment has directed staff to prepare a benefit report on the Investment and Growth Reserve (IGR), including Northland Inc operational funding, before the end of November 2025. Such a benefit study will be helpful to all shareholders in understanding the value and impact of the IGR and Northland Inc. Such a report will be of value to all shareholder councils as they prepare their respective 2027-2037 Long Term Plans (LTPs) and engage in broader discussions on regional economic development.

Finally, the Joint Committee encourages WDC to consider making, as part of the 2027-2037 LTP, an unqualified commitment to being a shareholder of Northland Inc and to providing a 10-year funding contribution into the IGR that conforms with the expectations set out in the Northland Inc Shareholders' Agreement. An unqualified commitment does not limit WDC's



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rights and abilities, as set out under the Shareholders' Agreement, to cease being a shareholder of Northland Inc and provide funding into the IGR. But what such a decision does do is to bring WDC in line with the commitments made by the other three councils, provides clarity and confidence to all parties involved, and reduces the administrative and strategic uncertainty that has arisen from the conditional arrangements contained within the current WDC 2024-2034 LTP.

We look forward to continuing our collaboration and to working together to ensure the long-term success of Northland Inc and the equitable development of our region and districts.

Ngā mihi nui,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Vujcich", is written over a light grey rectangular background.

**FNDC Cr John Vujcich**

**Chair of the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee**

CC FNDC Cr Penetaui Kleskovic (Deputy Chair), KDC Mayor Craig Jepson, KDC Deputy Mayor Jonathan Larson, WDC Mayor Vince Cocurullo, WDC Deputy Mayor Phil Halse, NRC Chair Geoff Crawford and NRC Deputy Chair Tui Shortland

**TITLE: Northland Inc Limited: Reporting Against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on the Statement of Intent 2025/26 including Half-Year Financials and Quarterly Highlights**

**From:** Codie McIntyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist

**Authorised by Group Manager/s:** Bruce Howse, Pou Taumatua – Group Manager Corporate Services, on 02 March 2026

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**Whakarāpopototanga / Executive summary**

The Joint Regional Economic Development Committee (Joint Committee) has received from Northland Inc Limited (Northland Inc) reporting against its Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) set out in its Statement of Intent (SOI) 2025/26 and half-year financials for the period ending 31 December 2025 (**Attachment 1**).

Staff have reviewed the progress against the 14 KPIs. The following table summarises the progress made within the first six months.

Description of Progress	Number of Indicators	Specific Indicators
Target already met	5	1, 2, 5, 9, 14
On track to meet target	7	3, 4, 7, 8,10, 11,12
Behind target	2	6, 13

Out of Northland Inc’s fourteen KPIs, annual targets have already been met for five, with a further seven KPIs on track to meet their targets by 30 June 2026. Two KPIs are behind target (less than 50% complete): one of the KPIs is in the Tourism and Destination section, with the number of destination management plan initiatives completed, currently below half and the other is in relation to the Māori Economic development area, where the survey of Māori organisations whom Northland Inc support is yet to be undertaken and will occur in quarter three, meaning that this KPI is hard to substantiate.

The Northland Inc financial performance for the six months to 31 December 2025 is tracking ahead of budget, with the total result being better than budgeted by \$141,994 (a year-to date surplus of \$17,293 versus a budgeted deficit of \$124,701). This positive variance is due to a modest uplift in BAU revenue for the half (+\$29,873) and the receipt of a higher than budgeted uplift in strategic project revenue (+\$644,747), which is partly offset by higher strategic project expenditure (-\$517,398). The anticipated full year result is a net surplus of \$5,284 which is \$4,557 ahead of the corresponding budgeted surplus of \$727. With a closing balance of \$1,661,510 at the end of December 2025, Northland Inc appears well placed to manage operating cashflows through to the end of the financial year.

Representatives from Northland Inc will attend the Joint Committee meeting to provide comment on the KPI report and six-monthly financials and answer any questions. Northland Inc will also take the opportunity during discussion on this item to update the Joint Committee on some of the important work areas across the last quarter (**Attachment 2**).

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**Ngā mahi tūtohutia / Recommendation**

That the report ‘Northland Inc Limited: Reporting Against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on the Statement of Intent 2025/26 including Half-Year Financials and Quarterly Highlights’ by

Codie McIntyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist and dated 12 February 2026, be received.

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### Background/Tuhinga

Not applicable.

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### Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Attachment 1: Northland Inc - Key Performance Indicator Report 2025-2026 and six-monthly financials for period ending 31 December 2025  
YTD 31 December 2025 [↓](#) 

Attachment 2: Northland Inc Quarterly Highlights: February 2026 [↓](#) 

## Northland Inc -Key Performance Indicator Report 2025-2026 YTD 31 December 2025

INFRASTRUCTURE AND INVESTMENT		TARGET	YTD 31 December 2025
1.	Number of inward delegations hosted (Massey University, Japanese Consulate, Obayashi Corporation)	3	3
2.	Number of high impact projects that are being actively supported (reporting by regional strategic sectors)	4	6
<b>Reporting by regional strategic sectors</b>			
	Manufacturing		3
	Agriculture		1
	Tourism		2

TUPUTUPU – GROW NORTHLAND		TARGET	YTD 31 December 2025
3.	Projects assisted through stages of growth (Includes Navigator and Protective Cropping)	6	5
4.	Number of businesses and landowners that as a result of engagement are exploring, developing, leading and delivering on change activity	24	14

TOURISM & DESTINATION MANAGEMENT		TARGET	YTD 31 December 2025
5.	Number of destination marketing campaign initiatives to generate national exposure to the region (reporting will include number of businesses that are engaged in the campaign).	1	1
	Number of businesses engaged in the campaign	-	60
6.	Number of Destination Management Plan initiatives completed in partnership with stakeholders.	7	3

INNOVATION & ENTERPRISE		TARGET	YTD 31 December 2025
7.	Number of business engagements assisted (includes both one to one and one to some assistance and reporting by TA and industry)	250	158
<b>Engagements by TA and Industry</b>			
	FNDC		55
	KDC		18
	WDC		83
	Other		2
Accommodation & Food			7
Administrative & Support			11
Agriculture & forestry & fishing			9
Arts & Recreation			11
Construction			17
Education & Training			4
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste			1
Financial & Insurance			2
Health Care & Social Assistance			7
Information media & Telecommunications			2
Manufacturing			26
Mining			0
Other			4
Professional & Scientific & Technical			29
Public Admin & Safety			0
Rental & Hiring & Real Estate			4
Retail trade			16
Transport & postal and warehousing			0
Wholesale trade			8

INNOVATION & ENTERPRISE		TARGET	YTD 31 December 2025
8.	Proportion of those business engagements that are Māori (by TA and industry).	35%	26% (42)
<b>Māori Business Engagements by TA and Industry</b>			
	FNDC		21
	KDC		3
	WDC		18
	Accommodation & Food		2
	Administrative & Support		6
	Agriculture & forestry & fishing		3
	Arts & Recreation		2
	Construction		5
	Education & Training		1
	Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste		0
	Financial & Insurance		2
	Health Care & Social Assistance		1
	Information media & Telecommunications		0
	Manufacturing		1
	Mining		0
	Other		1
	Professional & Scientific & Technical		9
	Public Admin & Safety		0
	Rental & Hiring & Real Estate		2
	Retail trade		5
	Transport & postal and warehousing		0
	Wholesale trade		2

ADVOCACY & BRAND		TARGET	YTD 31 December 2025
9.	Number of regional economic development updates or reports released	6	8
10.	Number of media features that profile the region.	24	15
11.	Number of media activity that references Northland Inc.	52	33

MĀORI ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		TARGET	YTD 31 December 2025
12.	Number of iwi/hapū groups and other Māori organisations e.g. marae, land trusts, etc. actively supported.	20	14
13.	Proportion of Māori organisations that are satisfied with Northland Inc support. (survey will be completed Q3)	>80%	-

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY		TARGET	YTD 31 December 2025
14.	Number of businesses and organisations supported to improve their environmental sustainability.	20	25

## Statement of Financial Performance to 31 December 2025

	YTD			Forecast to 30 June 26			
	Act \$	Bud \$	Var \$	For \$	Bud \$	Var \$	
<b>Revenue</b>							
<b>BAU Revenue</b>	1,569,403	1,539,530	29,873	3,172,032	3,094,063	77,969	
<b>Strategic Project Revenue</b>	1,039,747	395,000	644,747	2,268,553	1,060,000	1,208,553	
<b>Total Revenue</b>	2,609,149	1,934,530	674,620	5,440,585	4,154,063	1,286,522	
<b>Expenditure</b>							
<b>BAU Expenditure</b>	1,499,801	1,484,573	15,228	3,134,733	3,004,021	(130,712)	
<b>Strategic Project Expenditure</b>	1,092,056	574,658	517,398	2,300,568	1,149,315	(1,151,253)	
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	2,591,857	2,059,231	(532,626)	5,435,301	4,153,336	(1,281,965)	
<b>Total Surplus (Loss)</b>	17,293	(124,701)	141,994	5,284	727	4,557	



Financial Position	31 December 2025	30 June 2025
<b>Assets</b>		
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	1,939,123	1,734,840
<b>Total long-term assets</b>	192,718	218,030
<b>Total Assets</b>	2,131,841	1,952,870
<b>Liabilities</b>		
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	1,903,324	1,741,645
<b>Total liabilities</b>	1,903,324	1,741,645
<b>Total shareholders' equity</b>	228,518	211,225

Northland Inc Cashflow

Inclusive of GST																	
Northland INC	October		November		December		January		February		March		Actual YTD	Forecast YTD	Variance YTD	Cashflow Budget	
Cash Flow 2025/26	Forecast	actual															
<b>INCOME</b>																	
Grants	31,625	57,500	0	0	690,000	690,000	0	0	721,625	0	0	0	1,437,500	1,411,625	25,875	2,886,500	
Opex					690,000	690,000			690,000				1,380,000	1,380,000	0	2,760,000	
NRC Feasibility Fund	31,625	57,500							31,625				57,500	31,625	25,875	126,500	
BAU	66,036	81,936	66,036	76,504	66,036	73,502	66,036	0	66,036	0	70,347	0	582,189	396,216	185,973	1,028,172	
<b>Total Grant &amp; BAU Income</b>	<b>97,661</b>	<b>139,436</b>	<b>66,036</b>	<b>76,504</b>	<b>756,036</b>	<b>763,502</b>	<b>66,036</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>787,661</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>70,347</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,019,689</b>	<b>1,807,841</b>	<b>211,848</b>	<b>3,914,672</b>	
<b>Total Strategic Income</b>	<b>300,438</b>	<b>420,096</b>	<b>102,064</b>	<b>90,499</b>	<b>71,876</b>	<b>146,333</b>	<b>71,876</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>71,876</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>51,748</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,480,881</b>	<b>546,254</b>	<b>934,627</b>	<b>862,500</b>	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>398,099</b>	<b>559,532</b>	<b>168,100</b>	<b>167,003</b>	<b>827,912</b>	<b>909,835</b>	<b>137,912</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>859,537</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>122,095</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,500,570</b>	<b>2,354,095</b>	<b>1,146,475</b>	<b>4,777,172</b>	
<b>EXPENSES</b>																	
Salaries	193,472	258,027	193,472	203,064	193,472	165,092	193,472	0	193,472	0	193,472	0	1,149,734	1,160,830	(11,096)	2,321,660	
BAU Programme Expenditure	21,285	11,311	28,185	19,526	71,285	66,133	21,285	0	21,285	0	34,535	0	245,523	191,508	54,015	395,715	
Destinational Management & Marketi	13,417	4,099	13,417	12,329	13,417	15,773	13,417	0	13,417	0	13,417	0	137,388	80,502	56,886	161,000	
Co Sharing Space	671	0	671	0	671	0	671	0	671	0	671	0	0	4,024	(4,024)	8,050	
Business Dev	7,197	7,212	14,097	7,197	7,197	355	7,197	0	7,197	0	7,197	0	58,130	56,982	1,148	100,165	
Investment	0	0	0	0	50,000	50,005	0	0	0	0	13,250	0	50,005	50,000	5	126,500	
Overheads	92,961	119,098	92,970	148,769	115,959	122,898	92,970		92,965		101,771		762,199	593,909	168,290	1,232,104	
Strategic Project Expenses	31,640	93,364	131,640	126,735	101,640	167,150	31,640	0	31,640	0	31,640	0	954,123	359,840	594,283	379,675	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>339,358</b>	<b>481,799</b>	<b>446,267</b>	<b>498,094</b>	<b>482,356</b>	<b>521,272</b>	<b>339,367</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>339,362</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>361,418</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,111,579</b>	<b>2,306,087</b>	<b>805,492</b>	<b>4,329,154</b>	
GST estimate			15,601	15,601			59,261				92,043		252,263	205,656	46,607		
<b>SUB TOTAL OPERATING CASHFLOWS</b>	<b>58,741</b>	<b>77,733</b>	<b>(293,768)</b>	<b>(346,692)</b>	<b>345,556</b>	<b>388,563</b>	<b>(260,715)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>520,175</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(331,366)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>136,727</b>	<b>(157,648)</b>	<b>294,375</b>	<b>448,018</b>	
<b>TOTAL OPERATING CASHFLOWS</b>	<b>58,741</b>	<b>77,733</b>	<b>(293,768)</b>	<b>(346,692)</b>	<b>345,556</b>	<b>388,563</b>	<b>(260,715)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>520,175</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(331,366)</b>	<b>0</b>					
OPENING BALANCE	1,541,906	1,541,906	1,600,647	1,619,639	1,306,880	1,272,947	1,652,436	1,661,510	1,391,720	1,661,510	1,911,896	1,661,510					
Operating surplus/(deficit)	58,741	77,733	(293,768)	(346,692)	345,556	388,563	(260,715)	0	520,175	0	(331,366)	0					
Non operating surplus/(deficit)																	
<b>CLOSING BALANCE</b>	<b>1,600,647</b>	<b>1,619,639</b>	<b>1,306,880</b>	<b>1,272,947</b>	<b>1,652,436</b>	<b>1,661,510</b>	<b>1,391,720</b>	<b>1,661,510</b>	<b>1,911,896</b>	<b>1,661,510</b>	<b>1,580,530</b>	<b>1,661,510</b>					

This cash flow includes GST on all expenses (except salaries, kiwisaver, bank fees & operating leases) although some like Directors fees or director travel may not have GST attached. As these are minor they do not have an impact on the result but this has been done in favour of presenting a conservative approach.



## RESPONSE TO JANUARY WEATHER EVENTS

Northland Inc worked in partnership with regional agencies and leaders in the immediate aftermath of the January 2026 weather events. Advocating for the region through national forums, including the Visitor Sector Emergency Advisory Group and providing direct feedback to MSD and MBIE. Utilising partner networks including NorthChamber and Whāriki, Northland Inc collected feedback from regional businesses around the economic impact of the weather event, which was shared with relevant forums and will be discussed in the Small Business Advisory Group meeting with Minister Penk on 24 February.

Once the immediate impacts had passed, the Destination Management & Marketing team bought forward their Autumn marketing campaign to help reassure potential visitors that the Northland region was open, and support ongoing visitation to the region in the lead up to Waitangi Day, Easter and the April school holidays.



## EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CHANGES

The Northland Inc Executive Leadership team has recently welcomed two new members. Tui Rutherford (Te Rarawa, Ngāpuhi, Te Roroa) joins as the new Head of Investment.

Tui brings a strong background across central and local government and economic development. Most recently, he was Head of Small Business Services at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, working closely with government, industry, and regional partners to support business growth and investment outcomes. Prior to this he has held key roles with Tātaki Auckland Unlimited and Auckland Council, brings a background in private sector enterprise level broadcast technology sales in New Zealand and Australia (TVNZ Satellite Services, Cygnus Satellite), and has contributed through a range of governance roles across community, small business, and Māori organisations.



Tui Rutherford

Ben Chapman also joins as Head of Destination, moving across from his previous role leading the Business, Innovation and Growth team. Ben has worked in tourism across New Zealand and offshore, including roles with Tourism New Zealand in Singapore and wider Asia, Destination Queenstown, Business South, and senior sales and marketing roles with Cruising Milford Sound and NZONE Skydive. He has also run his own tourism advisory business, Tourism Partners Ltd.

Ben and Tui are joined by Amanda Blake, whose role as Delegations Advisor will focus on hosting inward investment delegations across the region.



Ben Chapman

## DELIVERING IMPACT THROUGH DESTINATION MARKETING

Northland Inc, through the Destination Management & Marketing team, continues to promote the Northland region domestically and internationally.

Northland Inc secured two additional campaigns funded by the Regional Tourism Boost Fund Round 2 announced earlier in January, in addition to the Rotorua-led collective marketing campaign and partnership activity to drive visitation from the Australian market (announced in November 2025). The first is a \$1.2 million national campaign coordinated by Tātaki Auckland Unlimited to encourage visitors from the USA and Canada to discover all corners of New Zealand, and the second is a \$600,000 cycling initiative that will encourage more Australian holidaymakers to experience New Zealand's Great Rides, led by Destination Great Lake Taupō. The team are working closely with the lead RTOs to ensure the Northland offering is front of mind.

International trade marketing was a key focus of late 2025, with Northland represented at several international trade events across the United Kingdom. Tourism New Zealand's Kiwi Link UK and Europe trade event in London provided the opportunity to promote Northland to UK and German markets who have strong interest in the region, but often only visit during peak season. Trade Marketing Manager, Sarah Archer, delivered a bespoke Northland training session for over 50 frontline travel sellers, and then hosted over 60 one-on-one appointments over the next 2 days.

Northland representatives from Explore/Fullers Bay of Islands, The Scenic Group, Copthorne Hotel and Terra & Tide also attended the event providing a strong Northland presence.

International trade marketing is underway again in March, with Northland Inc attending the Tourism New Zealand Regional Showcase along with other RTO representatives to connect and educate travel trade. This is followed by the RTNZ Trade show in Auckland, with two days of meetings with New Zealand based inbound tour operators, to upskill them on selling Northland as a destination.



## SUPPORTING REGIONAL BUSINESSES

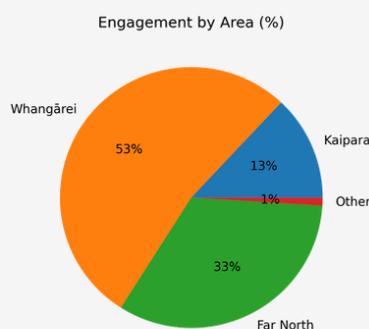
The Northland Inc Business, Innovation & Growth Team are out across the Northland region, meeting with businesses to support them on their growth journeys with assistance through the Regional Business Partner Network and Callaghan Innovation grants.

### Business Engagement

In the year to date (from 1 July '25), our Business Innovation and Growth Team have engaged with 185 businesses across Northland through the Regional Business Partner Programme & MBIE Innovation Services, delivering \$184,235 of funding into Northland businesses. 27% of these businesses self-identify as being pakihi Māori.

The team are supporting the MBIE AI Automation Pilot rollout for Northland, and supporting upcoming workshops focused on management, social media, health and safety, content marketing and governance for Northland businesses.

Business are able to connect with a Growth Advisor via the Northland Inc website. Keep up to date with BIG Team visits around the region on the Northland Inc Facebook page.



## LEADERSHIP IN THE PRIMARY SECTOR

Following the signing of a [Waka Hourua Agreement with Massey University](#) in late 2025, work to develop regionally based, primary sector focused education and research continue to gain momentum. Massey has confirmed the appointment of two key in region roles: a Professor and Strategic Lead, and a Māori Engagement Lead, with a 12 month offer currently in place.

These positions represent a critical investment in strengthening Massey's commitment to the region, deepening engagement with communities, and building the foundations for an effective local delivery model. A Northland Inc service delivery agreement to support this is currently under development.

The Tuputupu Grow Northland team are delivering 'From Gate to Port' workshops across the region, in partnership with regional and national export bodies. The practical workshop is delivered specifically for growers and producers in Northland who are considering pathways to market (or are already exporting) and want a clearer understanding of what is required and what support is available.

The workshops will bring together key stakeholders working in the export and primary sector space, including Ministry for Primary Industries, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, Horticulture New Zealand, NorthChamber and Northland Inc.

Advisors for each organisation will be on hand to explain requirements, services and support available to growers who are exploring export opportunities, providing important information sharing in supporting the export capabilities of regional growers and producers.

Workshops will take place in:

Tuesday 17 March – Ngāwhā | 2:00–4:00pm  
Wednesday 18 March – Kaitiaki | 10:00am–12:00pm  
Thursday 19 March – Mangawhai | 10:00am–12:00pm  
Thursday 19 March – Whangārei | 3:00–5:00pm

[Further information is available here.](#)

**FROM GATE TO PORT**  
Taking Te Tai Tokerau Food and Fibre to the World

WORKSHOP SERIES FOCUSED ON PRODUCING FOOD AND PRIMARY SECTOR PRODUCTS FOR NEW ZEALAND AND EXPORT MARKETS

Logos: Northland Inc, Ministry for Primary Industries, New Zealand Trade & Enterprise, Horticulture

**TITLE: Te Rerenga: Taitokerau Northland Economic Wellbeing Pathway - Progress Update**

**From:** Codie McIntyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist

**Authorised by Group Manager/s:** Bruce Howse, Pou Taumatua – Group Manager Corporate Services, on 03 March 2026

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**Executive summary/Whakarāpopototanga**

The purpose of this report is to update the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee (Joint Committee) on progress against the priority pipeline actions within *Te Rerenga: Taitokerau Northland Economic Wellbeing Pathway* (Te Rerenga), and to seek written feedback from Northland Inc on the strategic importance of the strategy and their role in its future implementation.

Te Rerenga is available online at <https://www.northlandnz.com/northland-inc/what-we-do/regional-leadership-strategy-and-insights/tererenga/>.

This is the first progress update since Te Rerenga was completed and noted by the Joint Committee on 26 July 2024. **Attachment 1** provides the priority pipeline contained in Te Rerenga, followed by a table summarising progress to date. While a dedicated implementation programme has not yet been established, the progress update shows that many actions are underway. Some are being undertaken with direct alignment to Te Rerenga; others are advancing independently of but contributing towards the actions. Contributions to the update were provided from Northland Inc and the four local authorities.

The absence of a clear lead agency and coordinated programme raises important questions about the ownership of and responsibility for Te Rerenga. In particular, there is uncertainty about which organisation is best positioned to drive implementation, and what role Northland Inc (as the region's Economic Development Agency) should play. Northland Inc has included the high-level outcomes of Te Rerenga within its 2025/26 Statement of Intent, signalling a recognition of Te Rerenga at a strategic planning level. To support decision-making, the Joint Committee should seek Northland Inc's views on this.

The Joint Committee may also wish to offer comment on actions that are a priority for them and the frequency of any ongoing reporting that they may wish to receive.

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**Recommendation(s)**

1. That the report 'Te Rerenga: Taitokerau Northland Economic Wellbeing Pathway - Progress Update' by Codie McIntyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist and dated 2 March 2026, be received.
2. That Northland Inc be requested to provide written comment by 31 March 2026 on:
  - a. Whether they have capacity and capability to lead out the implementation of Te Rerenga, and
  - b. The level of priority implementing Te Rerenga has in comparison to their other activities / work programmes.

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**Options**

No.	Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
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1	<p>Request Northland Inc to provide comment on:</p> <p>a. Whether they have capacity and capability to lead out the implementation of Te Rerenga, and</p> <p>b. The level of priority implementing Te Rerenga has in comparison to their other activities / work programmes.</p>	<p>Clarifies accountability and role expectation in regard to the implementation of Te Rerenga.</p> <p>Helps understand whether non-implementation to date is due to resourcing, prioritisation, or organisational constraints.</p> <p>Supports discussion and feedback on the Northland Inc SOI 2026/27</p>	<p>It will take time and resources for the Northland Inc Board and staff to compile a response.</p>
2	<p>Do not request Northland Inc to provide comment.</p>	<p>Allows Northland Inc effort to remain focussed on BAU.</p>	<p>Do not receive Northland Inc's perspective on Te Rerenga and its implementation.</p>

The staff's recommended option is Option 1.

## Considerations

### 1. Alignment to council strategic direction - community outcomes

The matters covered in this report relate to the following community outcomes:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Protected and flourishing native life                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy waters, land and air                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Safe and resilient transport networks                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A sustainable, innovative and equitable economy  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meaningful partnerships with tāngata whenua            | <input type="checkbox"/> Carbon neutral, resilient communities in a changing climate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Efficient, progressive and transparent council systems |  |

### 2. Climate Impact

There are no known impacts in relation to causing an increase in regional greenhouse gas emissions. Te Rerenga supports regional attempts to become more resilient to the impacts of climate change and to support businesses transition towards net-zero carbon-dioxide emissions.

### 3. Environmental Impact

Te Rerenga strives to take an intergenerational view of key issues, with the goal to enable transformational change and better outcomes for the community now and into the future.

While the strategy focuses on economic development, it supports other pieces of work that foster a pathway to environmental sustainability, social prosperity, and wellbeing.

#### **4. Community views**

A Steering Group was assembled by Northland Inc to set the strategic direction, identify priorities, provide input into a high-level action plan and advocate for strategic outcomes within regional networks. The Steering Group includes representatives from Te Kahu o Taonui, Whāriki, Northland Inc, the Joint Committee, and the Tai Tokerau Regional Public Services Commissioner, as well as Northland business and community leaders. Engagement across the region gathered insights from business and industry sectors, local and central government, Māori, community including youth, workforce and education.

Since its completion, Te Rerenga has been formally endorsed by Te Kahu O Taonui, Far North District Council, Northland Regional Council and Whangarei District Council. It has also been used as a point of reference in the development of the regional deal proposal and the Northland infrastructure plan, and has been utilised or referenced by a number of other stakeholders, such as central government agencies, North Chamber, etc., as being a foundational document for economic development in the region.

#### **5. Māori impact statement**

Te Rerenga was co-designed and developed in partnership with iwi and hāpu Māori, with the co-chair of the Steering Group being a Te Kahu O Taonui (Te Tai Tokerau Iwi Chairs Collective) representative and the work undertaken by the group, being based on a tikanga Framework. Te Kahu O Taonui have also endorsed Te Rerenga. The implementation of Te Rerenga would have positive consequences for Māori.

#### **6. Financial implications**

At the time of writing this report there are no known financial implications associated with this decision.

#### **7. Implementation issues**

At the time of this decision, there is no organisation or group actively leading the implementation of Te Rerenga and the immediate actions identified within Te Rerenga regarding an initial workplan remains to be completed.

#### **8. Significance and engagement**

In relation to section 79 of the Local Government Act 2002, this decision is considered of low significance when assessed against Northland Regional Council's significant and engagement policy. This does not mean that this matter is not of significance to tangata whenua and/or individual communities, but that the Joint Committee is able to make decisions relating to this matter without undertaking further consultation or engagement. As noted in the Community views section above, considerable input and feedback had been sought from a wide range of partners and stakeholders in developing Te Rerenga.

#### **9. Policy, risk management and legislative compliance**

Making this decision is consistent with policy and legislative requirements. The role and responsibilities of the Joint Committee are set out in its Terms of Reference.

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### **Background/Tuhinga**

At its meeting on 25 May 2020, the Northland Mayoral Forum tasked the region's Chief Executives with developing a regional economic development strategy as part of a broader proposal for jointly delivering local government economic development services across Northland. Northland Inc, as the

region's Economic Development Agency, were then tasked with facilitating the development of a strategy in partnership with iwi and hāpu Māori, business and industry, regional communities, local and central government.

To support this mandate, Northland Inc undertook comprehensive background research, reviewing key strategic documents related to economic development and the wellbeing economy, and integrating relevant elements into the emerging framework. Development of Te Rerenga was guided by a Steering Group comprising representatives from key sectors and stakeholders across the region, reflecting the significant collaborative effort underpinning the strategy. The steering group was co-chaired by a Te Kahu O Taonui representative and the current chair of the Joint Committee.

The Joint Committee was directly involved throughout the development process. On 30 September 2021, the Joint Committee allocated \$80,000 from the Investment and Growth Reserve (IGR) as co-funding for the development of Te Rerenga. Additional co-funders included the Ministry of Social Development (\$100,000) and Whangarei District Council (\$25,000). A further allocation of \$10,000 was approved at its meeting on 23 February 2024 to enable Northland Inc to complete the strategy and provide a foundation for future detailed investment and implementation.

Across its development, Te Rerenga was considered at **seven** previous Joint Committee meetings/workshops prior to its completion being noted in July 2024:

- 20 April 2023 – high-level direction
- 18 May 2023 – strawman narrative
- 15 June 2023 – initial draft
- 20 July 2023 – second draft
- 28 September 2023 – revised draft
- 30 November 2023 – provisional final draft
- 25 March 2024 – workshop to refine final draft

In parallel, the strategy was shaped through extensive regional engagement, including workshops and discussions with industry sectors, thought leaders, rangatahi, the Northland Chamber of Commerce, SME representatives, central government agencies through the Tai Tokerau Northland Economic Action Plan Advisory and Working Groups, Council Māori Advisory Forums, community groups, private sector stakeholders, councils, the Large Enterprise Chief Executive Forum, and the Mayoral Forum.

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## Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Attachment 1: Te Rerenga: Priority Pipeline Update [↓](#) 

# Our Priority Pipeline

To start Taitokerau Northland on the journey to success, we have identified actions that will drive the initial transformation to a wellbeing economy by 2040.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

*A multi decade Resilience Plan for multi modal transport infrastructure, energy, water and digital connectivity, with immediate actions identified.*

Connecting Taitokerau Northland - Deliver a Northland Expressway and improvement in major roads

- Implement a quality transport system connecting Northland to Auckland ensuring roads are safe for our community.
- Northland Expressway (four-lane) from Warkworth to Whangārei
- Resilient State Highways Whangārei to Te Hiku
- Multi modal access from Northport to Auckland
- Roading network across Northland improved and resilient
- New Whangārei Airport development confirmed
- Rail link Auckland north with mid-north logistics hub

## CHANGE FOR A RESILIENT ENVIRONMENT

*Create resilient infrastructure by improving critical services and ensuring our communities are ready and supported around changes in climate*

- Energy - Facilitate renewable energy generation including an upgraded power transmission line Bream Bay to Kaitiaki, and support of a regional network of power generation and distribution with maximum benefit to consumers
- Water - Support security of water supply for industry and towns/communities, primary sector, and wastewater and waste improvements
- Digital - Improve connectivity, skills and capability, providing equitable and affordable coverage across the region

## DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

*Enhance the value of our visitor experiences in collaboration with Iwi, Hapa and stakeholders, for the benefit of our communities, businesses, the environment, and future generation*

- Acceleration and further resources for the implementation of the Taitokerau Northland Destination Management Plan including product development, environmental stewardship, marketing, capability, insights, leadership and infrastructure
- Deliver Taitokerau Northland positioning as a cohesive identity - celebrating and promoting our unique value proposition increase quality visitor accommodation across Northland
- Develop the entertainment precinct in Whangārei's Town Basin

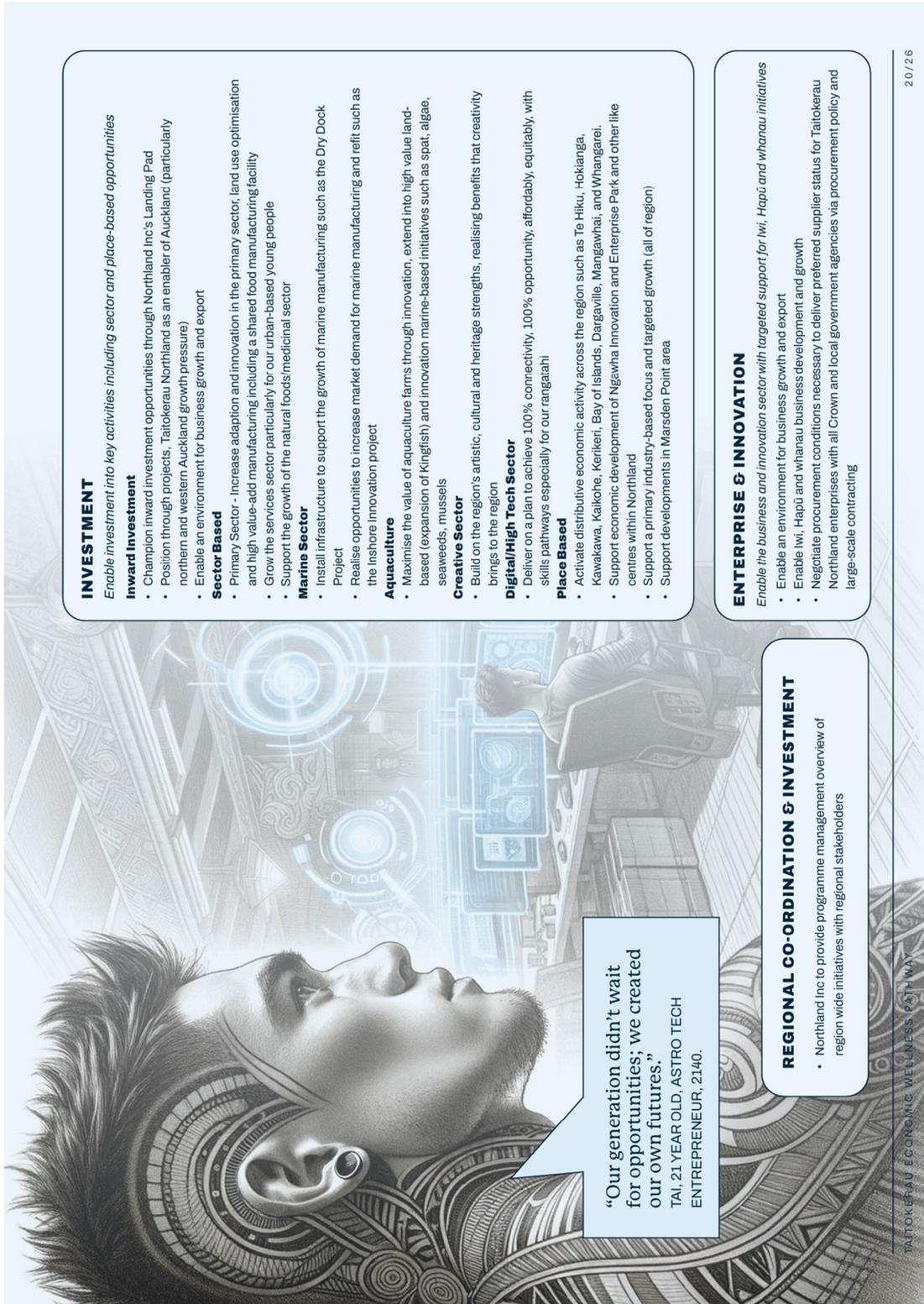
"We've grown a knowledge-driven economy and share our talents across the globe."

DAVID, 29 YEAR OLD, 2038

## ENVIRONMENT

*Protect and enhance the biodiversity & our natural resources through increased investments in innovation & workforce development*

- Develop a long-term adaptive roadmap that ensures the people and environment of Taitokerau Northland are resilient in a changing climate and the region transitions equitably to a thriving net zero emission society



“Our generation didn’t wait for opportunities; we created our own futures.”  
TAI, 21 YEAR OLD, ASTRO TECH ENTREPRENEUR, 2140.

**REGIONAL CO-ORDINATION & INVESTMENT**

- Northland Inc to provide programme management overview of region wide initiatives with regional stakeholders

**INVESTMENT**

Enable investment into key activities including sector and place-based opportunities

**Inward Investment**

- Champion inward investment opportunities through Northland Inc’s Landing Pad
- Position through projects, Taiokearu Northland as an enabler of Auckland (particularly northern and western Auckland growth pressure)
- Enable an environment for business growth and export

**Sector Based**

- Primary Sector - Increase adaption and innovation in the primary sector, land use optimisation and high value-add manufacturing including a shared food manufacturing facility
- Grow the services sector particularly for our urban-based young people
- Support the growth of the natural foods/medicinal sector

**Marine Sector**

- Install infrastructure to support the growth of marine manufacturing such as the Dry Dock Project
- Realise opportunities to increase market demand for marine manufacturing and reft such as the Inshore Innovation project

**Aquaculture**

- Maximise the value of aquaculture farms through innovation, extend into high value land-based (expansion of Kingfish) and innovation marine-based initiatives such as spat, algae, seaweeds, mussels

**Creative Sector**

- Build on the region’s artistic, cultural and heritage strengths, realising benefits that creativity brings to the region

**Digital/High Tech Sector**

- Deliver on a plan to achieve 100% connectivity, 100% opportunity, affordably, equitably, with skills pathways especially for our rangatahi

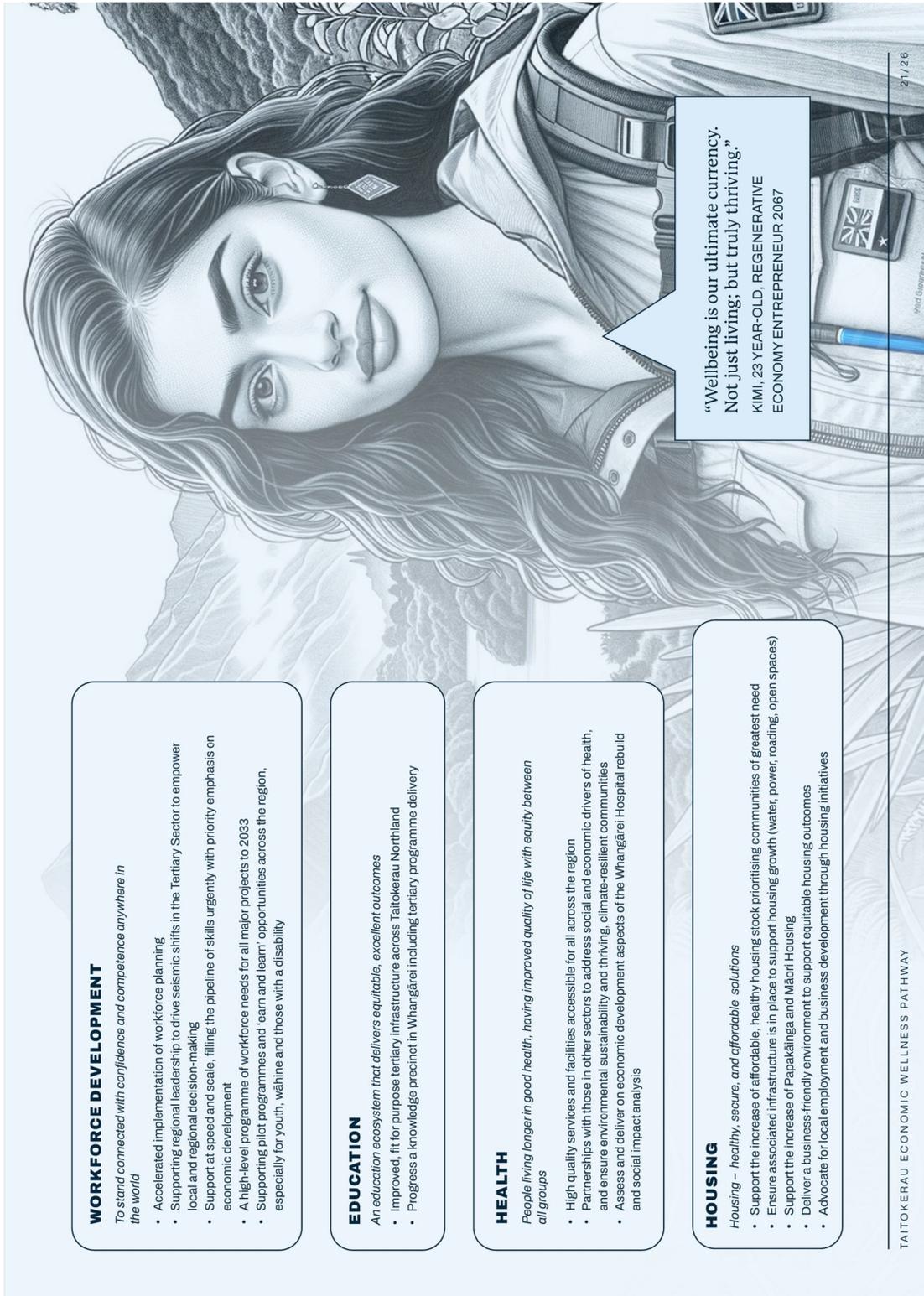
**Place Based**

- Activate distributive economic activity across the region such as Te Hiku, Hokianga, Kawakawa, Kaitiaki, Kerikeri, Bay of Islands, Dargaville, Mangawhai, and Whangarei.
- Support economic development of Ngawha Innovation and Enterprise Park and other like centres within Northland
- Support a primary industry-based focus and targeted growth (all of region)
- Support developments in Marsden Point area

**ENTERPRISE & INNOVATION**

Enable the business and innovation sector with targeted support for Iwi, Hapu and whanau initiatives

- Enable an environment for business growth and export
- Enable Iwi, Hapu and whanau business development and growth
- Negotiate procurement conditions necessary to deliver preferred supplier status for Taiokearu Northland enterprises with all Crown and local government agencies via procurement policy and large-scale contracting



**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

*To stand connected with confidence and competence anywhere in the world*

- Accelerated implementation of workforce planning
- Supporting regional leadership to drive seismic shifts in the Tertiary Sector to empower local and regional decision-making
- Support at speed and scale, filling the pipeline of skills urgently with priority emphasis on economic development
- A high-level programme of workforce needs for all major projects to 2033
- Supporting pilot programmes and 'earn and learn' opportunities across the region, especially for youth, wāhine and those with a disability

**EDUCATION**

*An education ecosystem that delivers equitable, excellent outcomes*

- Improved, fit for purpose tertiary infrastructure across Taikōkerāu Northland
- Progress a knowledge precinct in Whangārei including tertiary programme delivery

**HEALTH**

*People living longer in good health, having improved quality of life with equity between all groups*

- High quality services and facilities accessible for all across the region
- Partnerships with those in other sectors to address social and economic drivers of health, and ensure environmental sustainability and thriving, climate-resilient communities
- Assess and deliver on economic development aspects of the Whangārei Hospital rebuild and social impact analysis

**HOUSING**

*Housing – healthy, secure, and affordable solutions*

- Support the increase of affordable, healthy housing stock prioritising communities of greatest need
- Ensure associated infrastructure is in place to support housing growth (water, power, roading, open spaces)
- Support the increase of Papakāinga and Māori Housing
- Deliver a business-friendly environment to support equitable housing outcomes
- Advocate for local employment and business development through housing initiatives

**“Wellbeing is our ultimate currency. Not just living, but truly thriving.”**

**KIMI, 23 YEAR-OLD, REGENERATIVE ECONOMY ENTREPRENEUR 2067**

TAIKOKERAU ECONOMIC WELLNESS PATHWAY

21/26

## Te Rerenga: Priority Pipeline Update

### Infrastructure: Change for a Resilient Environment

Create resilient infrastructure by improving critical services and ensuring our communities are ready and supported around changes in climate

Priority Actions Identified in Te Rerenga		Relevant Regional Projects and Ongoing Progress	
Category	Actions	Projects/Activities	Progress
Planning	<b><i>A multi decade Resilience Plan for multi modal transport infrastructure, energy, water and digital connectivity, with immediate actions identified</i></b>	Development of a Regional Infrastructure Plan	The development of a Regional Infrastructure Plan is currently underway
		Future Development Strategy	WDC and NRC prepared the strategy as part of the Government’s National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 and had been adopted by both Councils. Both Councils will jointly prepare an Implementation Plan.  The Implementation Plan provides an added layer of detail about projects, timelines and outcomes to achieve the vision and objectives within the strategy. Work is now underway to complete the Implementation Plan.
		Far North District Wide Spatial Strategy	FNDC has commenced a District Wide Spatial Strategy with a focus on interventions to foster economic development across the district. This builds on the successful and adopted Te Pātukurea – Kerikeri/Waipapa Spatial Plan that covers 50% of the projected population growth in the Far North District and followed a Future Development Strategy approach.  The District Wide Spatial Strategy is expected to be finalized by late 2027. If the Government’s Resource Managed Reforms proceed as anticipated, the district’s spatial scenarios will be finalized by the end of 2026, allowing them to contribute to the Regional Spatial Plan.
Multi Modal Transport Infrastructure	<b><i>Implement a quality transport system connecting Northland to Auckland ensuring roads</i></b>	Section 3B: SH15 Loop Road to Tarewa	For the Brynderwyns section, geotechnical investigations to refine the preferred route began in 2025 and will move further north this year. The Notice of Requirement for this section is on track to be lodged in mid 2026.
		Section 3A: Port Marsden Highway to SH15 Loop Road	
		Section 2C: Waipu to Port Marsden Highway	Engagement with affected landowners across the entire route is due to be completed in early to mid 2026, with NZTA due to lodge the preferred designation
		Section 2B: SH12 to Waipu	

	<b>are safe for our community:</b>		and consents required for the rest of the route by the end of 2026.
	<b>Northland Expressway (four-lane) from Warkworth to Whangārei</b>	Section 2A: Te Hana to SH12	
	<b>Roading network across Northland improved and resilient, including:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>State Highways Whangārei to Te Hiku</b></li></ul>	Maintenance and upgrades across the network.	NZTA continues to invest in maintenance and upgrades across the entire State Highway network, with a range of major renewal sites coming up in 2026: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SH12 Kaikohe township – Asphalt resurfacing</li><li>• SH12 Paparoa township – Road rebuild</li><li>• SH1 Whakapara/Puhipuhi– Stage 2 road rebuild</li><li>• SH11 Paihia – Drainage improvements and asphalt repairs.</li></ul>
	<b>Multi modal access from Northport to Auckland</b>	Northport expansion	Northport gained consent for their proposed expansion at the end of 2025. The timing of any implementation of it is still to be worked through with it being co-dependant on the Marsden railway spur.
	<b>New Whangārei Airport development confirmed</b>	Airport Location Study	WDC agreed that Ruatangata (referred to as Site 9 in the consultation document) was the best option for further investigation as a replacement airport location. The initial assessments (geotechnical, flooding, transport, ecology, noise, visual, archaeological, and social limitations) of the preferred Ruatangata site have been completed. WDC staff will report back to Council on progress with further technical investigations, including whether any factors crop up that eliminate Ruatangata.  Whether the airport is actually required is still not known, further funding is proposed in years 7 onwards of the current LTP for further work. It is expected that funding for the construction of a new airport will require external (Government or other) assistance.
	<b>Kaitaia Airport</b>	Upgrade of key airport infrastructure in the Far North	Kaitaia Airport upgrades are underway and being progressed through a partnership with iwi, strengthening long-term investment confidence by improving regional connectivity, resilience, and economic access for Te Hiku o Te Ika
	<b>Rail link Auckland north with mid-north logistics hub</b>	Re-opening of Kauri-Otiria line	KiwiRail have paused the upgrading and re-opening of this line, and it is now on hold with a plan to progress it alongside the Marsden Rail Spur project.

<p><b>Energy</b></p>	<p><b>Facilitate renewable energy generation including an upgraded power transmission line Bream Bay to Kaitaia, and support of a regional network of power generation and distribution with maximum benefit to consumers</b></p>	<p>Upgrade Northland's electricity infrastructure to enhance network resilience and capacity including the Energy Bridge project.</p>	<p>Central Government allocated up to \$2 million from the Regional Infrastructure Fund to investigate upgrading Northland's electricity transmission and distribution network.</p>
		<p>Enable renewable energy generation across the region to improve overall baseload capacity and regional energy security, including:</p> <p>Solar:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Papareireiā (Maungaturoto)</li> <li>• Station Rd (Dargaville)</li> <li>• Meridian Ruakaka Energy Park</li> <li>• Community solar projects in Te Kao, Waimamaku, and Horeke.</li> </ul> <p>Wind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kaiwaikawe Dargaville Wind Farm</li> <li>• Other regional opportunities.</li> </ul> <p>Geothermal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support future extensions of Top Energy's Ngāwha Geothermal Power Station</li> </ul>	<p>A number of community solar projects in Northland have been supported by Central Government through the Regional Infrastructure Fund, e.g. there has been about \$6m of funding approved into:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Te Kao Community Microgrid- To enable local Māori economic development by constructing a solar and wind powered microgrid connected to a community battery ensuring consistency of low-cost energy supply to the community and local businesses.</li> <li>• Horeke Valley Energy Infrastructure Upgrade- To construct strategic solar sites and address local energy needs through smart, integrated solar and battery power system.</li> <li>• Waimamaku Community Solar- To enable Māori economic resilience development in Waimamaku, Taitokerau by constructing and installing solar power and batteries to Waimamaku – Te Whakamaharatanga Marae, Waimamaku Resource Centre, Waimamaku Bar and Grill, Four Square and GAS Petrol Station, providing consistent and reliable power</li> </ul> <p>From a resiliency perspective, there have also been over 10 community resiliency sites (marae, sports hub, churches) within Northland supported to invest in renewable energy through the community renewable site.</p> <p>Private investment continues to land in renewable energy initiatives across the region, with the most recent projects underway being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kaiwaikawe Dargaville Wind Farm- The site will host the tallest and largest turbines ever installed in New Zealand and the components for these are being trucked across from Northport in mid-late February. The project is currently targeting an operational date of late 2026 and once operational is forecasted to generate up to 77MW.</li> <li>• Meridian Ruakaka Energy Park- Construction is underway on the solar farm, with it expected to start generating electricity in late 2026 with full commissioning in 2027. It includes over 250,000 solar panels spread over 172ha, generating about 130MW.</li> </ul>

<b>Digital</b>	<b>Improve connectivity, skills and capability, providing equitable and affordable coverage across the region</b>	Engage strategically with government and industry to advocate for improved telecommunications	Leveraging FNDC’s “Nothing But Net” Strategy, relationships with telecommunication companies and digital advocacy groups, like the Digital Inclusion Alliance Aotearoa, are being maintained.
		Support infrastructure expansion, including fibre rollout, rural broadband schemes, and free Wi-Fi hotspots across districts	
<b>Water</b>	<b>Support security of water supply for industry and towns/communities, primary sector, and wastewater and waste improvements</b>	Actively explore collaborative opportunities, including assessing the feasibility of shared or managed water services, or the establishment of a Northland CCO.	Northland’s new regional water CCO is progressing through its establishment phase now, with a Programme Director appointed and an interim advisory group being formed, ahead of a transition phase in 2026–2027, and full go live in July 2027
		Support Te Tai Tokerau Water Trust to deliver key water storage projects, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Otawere Reservoir – Mid North</li> <li>• Matawii – Mid North</li> <li>• Waihekeora – Kaipara West Coast</li> <li>• Stop bank Upgrade Te Kōpuru to Dargaville</li> <li>• Kaipara Water Pipeline</li> </ul>	Te Waihekeora was officially opened by the Prime Minister Luxon on Thursday 25 September 2025 and Otawere has begun storing water, with construction finishing at the end of 2025, with just some minor finishing work left to do.  As a result of a 17.5m loan from the Regional Infrastructure Fund, work has begun on the extension of the distribution network from Te Waihekeora north to Dargaville, which will be completed by the end of 2026. At the same time, TTWT is also delivering the construction of an 11km stop bank between Te Kopuru and Dargaville with the intent of protecting productive land and other assets from large floods.
		Utilise regional water storage infrastructure to boost primary production and expand horticultural activity.	As well as TTWT, there has also been a number of investments into other smaller water storage projects across Northland with the intent of these being to enable more productive use or better utilisation of land. An example of this is the funding that has been allocated to smaller community-based projects through the Regional Strategic Partnership Fund, and other initiatives, like the Lake Ōmāpere Restoration Project  In terms of uptake, Northland Inc’s Tuputupu team are working alongside NRC, TTWT, BSI- P&FR, Hort NZ and other key stakeholders build the case for investment in

			primary sector activity that would utilise the water available from Te Waihekeora.
		Ruakaka Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade	Preliminary design of the new treatment plant is complete with detailed site evaluations now complete. Construction of parts of the scheme is expected to begin in 2027, with the overall scheme expected to be operational around 2030.

## Destination Management

*Enhance the value of our visitor experiences in collaboration with Iwi, Hapū and stakeholders, for the benefit of our communities, businesses, the environment, and future generation*

Priority Actions Identified in Te Rerenga		Relevant Regional Projects and Ongoing Progress	
Category	Actions	Projects/Activities	Progress
<b>Product Development</b>	<b><i>Deliver Taitokerau Northland positioning as a cohesive identity – celebrating and promoting our unique value proposition</i></b>	Support further development of high-quality Māori tourism experiences, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hihiaua Cultural Centre (Stage 2)</li> <li>• Waitaki Landing</li> <li>• Rakau Rangatira Waipoua Forest</li> </ul>	Northland Inc are supporting the development of Māori Tourism experiences, utilising the Project Development fund as a tool to help them assess feasibility, build out businesses cases and become more investment ready, e.g. Muriwhenua Inc and their proposed redevelopment at Waitaki Landing, etc.
		Grow golf tourism through strategic initiatives targeting local, national and international markets, leveraging world-ranked golfing experiences	Northland Inc are continuing to work alongside key stakeholders in the golf tourism space (e.g. North Golf Association, golf clubs, etc.) to progress key actions identified in Kaipara District Council’s economic development strategy that aim to position Northland as a premier golfing destination. This work includes, the development of four golf itineraries, supporting regional golf-focussed famils and planned engagement with Tataki Auckland to work on joint golf tourism activities.
		Implement key projects from the Northland Walking & Cycling Strategy, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion &amp; extension of Pou Herenga Tai</li> <li>• Completion &amp; extension of Kaihu Vally Trail</li> <li>• Other community led initiatives</li> </ul>	Northland Inc’s promotional support extends into the cycling space, with the region (and Pou Herenga Tai Twin Coast Cycle Trail) being included in a digital campaign targeting Australian Holidaymakers running March- June 2026.
		Support funding for Waitangi to deliver critical upgrades and modernisation	The Waitangi Treaty Grounds received \$10m from the Regional Infrastructure Fund to fund crucial upgrades to infrastructure, including protecting historic buildings from water damage, replacing the floor, restoring carvings, etc. to ensure the grounds are in the best condition for future Waitangi commemorations and national bicentenaries in 2035 and 2040. The upgrades are expected to be complete by the end of 20206
<b><i>Increase quality visitor accommodation</i></b>		Increase quality of visitor accommodation	There is growing interest in the development of higher quality accommodation offering across Northland from the private sector. A few examples include:

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	<b>across Northland</b>	stock across the region, including a focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bay of Islands</li> <li>• Whangarei</li> <li>• Hokianga</li> <li>• Mangawhai</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Millennium and Copthorne Hotels New Zealand purchasing land in Whangarei with a view to develop a hotel</li> <li>• Capstone Management being appointed as the new management company for Taipa Beach Resort with aspirations to upgrade it and reposition its value offering</li> </ul>
	<b>Develop the entertainment precinct in Whangārei's Town Basin</b>	Support the securing of funding/investment into conference facilities and other amenities that uplift the area	<p>The Oruku Landing Conference and Event Centre has been rescoped and requires a smaller proportion of investment than originally planned for. They are pursuing a number of funding avenues across central government and the private sector.</p> <p>Whangarei District Council continues to invest in upgrades around the loop walkway.</p>
<b>Leadership</b>	<b>Acceleration and further resources for the implementation of the Taitokerau Northland Destination Management Plan including product development, environmental stewardship, marketing, capability, insights, leadership and infrastructure</b>	Secure sustainable funding for the implementation of the Taitokerau Northland Destination Management Plan (TNDMP)	Northland Inc are working with the TNDMP leadership team to progress this – including focusing on a new narrative and 2040 bicentennial celebrations. DMP leaders presented to the Prime Minister and Minister of Tourism in December on these topics.
		Work collaboratively to support the development and delivery of local destination management plans.	A localised DMP for the Russell Community has been completed and has created a blueprint that can be utilised to help other tourism-based communities with destination management planning. The Russell community is now actively implementing actions from it and other complimentary initiatives.
		Advance tourism initiatives that regenerate ecosystems, empower local communities, and celebrate unique landscapes through conservation-focused experiences and narratives led, or in partnership with Māori, e.g. Development of a Great Walk in the eastern Bay of Islands	Northland Inc has supported development of a business case, to support IVL/RIF funding opportunities for Ipipiri Great Walk/Cape Brett Walkway
		Support projects which improve regional connectivity, including initiatives such as Ocean Flyer, the Northland Corridor, Airport connectivity, etc.	Northland Inc through the International Marketing Group is connecting Northland to the world. Continuous promotion of Northland through trade channels to key international markets including Australia, US, CAN, UK, Europe & India through the International Marketing Group, which has a stronger than ever membership. Tourism New Zealand has a strong focus in 2026 on Active Escapes, Food &

			Beverage and Wellness, our region is well suited for this focus and product development.
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## Environment

Protect and enhance the biodiversity & natural resources through increased investments in innovation & workforce development

Priority Actions Identified in Te Rerenga	Relevant Regional Projects and Ongoing Progress
Category	Actions
<b><i>Develop a long-term adaptive roadmap that ensure the people and environment of Taitokerau Northland are resilient in a changing climate and the region transition equitable to a thriving net zero emission society</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urban Flood Mitigation – Whangarei District Council are working in partnership with Northland Regional Council to develop a strategy to manage current and future flood risks in urban Whangārei. This strategy will enable a comprehensive, strategic approach to flood-risk management that guides investment in flood-management infrastructure and land-use planning. Currently Technical assessments being undertaken with business cases due late 2026.</li> <li>Climate Adaptation Pilot Project- The aim of the Climate Adaptation Pilot Project is to develop a sustainable adaptation plan, that places community wellbeing at the heart of the process and it will enhance community’s resilience to extreme events and sea level rise.</li> <li>Northland Inc regularly works with organisations like EECA to support environmental goals and support local businesses.</li> </ul>

## Investment

Enable investment into key activities including sectors and place-based opportunities

Priority Actions Identified in Te Rerenga		Relevant Regional Projects and Ongoing Progress	
Category	Actions	Projects/Activities	Progress
<b>Inward Investment</b>	<b><i>Champion Inward Investment Opportunities through Northland Inc’s Landing Pad</i></b>	Better leverage and support inward investment activity	Through the Enabling Investment Fund, the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee has provided Northland Inc with an allocation of funding to improve the coordination of inward delegations into the region.
	<b><i>Position through projects, Taitokerau Northland as an enabler of Auckland (particularly northern and western</i></b>	Advocating for Northland Port, Rail Link, Northern Corridor and Drydock as enablers for Auckland region and city resilience and trade.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Northland Inc Destination team encourages Aucklanders to visit north while Northland Inc have continued to advocate to Government for our Expressway and to strengthen the road over the Brynderwyns.</li> <li>Northland Inc CEO chaired the Brynderwyns Advisory Group to NZTA and our Market Access Economic report on the impact of the closure of</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Auckland growth pressure)</b></p> <p><b>Enable an environment for business growth and export</b></p>	<p>Support for Ocean Flyer and other transport initiatives to facilitate connection between Northland &amp; Auckland regions.</p> <p>Encourage a shift in agriculture and horticulture businesses to the north</p>	<p>the Brynderwyns was the first public report outlining the substantial economic impact associated with the extended closure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Northland Inc continue to support Ocean Flyer as needed, with support of our MoU with the organisation.</li> <li>• Northland Inc are investigating primary sector attraction in horticulture encouraging growers who have lost land south of the Bombays to move north.</li> </ul>
			<p>Northland Inc RBP team continues to work with hundreds of companies across the north to support them.</p> <p>Northland Inc are also actively advocating for investment in infrastructure to enable trade and industry to grow, along with support for identified investment areas such as Marsden Energy Precinct.</p>
<b>Sector-Based</b>	<p><b>Primary Sector - Increase adaption and innovation in the primary sector, land use optimisation and high value-add manufacturing including a shared food manufacturing facility</b></p>	<p>Tuputupu: Grow Northland</p>	<p>Northland Inc is implementing a programme focused on improving land utilisation. They have released a number of market opportunity studies (exploring sub tropicals, alternative arable crops and speciality root crops, as well as a report that focuses on the opportunity for protected cropping in Northland.</p>
	<p><b>Grow the services sector particularly for our urban-based young people</b></p>		
	<p><b>Support the growth of the natural foods/medicinal sector</b></p>	<p>A range of projects/programmes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Kai Ora programme continues to support Food/Kai security and community resilience. Far North District in partnership with Healthy Families supports a new role of Principal Advisor-Community Wellbeing: Health with a focus on the same.</li> <li>• Northland Inc has undertaken market opportunity studies that provide intel for growers on opportunities here and the labs at Ngawha Innovation &amp; Enterprise Park are being utilised by businesses focused on nutraceuticals</li> </ul>

<b>Marine Sector</b>	<b><i>Install infrastructure to support the growth of marine manufacturing such as the Dry Dock Project</i></b>	Support the development of the shipyard and floating drydock project	The dry dock project is being led by MBIE and is progressing
	<b><i>Realise opportunities to increase market demand for marine manufacturing and refit such as the Inshore Innovation project</i></b>	Complete the new Whangarei Marina Development at Okara	The marina at Okara now has completed stage one and two of the project, with a pier opening before Christmas 2025. They are seeking investment into the next stages to bring the project to completion.
		Relocate the Navy Maintenance and Training Operations to Marsden Point	
<b>Aquaculture</b>	<b><i>Maximise the value of aquaculture farms through innovation, extend into high value land based (expansion of Kingfish) and innovation marine-based initiatives such as spat, algae, seaweeds, mussels, etc.</i></b>	Expand Kingfish production capacity at NIWA Bream Bay to support commercial scale-up.	NIWA are in the process of undertaking a business case and developing an IM for their next stage of expansion, which has been supported through the Project Development Fund.
		Scale spat collection and hatchery operations for oysters and mussels.	Northland Inc are supporting a muscle spat project in the far north with project development funding and are looking to support commercialisation of a native oyster opportunity
<b>Creative Sector</b>	<b><i>Build on the region's artistic, cultural and heritage strengths, realising benefits that creativity brings to the region</i></b>	The region is exploring UNESCO bids for Whangarei and Russell	Led by Creative Northland, Whangarei has put a bid in to become a UNESCO City of Creativity for Craft and Folk Art in 2025. Russell is also actively being considered for nomination to the UNESCO World Heritage List.
		Lyric Theatre	The Knowledge Precinct Plan is a chance to transform this part of the city into a vibrant hub for events, culture and tertiary education opportunities for Taitokerau, including the potential for a larger theatre that meets our growing city's needs
		Turner Centre	Far North District Council continue to support the Turner Centre, Kerikeri, and the activities and events it provides through Community Board funding,

			recognising the role it plays in the North as an inclusive place connecting people through creativity and culture.
		Creative Northland	Far North District Council are partnering with Creative Northland to implement actions within the Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy, Toi Mana.
<b>Digital/High Tech Sector</b>	<b>Support strategic initiatives benefitting from the improved connectivity through the Hawaiiiki Cable</b>	Support the attraction of data centres	There has been renewed interest in investment in Data Centres recently with the growth in renewable energy within the region a key driver. Sites within the Mid North are currently being considered.
<b>Place Based</b>	<b>Activate distributive economic activity across the region such as Te Hiku, Hokianga, Kawakawa, Kaikohe, Kerikeri, Bay of Islands, Dargaville, Mangawhai, and Whangarei</b>	Northland Inc district-level reporting on economic activity across the region.	Northland Inc activity to support this is included in other categories, such as RBP, project development and enabling investment funding, and Tourism.
	<b>Support economic development of Ngawha Innovation and Enterprise Park and other like centres within Northland</b>	Establish and scale Food North, as an advanced food and natural product manufacturing facility.	Northland Inc continues to look for \$13-20M for this project (possibly less depending on scope). We have discussed with Ministers and are in parallel talking with possible private sector channels.
		Secure investment in export-enabling infrastructure—such as cool stores and logistics hubs.	Northland Inc is encouraging relocation of agriculture and horticulture operations from Auckland north, with a focus on encouraging and supporting packhouse and cool store operations to relocate, to enable growth of the sector.
	<b>Support a primary industry-based focus and targeted growth (all of region)</b>	Partner with Māori enterprises, universities, and Crown Research Institutes to deliver a regional R&D and innovation programme.	Massey University and Northland Inc have entered into a partnership in late 2025, signing a Waka Hourua (Heads of Agreement)
Integrate Māori and local producers into high-value supply chains.		Kanoa through funds such as the Regional Strategic Project Fund and most recently the Regional Infrastructure Fund have provided support to a number of Māori entities to enable them to grow and add value	

			<p>to their assets, e.g. there was over \$20.5m of funding approved into the below projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Muriwhenua Spat Company Limited- Establish a mussel spat catching farm in 2.07 hectares of consented water space in the Whangape Harbour</li> <li>• Te Tutakitanga Limited- Establish a 20 hectare avocado orchard near Te Kōpuru in the upper Kaipara, Northland</li> <li>• Bells Produce Limited- Construction of a new packhouse and cool store to facilitate an expansion of Bells' horticulture production</li> <li>• Kaikohe Berryfruit Limited Partnership- To construct a new packhouse, cool store and staff facilities and an extension of the Kaikohe Berryfruit strawberry growing platform.</li> <li>• Te Aupōuri Commercial Development Limited- Establish a water storage reservoir that enables Te Aupōuri to introduce horticulture operations on its whenua at Te Raite station near Houhora</li> <li>• Oromahoe and Rangihāmama Omapere trusts- Kiwifruit orchard preparation and infrastructure including irrigation, drainage, access tracks, orchard structures, and shelter belts</li> </ul> <p>There are also a number of further investments from TPK and other agencies into the scaling of oysters and better utilisation of consented water space.</p>
	<p><b>Support Developments in Marsden Point Area</b></p>	<p>Support private investment in a clean energy precinct at Marsden Point, in activities like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bio-refining</li> <li>• Sustainable Aviation Fuel Production</li> <li>• Hydrogen production</li> <li>• Carbon capture</li> </ul>	<p>Channel NZ, Northland Inc, Council, Invest NZ and other key stakeholders are working with a range of investors and project proponents to assist in information provision, connections, and advocacy through a range of channels to enable due diligence and feasibility stages to be progressed through as quickly as possible.</p>
		<p>Advocate for policy change to support investments to land, e.g. SEZ, E-SAF mandates, etc</p>	<p>For a number of these opportunities, a level of policy change at a central government level is required to either improve the investable proposition or provide greater security for inputs. Two pieces of policy that are important are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Setting of an e-SAF Mandate in New Zealand- which in late 2025 an agency group has been established to start exploring</li> </ol>

			2. Setting of a regulatory regime for CCUS that is fit for purpose
		Complete the expansion of Northport's eastern wharf	In late 2025, Northport obtained resource consent for the eastward expansion of the port (approx. 13ha), which it will build a dedicated container handling, storage, and logistics facility to support economic growth and supply chain resilience in Northland and the Upper North Island. The consents have a 35-year term and a 20-year lapse period.

## Regional Co-Ordination & Investment

Priority Actions Identified in Te Rerenga		Relevant Regional Projects and Ongoing Progress	
Category	Actions	Projects/Activities	Progress
	<b>Northland Inc to provide programme management overview of region wide initiatives with regional stakeholders</b>		There is currently no project funding being provided for this work from the I&GR or external sources, like central government. Northland Inc are not currently resourcing this through the operational funding from the IGR.

## Enterprise & Innovation

Enable the business and innovation sector with targeted support for Iwi, Hapū and whanau initiatives

Priority Actions Identified in Te Rerenga		Relevant Regional Projects and Ongoing Progress	
Category	Actions	Projects/Activities	Progress
	<b>Enable an environment for business growth and export</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional delivery of the Regional Business Partnership (RBP) programme across Te Tai Tokerau.</li> <li>Targeted business capability development funding to support growth, productivity, and export readiness.</li> <li>Delivery of The Pick Business Starter / Accelerator to build early-stage enterprise capability.</li> <li>Support for sector development initiatives</li> </ul>	<p>Northland Inc update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RBP annual targets achieved, with strong uptake across priority sectors.</li> <li>Increased participation from Māori-owned businesses and wāhine-led enterprises.</li> <li>Capability co-funding leveraged to unlock private investment and improve firm-level productivity.</li> <li>Pipeline of growth-oriented SMEs strengthened through structured advisory support.</li> </ul>

	<p>including Māori tourism, primary industries diversification and innovation pipelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing engagement with MBIE, NZTE and Callaghan Innovation transition processes to ensure continued R&amp;D access for regional firms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued advocacy to central government to ensure Northland firms retain access to innovation and export pathways post-Callaghan transition.</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Enable Iwi, Hapū and whanau business development and growth</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of Whāriki Te Tai Tokerau Māori Business Network, facilitating peer support, collaboration and procurement readiness.</li> <li>• Targeted advisory support through RBP to Māori enterprises, land trusts, and post-settlement governance entities.</li> <li>• Support for Māori tourism product development aligned to regional destination management priorities.</li> <li>• Partnership engagement with iwi asset holding companies exploring diversification, alternative land use, and value-add opportunities.</li> </ul>	<p>Northland Inc Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong growth in Māori business engagement through RBP from 15% to 33%.</li> <li>• Whariki Māori business network increased from 170 to over 600 in three years.</li> <li>• Increased visibility and connectivity of Pakihi Māori across the regional ecosystem.</li> <li>• Māori enterprises supported to access capability funding, advisory services, and market development pathways.</li> <li>• Strengthened relationships between Māori organisations and regional economic infrastructure opportunities.</li> <li>• Growing pipeline of iwi-led commercial initiatives aligned to long-term intergenerational outcomes.</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Negotiate procurement conditions necessary to deliver preferred supplier status for Taitokerau Northland enterprises with all Crown and local government agencies via procurement policy and large-scale contracting</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active promotion of Amotai supplier diversity pathways for Māori businesses.</li> <li>• Engagement with local government and Crown agencies to increase awareness of regional supplier capability.</li> <li>• Advocacy for inclusion of social procurement and regional weighting in infrastructure and public works programmes.</li> <li>• Support for Māori and regional SMEs to meet compliance, health and safety and tender readiness requirements. Engagement with prime contractors for local</li> </ul>	<p>Northland Inc Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased number of Māori and local enterprises registered and active within supplier diversity systems.</li> <li>• Improved procurement literacy among SMEs and Māori organisations.</li> <li>• Stronger relationships between project owners and regional suppliers.</li> <li>• Foundations laid for greater regional retention of public infrastructure expenditure.</li> <li>• FNDC has moved local and regional procurement from 33% to over 70% over the last three years.</li> <li>• Early engagement with prime contractors to develop coordination, procurement and on-the-job training</li> </ul>

		subcontractors to support design, build and ongoing operations.	support pathways for TTT T2 and T3 subcontractors.
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## Workforce Development

To stand connected with confidence and competence anywhere in the world.

Priority Actions Identified in Te Rerenga	Relevant Regional Projects and Ongoing Progress
Category	Actions
<b>Accelerated implementation of workforce planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The development of the Regional Infrastructure Plan should provide a better understanding of the pipeline of work (and thus number of jobs required) across the infrastructure and construction sectors. MSD, MOE, and other regional stakeholders in this space are already thinking about how they can use this information to strengthen planning and delivery of their BAU activity.</li> <li>Massey University and Northland Inc have entered into a partnership in late 2025, signing a Waka Hourua (Heads of Agreement), with an intent to strengthen the delivery systems for education, training and research across the primary and other related sectors in the region.</li> <li>Far North District Council in partnership with MSD, delivers the Mayor's Taskforce for Jobs to support rangatahi and those disadvantaged in the labour market. It also continues to support and deliver on a Cadet programme to support local employment.</li> <li>Northland Inc are in discussions with Qualmark and QRC around capability building for the tourism workforce. There are opportunities to leverage programmes such as Qualmark, Regional Business Partners and the QRC (Queenstown Resort College) Ambassador Programme to help lift the quality of customer experience across Taitokerau Northland.</li> </ul>
<b>Supporting regional leadership to drive seismic shifts in the Tertiary Sector to empower local and regional decision-making Support at speed and scale, filling the pipeline of skills urgently with priority emphasis on economic development</b>	
<b>A high-level programme of workforce needs for all major projects to 2033</b>	
<b>Supporting pilot programmes and 'earn and learn' opportunities across the region, especially for youth, wāhine and those with a disability</b>	
<b>Support a primary industry-based focus and targeted growth (all of region)</b>	

## Health

People living longer in good health, having improved quality of life with equity between all groups.

Priority Actions Identified in Te Rerenga	Relevant Regional Projects and Ongoing Progress
Category	Actions
<b>High quality services and facilities accessible for all across the region</b>	Knowledge Hub - Resilience Fund provided to Northland by Transpower and Omexom will deliver up to \$250,000 in seed funding to establish a Health

<b>Partnerships with those in other sectors to address social and economic drivers of health, and ensure environmental sustainability and thriving, climate-resilient communities</b>	Simulation and Training Centre at the new Knowledge, Education & Arts (KEA) Hub in Whangarei.
<b>Assess and deliver on economic development aspects of the Whangārei Hospital rebuild and social impact analysis</b>	

## Education

An education ecosystem that delivers equitable, excellent outcomes

Priority Actions Identified in Te Rerenga	Relevant Regional Projects and Ongoing Progress
Category	Actions
<p><b>Improved, fit for purpose tertiary infrastructure across Taitokerau Northland</b></p> <p><b>Progress a knowledge precinct in Whangārei including tertiary programme delivery</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Knowledge Precinct Plan is a chance to transform this part of the city into a vibrant hub for events, culture, and tertiary education opportunities for Taitokerau. We are now working on a draft Knowledge Precinct Plan, which incorporates the opportunities and concerns raised by the community. This will be shared as part of the second round of public engagement before any decisions are made.</li> <li>Whangarei District Holdings Limited's first Statement of Intent are under development, with the Forum North site identified as one of the strategic Council Owned properties for focus.</li> </ul>

## Housing

Housing- healthy, secure, and affordable solutions

Priority Actions Identified in Te Rerenga	Relevant Regional Projects and Ongoing Progress
Category	Actions
<p><b>Support the increase of affordable, healthy housing stock prioritising communities of greatest need</b></p> <p><b>Ensure associated infrastructure is in place to support housing growth (water, power, roading, open spaces)</b></p> <p><b>Support the increase of Papakāinga and Māori Housing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Springs Flat - A new roundabout at Springs Flat Road will provide safer connections to State Highway 1 from Te Kamo and access for future housing planned for Te Kamo East. It will also enable the development of a new supermarket and shopping centre next to the roundabout. The Springs Flat roundabout project is on track for completion by February 2027</li> <li>Port Nikau - Stage 1 residential development has begun.</li> <li>Infrastructure Acceleration Fund projects in Kaikohe and Kawakawa are delivering critical enabling infrastructure to support housing growth, including water, wastewater, and transport upgrades, enabling up to 221</li> </ul>

<p><b><i>Deliver a business-friendly environment to support equitable housing outcomes</i></b></p>	<p>new homes in Kaikohe and approximately 310–319 new homes in Kawakawa. The programme supports a mix of social, affordable, iwi led and market housing, including papakāinga aligned developments, and is being delivered through coordinated governance to align infrastructure delivery with planning, funding, and housing outcomes while supporting local employment and development capacity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga – Ministry of Housing and Urban Development is supporting a Far North housing development of approximately 120–130 homes, progressing through early design and planning to deliver papakāinga aligned, whānau centred housing outcomes as part of the wider place-based housing programme.</li> <li>• The Government is investing \$4 million from the Regional Infrastructure Fund to support enabling infrastructure for 100 new affordable homes on Bisset Road, Kaikohe, led by Te Hau Ora o Ngāpuhi. The project includes the delivery of roads, utilities, and stormwater infrastructure, and will provide long-term affordability through capped rents at 80% of market rates for 25 years. The development is supported by additional funding of \$29.7 million from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and a \$13.6 million loan from Community Finance, and is expected to create local jobs, apprenticeships, and strengthen regional supply chains through the use of local resources, with infrastructure works underway and completion targeted for 2027.</li> <li>• The Proposed Far North District Plan strengthens housing outcomes on Māori land through the Māori Purpose Zone, which enables papakāinga and other whānau-centred housing as a primary activity on Māori freehold and customary land. The provisions are designed to reduce regulatory barriers by providing for papakāinga as a permitted activity where infrastructure servicing and development standards are met, while retaining flexible consenting pathways where needed.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Māori Purpose Zone supports a mix of urban and rural housing responses, recognises tikanga Māori and mātauranga Māori in land-use decision-making, and enables tangata whenua to develop housing that supports intergenerational living, cultural connection, and long-term wellbeing. The Plan is expected to be adopted by FNDC in June 2026, providing an updated planning framework to support papakāinga delivery and Māori housing outcomes across the district.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Advocate for local employment and business development through housing initiatives</i></b></p>	

**TITLE:** Northland Inc Limited: Statement of Intent 2026/27 - Draft received from Northland Inc

**From:** Codie McIntyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist

**Authorised by Group Manager/s:** Bruce Howse, Pou Taumatua – Group Manager Corporate Services, on 02 March 2026

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### Whakarāpopototanga / Executive summary

The purpose of this report is to provide the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee (Joint Committee) with Northland Inc Limited's (Northland Inc) draft Statement of Intent (SOI) 2026/27 (**Attachment 1**) received on the 27 February 2026 so that an initial discussion on the content of the draft SOI can take place. Along with the draft SOI, Northland Inc provided a cover letter (**Attachment 2**) highlighting the changes they are proposing to make to their SOI and their responses to the shareholders letter of expectations sent on 9 October 2025 (**Attachment 3**).

As outlined in the cover letter, Northland Inc have made small changes to the wording and narrative, as well as creating greater clarity around whether KPI's are outcome or output related, that were requested of them in the letter of expectations. The level of CCO operational funding forecast in the prospective statement of financial performance for 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29 is in line with that set out in the letter of expectations.

A key change, which they have highlighted in the cover letter, is that they believe, due to funding constraints, that they will have to reduce the outputs associated with the Primary Sector priority area (pou): "please note the Tuputupu programme outputs have been reduced given the reduced funding available to maintain this Pou". As a result, the KPI's associated with this activity have halved compared to the previous SOI:

- Projects assisted through stages of growth drops from 6 per annum to 3
- Number of businesses and landowners that as a result of engagement are exploring, developing, leading and delivering on change activity drops from 24 per annum to 12

Regarding the comment on the level of funding available for the Primary Sector, it is important to note that, as indicated in the letter of expectations, the level of operational funding that the Joint Committee requested that Northland Inc budget for 2026/27 was an amount equivalent to the current financial year 2025/26 operational funding increased by an amount equal to the Enabling Investment funding provided for 2025/26 for the Tuputupu Grow Northland programme and the Inward Delegations activity.

In terms of helping to inform the discussion, we have also received a copy of Northland Inc's Annual Snapshot (**Attachment 4**), which is a report that sits alongside their [Annual Report](#) and provides an overview of their activities for the associated financial year.

Representatives from Northland Inc will attend the Joint Committee meeting to introduce the draft SOI, discuss the changes they have made and activities to be undertaken in 2026/27, including in regard to the Primary Sector priority area (pou).

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### Ngā mahi tūtohutia / Recommendation

That the report 'Northland Inc Limited: Statement of Intent 2026/27 - Draft received from Northland Inc' by Codie McIntyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist and dated 11 February 2026, be received.

## Background/Tuhinga

In accordance with Schedule 8 from the Local Government Act 2002, council-controlled organisations (CCO) such as Northland Inc are required to submit a Statement of Intent to council or an appointed joint committee on an annual basis. This document outlines the strategic direction and priorities of the CCO for the following three years and provides a framework to guide the allocation of operational funding that Northland Inc receives through the Investment & Growth Reserve. A letter of expectations allows the owners of a CCO to provide guidance and direction as the CCO prepares its SOI.

The figure below illustrates the process used by the Joint Committee to guide Northland Inc in shaping its SOI 2026/27. Under the LGA 2002, the Joint Committee has until 1 May to provide comments back to Northland Inc on the draft SOI. As such, the shareholder comment on the draft SOI will be further discussed and agreed at the Joint Committee meeting on Friday 24 April 2026.

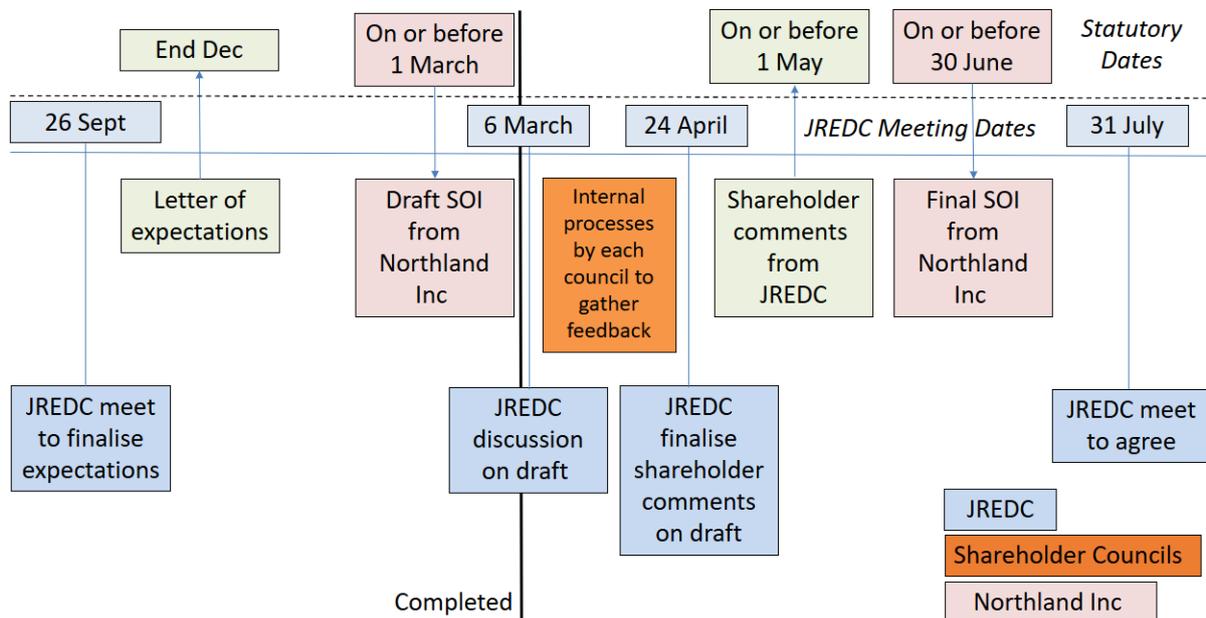


Figure 1: Process for Northland Inc SOI 26-27

In preparing the letter of expectations, staff suggested that few changes be requested for 2026/27. This is because major changes were made in SOI 2024/25 to align with councils' LTP 2024-2034, a thorough review was then done for the SOI 2025/26, and the expectation that there will be future changes made to align with councils' LTP 2027-2037.

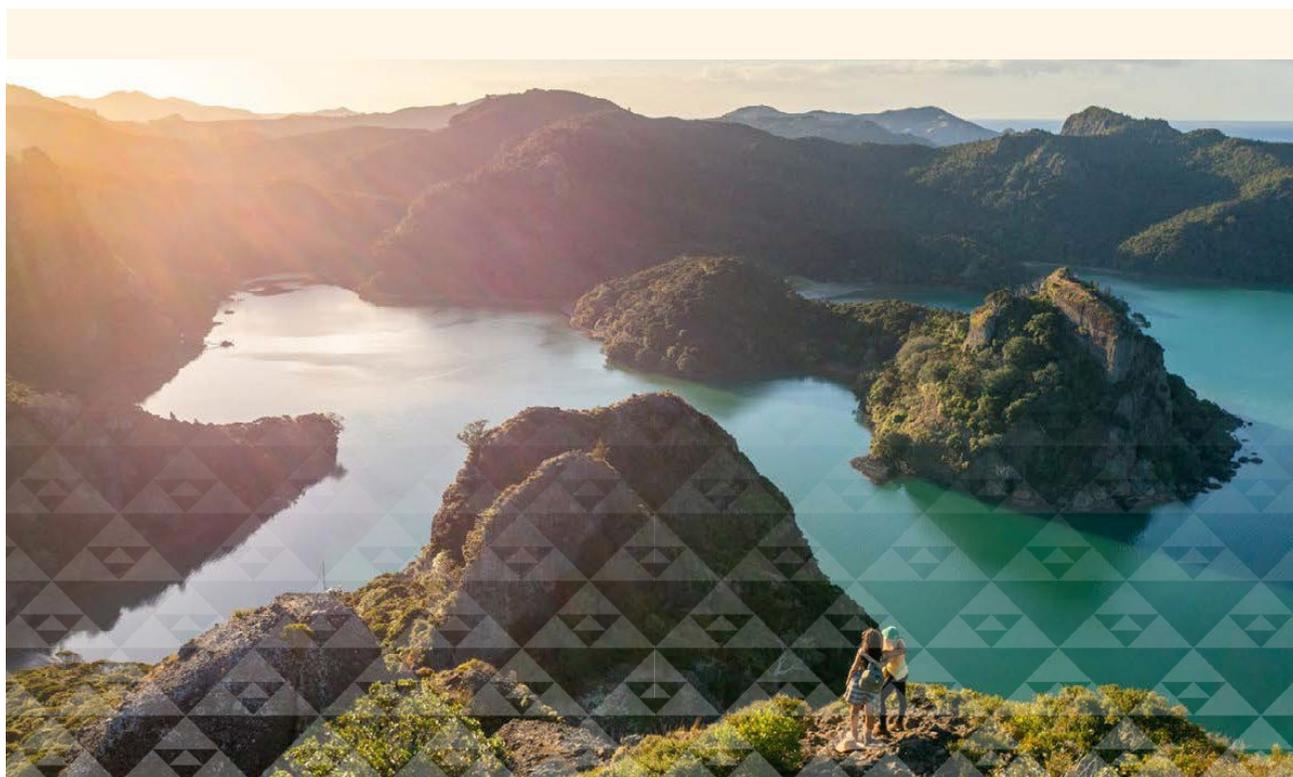
## Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Attachment 1: Northland Inc Limited - Draft Statement of Intent 2026/27 [↓](#)

Attachment 2: Northland Inc Limited - Cover Letter accompanying the draft Statement of Intent 2026/27 [↓](#)

Attachment 3: Letter of Expectation to Northland Inc Limited on SOI 2026/27 [↓](#)

Attachment 4: Northland Inc - Annual Snapshot 2024/25 Financial Year [↓](#)



## NorthlandInc

Growing Northland's Economy  
Kia tupu ai te ōhanga o Te Tai Tokerau

# Tauākī Whāinga Statement of Intent

2025/26 - 2028/29

Draft as at 28 February 2026

DRAFT

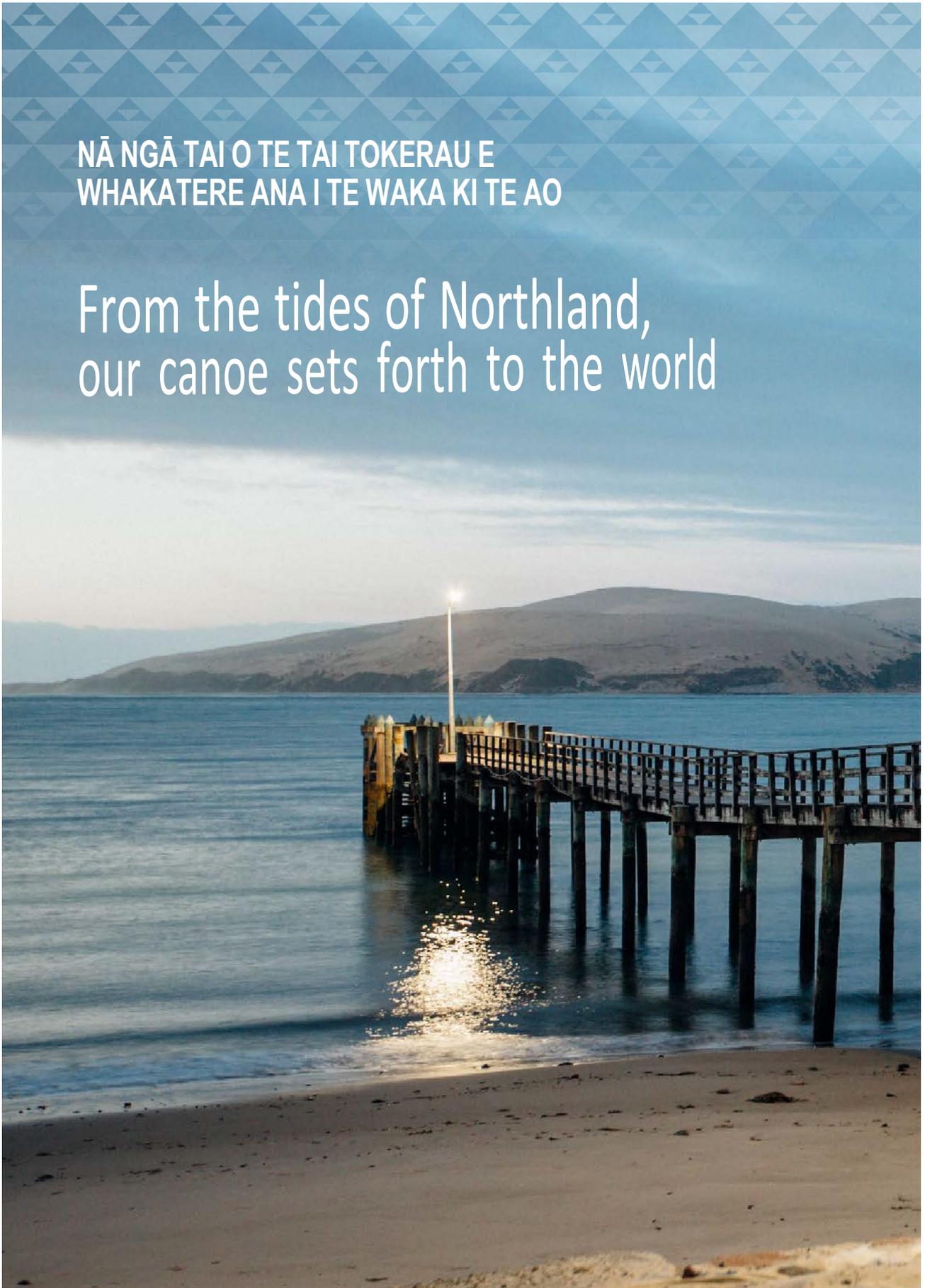


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NĀ NGĀ TAI O TE TAI TOKERAU E  
WHAKATERE ANA I TE WAKA KI TE AO

From the tides of Northland,  
our canoe sets forth to the world



# 1 KUPU WHAKATAKI INTRODUCTION

The Board of Directors of Northland Inc Limited (Northland Inc) presents this Statement of Intent (SOI) as a public declaration of the activities and intentions of Northland Inc in accordance with Clause 9 of Schedule 8 of the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act).

Northland Inc is a limited liability company, registered under the Companies Act 1993, a reporting entity for the purposes of the Financial Reporting Act 1993. It is jointly owned by Far North District Council (FNDC), Kaipara District Council (KDC), Northland Regional Council (NRC), and Whangārei District Council (WDC), herein referred to as the 'Shareholders'. Northland Inc is a council-controlled organisation (CCO) as defined under Section 6 of the Local Government Act 2002.

This SOI is the guiding governance tool and terms of reference for Northland Inc and defines the key performance indicators (KPIs) as agreed by the Shareholders. It outlines the Directors' accountabilities to the Shareholders for the performance of the business.

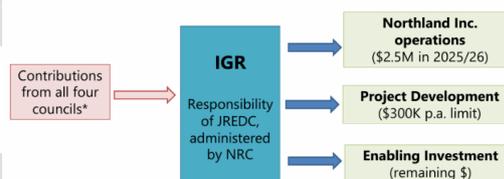
The Shareholders of the CCO (the four councils of Northland) collectively oversee the SOI and appoint directors as shareholder representatives.

The organisation is governed by a board of five independent directors appointed for three years (or as otherwise specified from time to time by the Shareholders). The Board Chair is elected by the directors. The Chief Executive Officer leads the operational activities.

Northland Inc is funded by annual contributions from each of the Shareholders which supports the operational activities of the organisation. Project-based funding is obtained through other public and private agencies, with central government being the next largest funder of Northland Inc.

Northland Inc is funded from a number of sources – shareholder contributions, Central Government (generally under specific contracts) and other sources (usually project based and time limited).

Shareholder contributions are funded into the Investment and Growth Reserve (IGR) which is the responsibility of the shareholder councils through the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee (JREDC) and is administered by NRC.



For the FY 2026/27 contributions in total from all Shareholders to the IGR are \$3.35M. Of this the allocation to Northland Inc's core Opex is around \$2.8M (including out years for inward delegations support to the four councils) – with the balance for project development and enabling investment initiatives.

The majority of funding (62%) is provided by NRC (the original sole shareholder of Northland Inc) with the other three councils contributing to the 38% balance based on population size or as may have been agreed. For the 2026/27 year WDC contributes 18%, FNDC 15% and KDC 5%.

Northland Inc understands the dynamics of our region; its challenges and opportunities and what needs to be done to transform our economy and our communities. Central to this is ensuring alignment with regional statements and leadership forums.

Northland Inc focuses on regional reach and is set up to prioritise regional benefit and serve the region as a whole.

It aims to provide vision, aspiration, leadership and unity-of-purpose in sustainable economic development for Te Tai Tokerau Northland

Te Rerenga, Taitokerau Northland Economic Wellbeing Pathway sets a long-term intergenerational vision for a sustainable, innovative, and prosperous economy focusing on the wellbeing of people, the economy, and the environment.

The Regional Deal framework Northland Inc facilitated on behalf of Shareholders outlines more immediate strategic priorities, priority sectors and specific projects for the region as well as the critical infrastructure enablers required to achieve economic growth.

Northland Inc will work with key industry sectors in Northland to address market failures, facilitate value-added activities and value chain improvements, increase exports, and provide business, job and investment opportunities

Northland Inc's strategy and work aligns with the Northland Mayoral Forum goals. The Forum is committed to strategically collaborating to take Te Tai Tokerau Northland forward together and identified six regional priorities which underpin Northland Inc's work:

- Connecting Northland – multi model transport system
- Infrastructure resilience and climate change
- Northland as a regional economic hub – including Marsden Point / Ruakākā and Kaikohe
- Housing and associated infrastructure
- Restoring the health of the environment
- Local Government as a trusted partner with central government

Northland Inc acknowledges that Northland's Councils have made commitments to their communities through long-term plans, annual plans, spatial plans and policies. At its core, regional economic development is about improving the livelihoods of Te Tai Tokerau Northland's people. Therefore, Northland Inc makes a commitment to work in alignment with the plans and policies of our Shareholders, in their districts to ensure the same positive outcomes for Te Tai Tokerau Northland.

## 2 HE POU MAHI VISION AND MISSION

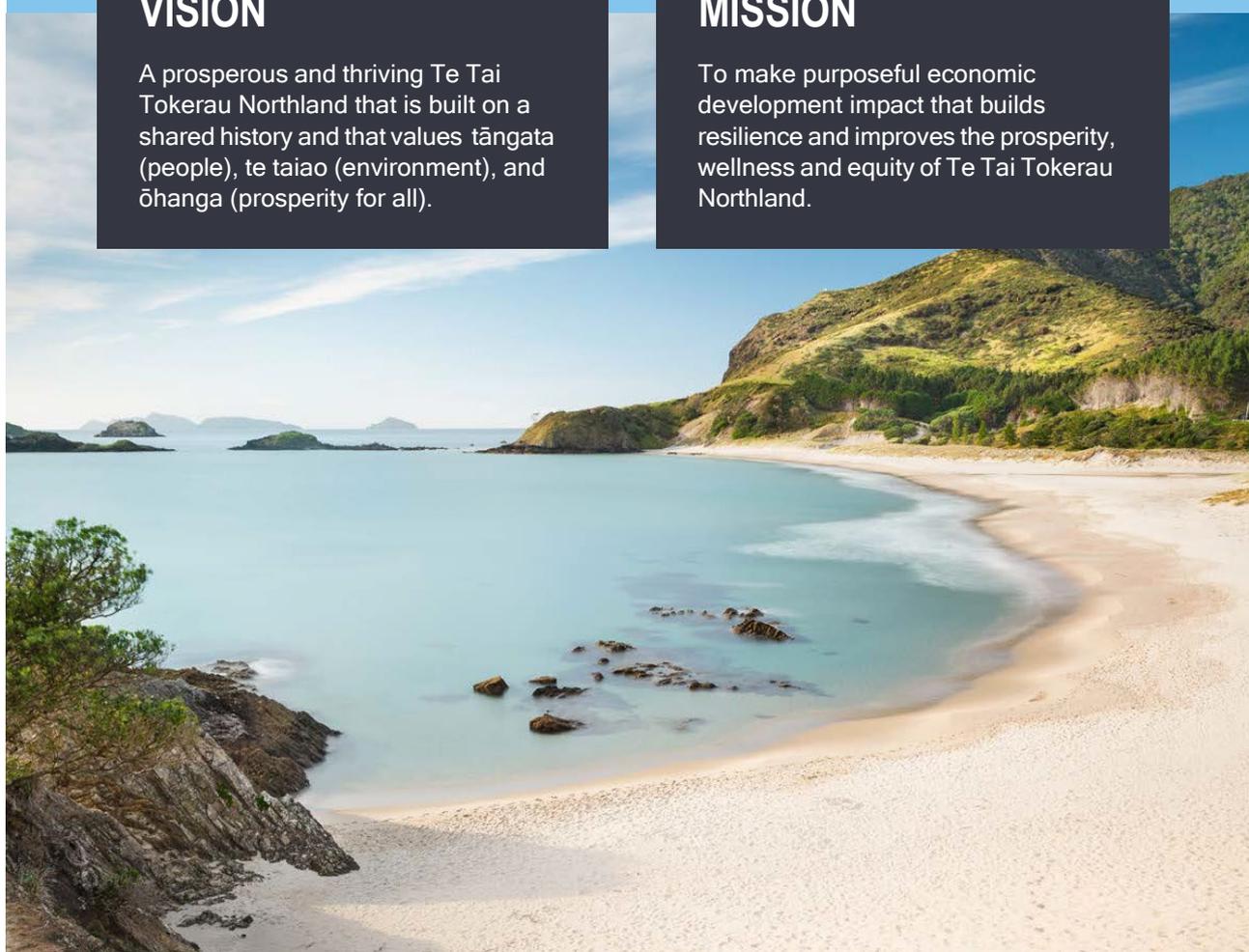
Northland Inc works with public and private organisations in Te Tai Tokerau Northland with a common purpose to identify and focus on activities and relationships that strengthen, diversify, and grow Te Tai Tokerau Northland's economy.

### TIROHANGA KI MUA VISION

A prosperous and thriving Te Tai Tokerau Northland that is built on a shared history and that values tāngata (people), te taiao (environment), and ōhanga (prosperity for all).

### TE ARONU MISSION

To make purposeful economic development impact that builds resilience and improves the prosperity, wellness and equity of Te Tai Tokerau Northland.



### 3 ORGANISATIONAL OBJECTIVES, ACTIVITIES AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The following pages provide the context, the objectives, nature and scope of activities and the key performance indicators for the enablers and strategic pou that make up the organisational strategy. Enablers are core, supporting or contracted activities while 'Pou' are areas that Northland Inc will be prioritising effort in.

**There are four priority areas (pou)** – Investment and Infrastructure; the Primary Sector, Tourism and Destination Management, Innovation and Enterprise

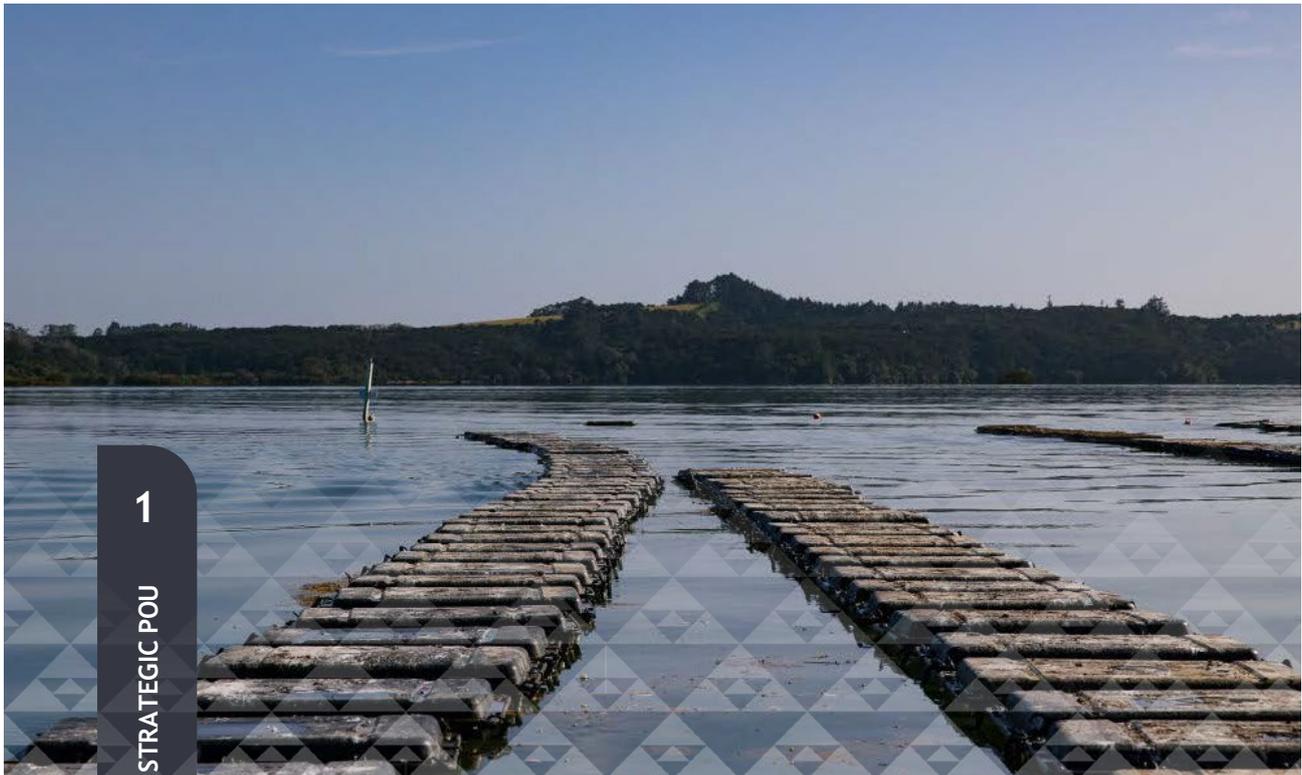


**There are six enablers** - Advocacy and Brand, Māori Economic Development, Environmental Sustainability, Partnerships, Organisational Culture and Capability and Workforce and Education. These enablers are part of Northland Inc's 'business as usual' (BAU) and supports our activities over a range of sectors and initiatives.

- 1 ADVOCACY AND BRAND
- 2 MĀORI ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- 3 ENVIRONMENT SUSTAINABILITY
- 4 PARTNERSHIPS
- 5 ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AND CAPACITY
- 6 WORKFORCE AND EDUCATION

Each section includes Regional Outcomes (often macro-economic), which do not form part of the direct and measurable performance framework. These are the longer-term regional-scale outcomes that we hope to influence as part of our collective approach to regional economic development. Many are outside of our direct control, but the work Northland Inc does contribute to their outcomes.

We are guided by economic models that focus on creating a society that can provide enough materials and services for all, while utilising resources in a way that does not compromise our future security and prosperity. They emphasise connecting people to their local environment and hold space for indigenous knowledge. Their social foundation and ecological approach aim to enable a system-shift to a more collaborative, distributive, circular and regenerative future.



## INVESTMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

### CONTEXT:

Although underpinned by primary production and manufacturing, Te Tai Tokerau Northland's economy is diverse. High-performing sectors include pastoral farming and processing, horticulture, tourism, and marine manufacturing. There is huge potential to further strengthen these areas, in addition to other emerging industries.

### ACTIVITY:

- We will strategically focus on attracting, nurturing, and evaluating a pipeline of promising investment opportunities that align with our impact framework and reflect the organisational capacity at any time. Credibly and proactively link projects with private investment, Councils and Government and assist in de-risking key projects;
- Leverage the Investment and Growth Reserve to increase investment. Actively support and facilitate investment in strategic sectors (aquaculture, agriculture and horticulture, digital, tourism, marine manufacturing);

### OBJECTIVE:

Grow investment and infrastructure support such that regional economic activity improves consistently year on year.

- Support and facilitate the development of new and enabling infrastructure such as renewable energy, digital connectivity, roads, rail, and water;
- Connect with investment providers to help direct investment to the most impactful projects;
- Credibly and proactively inform Government funding options and influence priorities;
- Remain well informed on infrastructure challenges and opportunities;
- Connect regionally and nationally levels to ensure equitable investment in infrastructure.



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS		TARGET
Output	Number of inward delegations hosted	3 per annum
Outcome	Number of high impact projects that are being actively supported (reporting by regional strategic sectors)	4 per annum

#### ADDITIONAL REGIONAL OUTCOMES SOUGHT

Positive change in regional economic profile (increase in average household income, productivity, structure of economy).

Increase in level of government investment into the region (where possible breakdown by co-investment, sector and research / tertiary activity).

Increase in the number of filled jobs in the region.

#### Te Rerenga Outcomes - Our Economy:

- Productivity (GDP per worker) 2040 Target - **increase productivity by 1% in real terms**
- Economic Diversity (HH Index) 2040 Target - **reduction in HH Index to less than 20**
- Underutilisation rate 2040 Target - **reduce to less than 10%**
- Young people actively engaged in employment, education and training 2040 target - **no less than 95%**
- Annual mean income from salaries and wages 2040 target - **Increase 1% per annum in real terms**
- Business capital Index 2040 target - **growth in private sector 1% per annum**



## THE PRIMARY SECTOR TUPUTUPU - GROW NORTHLAND

### CONTEXT:

Te Tai Tokerau Northland's economy has long depended on the economic returns and employment opportunities created by the primary and associated manufacturing sectors. In the Grow Northland/Tuputupu framework, the primary sector encompasses pastoral & arable farming, horticulture, aquaculture and forestry. The changing environment is demanding that we as individuals, as landowners, and as business owners adapt, which brings a number of significant challenges. Adaptation and innovation in the primary and associated manufacturing sectors is critical to ensure the people and the environment of Te Tai Tokerau Northland can thrive into the future.

### OBJECTIVE:

Support and facilitate adaptation and innovation in Te Tai Tokerau Northland's primary and associated manufacturing sectors to ensure the people and environment of Te Tai Tokerau Northland can thrive into the future.

### ACTIVITY:

- Facilitate adaptation and innovation in Te Tai Tokerau Northland's primary sector around land use optimisation through to commercialising new agri-business opportunities for domestic and export markets
- Facilitate and enable proposals for commercialisation and value-added manufacturing investment locally;
- Support the Ngawha Innovation and Enterprise Park;
- Develop collaborative engagements across central and local Government, national and regionally based sector organisations; landowners and supply chain enablers;
- Advocate for world-class food and fibre businesses to be based in and grow out of Te Tai Tokerau Northland



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS		TARGET
Outcome	Projects assisted through stages of growth	3 per annum
Outcome	Number of businesses and landowners that as a result of engagement are exploring, developing, leading and delivering on change activity	12 per annum

#### ADDITIONAL REGIONAL OUTCOMES SOUGHT

Positive change in regional economic profile - living standards, productivity and contribution of primary sector to the economy.

##### Te Rerenga Outcomes - Our Economy:

- Productivity (GDP per worker) 2040 Target - **increase productivity by 1% in real terms**
- Economic Diversity (HH Index) 2040 Target -**reduction in HH Index to less than 20**
- Underutilisation rate 2040 Target - **reduce to less than 10%**
- Young people actively engaged in employment, education and training 2040 target - **no less than 95%**
- Annual mean income from salaries and wages 2040 target - **Increase 1% per annum in real terms**
- Businesses (number of units) 2040 target - **growth at least equal to population growth**
- Business capital Index 2040 target - **growth in private sector 1% per annum**



3

STRATEGIC POU

## TOURISM AND DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

### CONTEXT:

Tourism is integral to economic development in Te Tai Tokerau Northland and can be strategically utilised to achieve wider economic development outcomes. Destination Management provides the platform for enabling this to occur through ensuring that an integrated approach is taken across the three interdependent components of:

- Visitor experience - the destination's experience offering, including activities, attractions, supporting infrastructure, services and amenities;
- Marketing and promotion - the destination's marketing and promotional activity, creating demand and enabling the destination to be competitive, productive and sustainable;
- Resource management and development

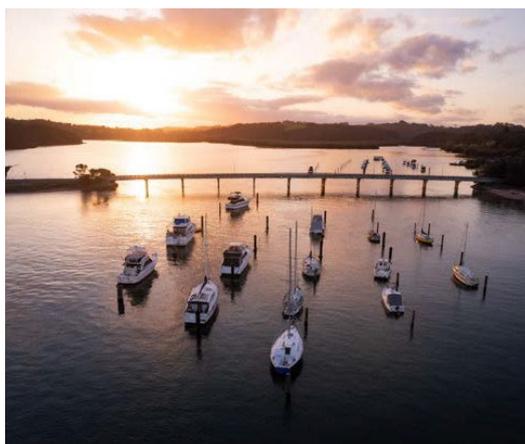
### OBJECTIVES:

- ▶ Support Te Tai Tokerau Northland's visitor industry through delivery of destination management and marketing activity that aims to better manage the impacts of visitation, improve the distribution of benefits and enhance our region's, heritage, and culture.
- ▶ Position Te Tai Tokerau Northland within target markets as a desirable place to visit.



**ACTIVITY:**

- Lead the Destination Management Plan (DMP) in partnership with relevant stakeholders, industry, iwi and hapū;
- Facilitate regional investment through sector collaboration groups, marketing the region nationally and internationally, and providing targeted business support for tourism operators;
- Play a key role in attracting direct investment into the region for infrastructure to support tourism and support the development of sustainable pathways for businesses operating in the region;
- Honour Māori storytelling traditions by supporting stories told by those who have the right to tell them. A strong partnership approach with iwi, hapū, Māori tourism operators and landowners are the basis for growing this portion of the market;
- Improve regional dispersal, length of stay, expenditure, and the appeal of off-peak travel particularly through leveraging the Twin Coast Discovery programme as a regionwide development framework for tourism;
- Coordinate, and where appropriate, lead the implementation of an Annual Regional Tactical Marketing Plan for destination marketing, in alignment with the direction of national tourism organisations and in partnership with the Te Tai Tokerau Northland tourism sector



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS		OUTPUT TARGET
Output	Number of destination marketing campaign initiatives to generate national exposure to the region (reporting will include number of businesses that are engaged in the campaign).	1 campaign per annum
Outcome	Number of Destination Management Plan initiatives completed in partnership with stakeholders.	8 per annum

**ADDITIONAL REGIONAL OUTCOMES SOUGHT**

Dispersal of tourism activity into the region measured through the accommodation data programme.

Tourism activity in the region measured through TECT (electronic transactions indicating tourism spend).

**Te Rerenga Outcomes - Our Economy:**

- Productivity (GDP per worker) 2040 Target - **increase productivity by 1% in real terms**
- Economic Diversity (HH Index) 2040 Target - **reduction in HH Index to less than 20**
- Young people actively engaged in employment, education and training 2040 target - **no less than 95%**
- Annual mean income from salaries and wages 2040 target - **Increase 1% per annum in real terms**
- Business capital Index 2040 target - **growth in private sector 1% per annum**
- Māori Unemployment rate 2040 target - **Decrease to 5%**



## INNOVATION AND ENTERPRISE

### CONTEXT:

Business growth is crucial for Te Tai Tokerau Northland's economy as it creates jobs, increases revenue, fosters innovation and competition, benefits the supply chain, diversifies the economy, and enhances the quality of life for residents. It also creates a ripple effect in the supply chain, benefiting other local businesses.

Whatever size or stage a business is at, Northland Inc has tools and resources to help. Our role is to support businesses on their journey.

This might include employing more staff, setting up scalable business processes, identifying new finance options or exploring the export potential of products. We can also help activate innovation, accelerate commercialisation, develop new and innovative products, processes, or services, or supporting established Research and Development (R&D) programmes.

### OBJECTIVE:

Support small to medium enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups who want to start or grow their business in Te Tai Tokerau Northland.

### ACTIVITY:

- Work with Government and other stakeholders to deliver funding, innovation, R&D and business support programmes into Te Tai Tokerau Northland;
- Contribute towards a more innovative, digital and technologically advanced environment that supports our core and developing industries;
- Deliver business advice effectively across the region to support innovation, capacity and capability development through incubation services and the Regional Business Partnership
- Develop clusters, business networks or associations to take advantage of market development opportunities that leverage Te Tai Tokerau Northland's key sectors and comparative advantages;
- Build and share specialist knowledge through a business events programme and provide opportunities to access a range of capital support mechanisms for Te Tai Tokerau Northland businesses.

	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	TARGET
Output	Number of business engagements assisted (includes both one to one and one to some assistance and reporting by TA and Industry)	<b>250 per annum</b>
Output	Number of business engagements that are Māori (by TA and Industry) equivalent to 35% of target engagements.	<b>86 per annum</b>
Outcome	Client satisfaction with businesses assistance provided by Northland Inc and measured by Net Promotor Score	<b>Annual net promoter score &gt;50</b>

#### ADDITIONAL REGIONAL OUTCOMES SOUGHT

Positive change in regional economic profile (living standards, productivity, structure of economy).

Increase in the number of filled jobs in the region.

Sustaining the number of business units in the region.

#### Te Rerenga Outcomes - Our Economy:

- Productivity (GDP per worker) 2040 Target - **increase productivity by 1% in real terms**
- Economic Diversity (HH Index) 2040 Target - **reduction in HH Index to less than 20**
- Underutilisation rate 2040 Target - **reduce to less than 10%**
- Annual mean income from salaries and wages 2040 target - **increase 1% per annum in real terms**
- Businesses (number of units) 2040 target - **growth at least equal to population growth**
- Business capital Index 2040 target - **growth in private sector 1% per annum**
- Māori Unemployment rate 2040 target - **decrease to 5%**





ENABLER 1

## ADVOCACY AND BRAND

### CONTEXT:

Advocacy efforts help promote Te Tai Tokerau Northland as an attractive destination for investment, tourism, and talent. By showcasing the region's unique assets, such as its natural beauty, Māori culture, heritage, and business opportunities, Northland Inc can attract interest and support for the region's economic development.

Advocacy also helps Te Tai Tokerau Northland unify its voice and strengthen its relationship with Central Government by bringing the region together and seeking support for infrastructure, programmes and funding. Northland Inc is seen as a trusted channel to Central Government, and for Central Government to provide industry and business support into the region.

A strong brand identity helps distinguish Te Tai Tokerau Northland from other regions, creating a positive perception and reputation. This can attract businesses, investors, tourists, and skilled workers who are aligned with Northland's values and offerings.

A strong organisational brand and reputation positions Northland Inc regionally and nationally as a unique effective entity able to support the region.

### OBJECTIVE:

- ▶ Advocate for Te Tai Tokerau Northland to improve the economic well-being of the region, helping to support strong communities and environmental sustainability.
- ▶ Develop and improve the profile of economic development and of Northland Inc to ensure that Te Tai Tokerau Northland understands and values the efforts of Northland Inc.

**ACTIVITY:**

- Be proactive and well informed on both the challenges and opportunities in Te Tai Tokerau Northland and is acknowledged as regional leader in impactful economic development;
- Be a respected voice for the region and a credible source for central and local Government to understand the regional context and to prioritise investment, policy settings and decisions on key economic opportunities;
- Use powerful communications and a well-connected network to improve the reputation and visibility of the region while advocating for its needs;
- Lead the implementation of the Te Rerenga, the region's long-term Economic Development Strategy and provide economic development intelligence and insights;
- Assist with project management and delivery of economic response activities

	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	TARGET
Output	Number of regional economic development updates or reports released	<b>6 per annum</b>
Output	Number of media features that profile the region	<b>24 per annum</b>
Output	Number of media activity that references Northland Inc	<b>52 per annum</b>

**ADDITIONAL REGIONAL OUTCOMES SOUGHT**

Active support from Central Government and other partners into Northland.

Positive change in the profile of economic development and Northland Inc.

Sustaining the number of business units in the region.

**Te Rerenga Outcomes - Our Economy:**

- Productivity (GDP per worker) 2040 Target - **increase productivity by 1% in real terms**
- Economic Diversity (HH Index) 2040 Target - **reduction in HH Index to less than 20**
- Annual mean income from salaries and wages 2040 target - **increase 1% per annum in real terms**
- Businesses (number of units) 2040 target - **growth at least equal to population growth**
- Business capital Index 2040 target - **growth in private sector 1% per annum**



ENABLER 2

## MĀORI ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**CONTEXT:**

The regional aspiration is to establish an equitable economic platform which enhances Māori participation in the Te Tai Tokerau Northland economy and enables whānau, hapū and iwi to be economically secure and to grow their wealth

We are focused on building and enhancing our Māori relationships in Te Tai Tokerau Northland to identify opportunities which deliver sustainable economic growth for our whānau, hapū and iwi. We support by Māori for Māori initiatives which recognise the mana motuhake of Māori enterprises and collectives to lead their own economic success

**OBJECTIVE:**

Assist strategic partners in the Māori Economic Development economy with their high impact Māori economic development projects across all levels, with a specific focus on improving capacity and capability of those with whom we partner with for delivery.

**ACTIVITY:**

Respect and implement the principals of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, which support meaningful partnership with Māori

- Support tangata whenua to develop and implement their own visions and economic development plans;
- Partner with Māori organisations to deliver services to Māori businesses<sup>1</sup>;
- Connect into existing local and national Māori Economic Development activity and strategies that will support Te Tai Tokerau Northland;
- Engage and partner with iwi, hapū, marae and the Māori community, Central Government agencies and other entities supporting Māori Economic

Development to advance their aspirations in economic development and enable investment, business growth and completion of economic development projects;

- Work with, advocate for and support Māori businesses, trusts and entities with their aspirations for growth;
- Engage with the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment on the continual improvement of the RBP delivery into the Māori economy

	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	TARGET
Output	Number of iwi/hapū groups and other Māori organization, eg. Marae,land trusts etc. actively supported	2026/27 :22 2027/28 :24 2028/29 :24
Outcome	Proportion of Māori organization that are satisfied with Northland Inc support	>80%

**ADDITIONAL REGIONAL OUTCOMES SOUGHT**

Reduction in Māori unemployment rate in Northland.

Positive change in the profile of economic development and Northland Inc.

**Te Rerenga Outcomes - Our Economy:**

- Productivity (GDP per worker) 2040 Target - **increase productivity by 1% in real terms**
- Economic Diversity (HH Index) 2040 Target - **reduction in HH Index to less than 20**
- Underutilisation rate 2040 Target - **reduce to less than 10%**
- Young people actively engaged in employment, education and training 2040 target - **no less than 95%**
- Annual mean income from salaries and wages 2040 target - **increase 1% per annum in real terms**
- Businesses (number of units) 2040 target - **growth at least equal to population growth**
- Business capital Index 2040 target - **growth in private sector 1% per annum**
- Māori Unemployment rate 2040 target - **decrease to 5%**

<sup>1</sup> A Māori business is a business that is owned by a person or people who have Māori whakapapa, and a representative of that business self-identifies the business as Māori



ENABLER 3

## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

### CONTEXT:

In Te Tai Tokerau Northland, as our export economy is predominantly biologically based our long-term economic wellbeing is more reliant on the environment than other regions. The environment plays a critical role in supplying our needs for resources, food, energy, water, recreation and cultural connections and as such as a polluted or degraded environment has public health, economic and social consequences.

Pursuing environmental sustainability initiatives that give focus to reducing the impact on the natural environment can make a business more efficient, long term and less costly to run. Furthermore, global export markets are now demanding imports comply with climate and carbon reporting standards as they seek to achieve their national commitments on climate action. Careful consideration and planning for climate change adaptation is also key for ensuring the sustainability of businesses within the region over time.

### OBJECTIVE:

Help Te Tai Tokerau Northland businesses achieve environmental sustainability; through partnerships that provide support and practical programmes.

### ACTIVITY:

- Support Te Tai Tokerau Northland businesses to meet climate adaptation targets set by central Government through access to appropriate information and tools;
- Partner to provide support to businesses with practical programmes;
- Use an environmental sustainability focus for all active projects;
- Assess the environmental aspirations of businesses and projects;
- Utilise te ao Māori/mātauranga Māori in environment/sustainability kaupapa;
- Have environmentally sustainable business practices within Northland Inc

	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	TARGET
Output	Number of business and organisations supported to improve their environmental sustainability.	2024/27: 40 2027/28: 50 2028/29: 50

#### ADDITIONAL REGIONAL OUTCOMES SOUGHT

Reduction in Māori unemployment rate in Northland.

Positive change in the profile of economic development and Northland Inc.

#### Te Rerenga Outcomes - Our Environment:

- Freshwater quality index 2040 Target - improve
- Swimming quality 2040 Target - improve
- Air Quality 2040 Target - maintain air quality

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ENABLER 4

## PARTNERSHIPS

**CONTEXT:**

Partnerships are essential in economic development as they enable organisations to leverage each other's strengths, resources, and networks to achieve shared goals and drive economic development. As a region, we recognise the importance of combining our efforts to achieve the best results and overcome the challenges we face.

**OBJECTIVE:**

Develop and nurture high trust partnerships across the region with those who have the capability to positively impact economic development outcomes across Te Tai Tokerau Northland.

**ACTIVITY:**

- Northland Inc is a trusted and valuable organisation to partner with that develops initiatives that have visible and measurable impact and generates positive economic development outcomes
- Expand these partnerships leading to increased opportunities and resilience, creating a stronger, interconnected region
- Develop and maintain high trust partnerships with stakeholders who impact economic development outcomes across Te Tai Tokerau Northland;
- Northland Inc is embedded within a network of relationships that bring capabilities and contributions to key projects with shared interests;
- Partnership activity spread across central government, local government, business communities, investors and other stakeholders

Note: KPI's and Regional Outcomes covered by other sections

ENABLER 5

## ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AND CAPABILITY

### CONTEXT:

Upholding a culture of respect and support within Northland Inc is crucial for fostering employee wellbeing, team cohesion, and organisational reputation. A positive internal culture maintains morale, motivation, and productivity among employees, leading to better outcomes for the organisation. It also helps attract and retain top talent, strengthens relationships with stakeholders, enhancing our reputation as a supportive and respected organisation.

### OBJECTIVE:

Uphold our culture where we are respectful, and supportive of one another; our histories, our whānau, our aspirations and development journey.



### ACTIVITY:

Our culture is supportive, encouraging and positive - supporting our people and their livelihoods. Our capability is performance-focused, fit for purpose and within the resource available.

- Have quality resources that support capability uplift in staff skills;
- Develop the capability to deploy impact or surge capacity in times of crisis or emergency response and have a strong network of operational partners that can activate as opportunity or needs arise;
- Stay well-connected across the region; understand our local economy and employ highly skilled networked people;
- Attract, retain and grow appropriate talent aligned to our culture and capability needs;

- Maintain a culture of being performance and outcome driven, encouraging professional development, and personal wellbeing
- Implement our internal capability pathway – He Korowai Manawanui – a programme of continuous cultural development that elevates the importance of Māori Economic Development and becoming a better partner for Māori with a genuine understanding of tikanga and te ao Māori
- Build a competent team (Northland Inc and partners) that operates as Te Tiriti based partners to support iwi, hapu, whānau and pakihi in achieving their economic development goals;

Note: KPI's and Regional Outcomes covered by other sections



ENABLER 5

## WORKFORCE AND EDUCATION

**CONTEXT:**

Education is fundamental to a thriving, prosperous, functioning society. It supports individuals to fully participate in and make positively contribute economically to their whanau and community. Education can improve people's employability and earnings and develops the workforce of the region to meet broader community aspirations. Workforce development and education enables innovation and exploration for economic development. Matching education needs with our economic growth aspirations and our population growth will help ensure that the workforce and education sectors are enablers.

**OBJECTIVE:**

Support the development of a skilled and resilient workforce and workforce pipeline, to ensure our people match employment opportunities.

**ACTIVITY:**

Northland Inc is a trusted and valuable organisation to partner on initiatives that have visible and measurable impact including:

- Engage with significant projects to undertake local procurement initiatives and maximise economic benefit to the region;
- Support the development of the Knowledge, Education and Arts (KEA) Hub, recognising the potential benefits of an investment in education and workforce development;
- Undertake workforce mapping to ensure changes in the sectors we work with are matched by the education providers
- Grow capability in existing businesses by providing access to appropriate training and upskilling opportunities

Note: KPI's and Regional Outcomes covered by other sections

## 4 NGĀ HUA MŌ NGĀ KAIPUPURI SHAREHOLDERS' FUNDS, DISTRIBUTIONS AND THE VALUE OF SHAREHOLDERS' INVESTMENT

Shareholders' funds (being retained surpluses plus share capital) 30 June 2025 was as follows:

	30 June 2025
Total Assets (\$)	1,952,870
Total Liabilities (\$)	1,741,645
Shareholders' Funds (\$)	211,225
Shareholders' Funds as % of Total Assets	10.82

Northland Inc forecasts small surpluses year-on-year. Accordingly, Shareholders' Funds as % of Total Assets will remain approximately at this level.

Northland Inc is not required to make any distributions to its Shareholders.

The value of the shareholders' investment in Northland Inc is estimated by directors to be equal to current shareholders' funds being \$211,085.

## 5 TE MANA WHAKAHAERE O TE POARI GOVERNANCE

The Board will effectively represent and promote the interests of its Shareholders by seeking to fulfil its mandate as described above. The Board will discharge their duties in accordance with Northland Inc's Board Charter.

In undertaking its activities, Northland Inc will:

- Achieve the objectives of its Shareholders, both commercial and non-commercial as specified in this Statement of Intent;
- Demonstrate ethical and good behaviour in dealing with all parties;
- Achieve active partnerships with Māori, and other key stakeholders and ethnic groups within the region, promoting effective communication where appropriate;
- Comply with all relevant legislative requirements, including those relating to the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi;
- Maintain an open and transparent approach to decision-making with its Shareholders while respecting the need for commercially sensitive information to be protected;
- Be a good employer; and
- Hold itself to the highest standards of social and environmental responsibility.

The Board will adopt the following approach to its fiduciary responsibilities to ensure good governance:

- Prepare a 3-year SOI setting out its strategic goals for agreement with its Shareholders, as shareholder;
- Establish a clear business plan which reflects the agreed SOI;
- Establish a clear performance framework and job description for the Chief Executive Officer;
- Approval of detailed operating, capital and cashflow budgets;
- Attend regular meetings to review performance and progress towards set objectives and budgets; and
- Operation of appropriate Board subcommittees to appropriately manage Risk, Compliance, Remuneration and Board performance.

The Board believes regular communication with its Shareholders is important to ensure good governance. The Board and Chief Executive will use their best endeavours to communicate in a regular and timely manner and ensure that matters are raised so there will be 'no surprises'. Established processes will be maintained to ensure regular contact between the Board, management and its Shareholders, and informal meetings will be encouraged to ensure regular communication flows regarding matters of mutual interest.

## 6 NGĀ KAUPAPA HERE KAUTE ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The accounting policies that have been adopted are detailed in the company's latest audited financial statements. A copy is included as **Appendix A**.

## 7 NGĀ KŌRERO HEI TUKU KI NGĀ KAIPUPURI INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED TO THE SHAREHOLDERS

Directors will formally report progress against the SOI to its Shareholders quarterly via a written report submitted within six weeks of the end of the 1st and 3rd quarters, and attendance at Joint Regional Economic Development Committee or Council(s) meetings thereafter as scheduled by Shareholders

In compliance with Clause 66 of Part 5 of the Act the Directors will, within two months after the end of the first half of each financial year, deliver to its Shareholders an unaudited half year report containing:

- a Statement of financial Performance, Position and Cash flow as at the half year balance date
- financial forecasts for the full year and comparison to approved budgets
- commentary on progress to meeting performance targets and the expected year end position

In accordance with Section 2 of Schedule 8 of the Act the Directors will deliver a draft SOI to its Shareholders as the shareholder by 1 March of each year for the subsequent three-year period

In accordance with Section 3 of Schedule 8 of the Act the Directors will deliver a Board approved SOI to its Shareholders as the shareholder on or before the 30 June of each year

In compliance with Clause 67 of Part 5 of the Act the Directors will, within three months of the end of the financial year, deliver to its Shareholders an audited Annual Report which meets the requirements of Section 68 and Section 69 of Part 5 of the Act. In addition, the Annual Report is to contain a declaration by the Board as to the compliance with the Act and specifically that the requirements of Schedule 8 have been met

## 8 NGĀ URUNGA, NGĀ WHIWHINGA ME NGĀ HOKONGA HOU NEW ENTITIES, ACQUISITIONS AND SALES

Directors may not create any new legal entity, acquire shares or any equity interest in any existing legal entity or sell any interest held by Northland Inc without the specific approval of the Shareholders as the shareholder

## 9 KIA RAPU PŪTEA I NGĀ KAUNIHERA MŌ ĒNEI TAKE ACTIVITIES FOR WHICH LOCAL AUTHORITY FUNDING IS SOUGHT

Northland Inc reserves the right to seek compensation from time to time for the necessity to provide any service required by its Shareholders where funding has not been previously agreed

### 1 WĒTAHI ATU TAKE ANY OTHER MATTERS

Northland Inc can request its Shareholders hold a confidential meeting of the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee or Council(s) meeting for discussion about commercially sensitive matters, subject to this request meeting the requirements of section 7(2) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987. Any report submitted by Northland Inc for formal consideration by its Shareholders should be accompanied by advice from their management.

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# 1 WHAKAMĀRAMATANGA-Ā-PŪTEA A PROSPECTIVE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

NORTHLAND INC Forecast Prospective Statement of Financial Performance					
Income	Actuals 24/25	Budget 25/26	Draft Forecast Budget 26/27	Draft Forecast Budget 27/28	Draft Forecast Budget 27/28
<b>BAU</b>					
CCO Opex	\$ 2,245,000	\$ 2,400,000	\$ 2,584,000	\$ 2,406,000	\$ 2,552,000
Delegations 2.5yr	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 225,000	\$ -	\$ -
IGR Project Development	\$ 175,000	\$ 110,000	\$ 110,000	\$ 220,000	\$ 300,000
MBIE RBP	\$ 369,063	\$ 369,063	\$ 369,063	\$ -	\$ -
WDC	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 110,000	\$ 110,000
Orchard Income	\$ 244,247	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000
Website Income	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000
Other Income/Interest/gains	\$ 72,996	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total BAU Income</b>	<b>\$ 3,121,306</b>	<b>\$ 3,094,063</b>	<b>\$ 3,503,063</b>	<b>\$ 2,951,000</b>	<b>\$ 3,177,000</b>
<b>BAU Expenses</b>					
Investment - IGR Project Development	\$ 40,000	\$ 110,000	\$ 110,000	\$ 220,000	\$ 300,000
Business Grow - awards	\$ 9,541	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000
RBP Partnership	\$ 75,100	\$ 75,100	\$ 75,100	\$ -	\$ -
The Orchard	\$ 16,206	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,000
Destinational Management & Marketing	\$ 148,879	\$ 140,000	\$ 140,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000
Salaries	\$ 1,734,005	\$ 1,840,000	\$ 1,840,000	\$ 1,593,932	\$ 1,625,810
Overheads	\$ 916,248	\$ 88,000	\$ 88,000	\$ 830,000	\$ 846,600
<b>Total BAU Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 2,939,978</b>	<b>\$ 3,062,100</b>	<b>\$ 3,062,100</b>	<b>\$ 2,812,932</b>	<b>\$ 2,941,410</b>
<b>Strategic Projects Income</b>					
Whariki	\$ 14,570	\$ 439,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Grow Northland /Tuputupu	\$ 308,001	\$ 315,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Peanuts	\$ 2,829	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
REF	\$ 581,973	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Other Project Income	\$ 1,122,117	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total Strategic Projects Income</b>	<b>\$ 2,357,141</b>	<b>\$ 754,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 90,000</b>	<b>\$ 45,000</b>
<b>Strategic Project Reserves</b>					
Delegations	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 90,000	\$ 45,000
Whariki	\$ 327,651	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total Strategic Projects Reserves</b>	<b>\$ 327,651</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 90,000</b>	<b>\$ 45,000</b>
<b>Total Strategic Projects Income &amp; Reserves</b>	<b>\$ 2,684,792</b>	<b>\$ 754,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 90,000</b>	<b>\$ 45,000</b>
<b>Strategic Projects Expenses</b>					
Whariki Activities	\$ 1,000	\$ 188,039	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Grow Northland /Tuputupu	\$ 5,273	\$ 88,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Peanuts	\$ 2,829	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Delegations 2.5 yr loading	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 180,000	\$ 45,000	\$ 22,500
Other Project Expenses	\$ 739	\$ -	\$ 80,000	\$ 70,000	\$ 230,000
Strategic Salaries	\$ -	\$ 419,848	\$ -	\$ 45,000	\$ 22,500
Overheads	\$ -	\$ 53,961	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total Strategic Project Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 9,841</b>	<b>\$ 750,000</b>	<b>\$ 260,000</b>	<b>\$ 160,000</b>	<b>\$ 275,000</b>
<b>Total Income BAU &amp; Strategic Projects</b>	<b>\$ 5,478,447</b>	<b>\$ 3,844,063</b>	<b>\$ 3,503,063</b>	<b>\$ 3,041,000</b>	<b>\$ 3,222,000</b>
<b>Total Expenses BAU &amp; Strategic Projects</b>	<b>\$ 5,254,720</b>	<b>\$ 3,754,020</b>	<b>\$ 3,395,910</b>	<b>\$ 2,972,932</b>	<b>\$ 3,216,410</b>
<b>Total Net Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>\$ 223,727</b>	<b>\$ 90,043</b>	<b>\$ 107,153</b>	<b>\$ 68,068</b>	<b>\$ 5,590</b>
<b>Other Income/Expenses</b>					
<b>NIEP</b>					
IGR Project Development	\$ -	\$ 190,000	\$ 190,000	\$ 80,000	\$ -
Tenant Income	\$ 207,561	\$ 120,000	\$ 120,000	\$ 60,000	\$ -
<b>Total NIEP Income</b>	<b>\$ 207,561</b>	<b>\$ 310,000</b>	<b>\$ 310,000</b>	<b>\$ 140,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
<b>NIEP Expenses</b>					
Overheads	\$ 329,435	\$ 337,619	\$ 344,119	\$ 168,752	\$ -
Salaries	\$ 89,961	\$ 61,696	\$ 67,084	\$ 35,376	\$ -
<b>Total NIEP Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 419,396</b>	<b>\$ 399,315</b>	<b>\$ 411,203</b>	<b>\$ 204,128</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
<b>Total Net Surplus/Deficit Other Income/Expenses</b>	<b>-\$ 211,835</b>	<b>-\$ 89,315</b>	<b>-\$ 101,203</b>	<b>-\$ 64,128</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
<b>Total Net Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>\$ 11,892</b>	<b>\$ 728</b>	<b>\$ 5,950</b>	<b>\$ 3,940</b>	<b>\$ 5,590</b>

NORTHLAND INC FORECAST PROSPECTIVE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

# APPENDIX A

## NGĀ KAUPAPA HERE KAUTE ACCOUNTING POLICIES

### 1. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

#### BASIS OF PREPARATION

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Tier 2 Public Benefit Entity (PBE) Financial Reporting Standards as issued by the New Zealand External Reporting Board (XRB). They comply with New Zealand equivalents to International Public Sector Accounting Standards Reduced Disclosure Regime (NZ PBE IPSAS with RDR) and other applicable Public Benefit Entity Financial Reporting Standards as appropriate to Public Benefit Entities.

The entity is eligible to report in accordance with Tier 2 PBE Accounting Standards on the basis that it does not have public accountability and is not large. The entity transitioned to PBE Standard Tier 2 from 1st July 2016.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Local Government Act 2002, which requires compliance with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand ("NZ GAAP") [LGA 111].

The entity is deemed a public benefit entity for financial reporting purposes, as its primary objective is to provide services to the community for social benefit and has been established with a view to supporting that primary objective rather than a financial return.

#### CHANGES IN ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Previously adopted Public Benefit Entity Simple Format Reporting - Accrual (Not-For-Profit). The impact of new and amended standards and interpretations applied in the year was limited to additional note disclosures.

# NorthlandInc

Growing Northland's Economy

Kia tupu ai te 6hanga o Te Tai Tokerau

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# Northland Inc

Growing Northland's Economy  
Kia tupu ai te ōhanga o Te Tai Tokerau

27 February 2026

Cr Geoff Crawford  
Chair of Joint Regional Economic Development Committee  
Northland Regional Council

Sent by email: [geoff.crawford@nrc.govt.nz](mailto:geoff.crawford@nrc.govt.nz)

Dear Geoff

Please find attached Northland Inc's Statement of Intent (SOI) for the period 2025/26 – 2028/29. This SOI has been approved by the Board for submission to the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee, as our shareholder, as required under the Local Government Act 2002.

We appreciate the guidance provided by the Council in your letter dated 9 October 2025 and the ongoing series of workshops, dialogue and conversation between our respective teams and have incorporated this feedback.

These conversations provide valuable opportunities to discuss our shared regional objectives and the best approach to support economic development and tourism promotion across the region. We look forward to maintaining this regular and transparent communication with the shareholder committee into the future.

## General Comments

We note the Joint Committee's comment that you are not seeking substantive changes to the 2026/27 SOI, reflecting the significant revisions made to previous SOI's, and the alignment of council Long Term Plans (2024-2034) with the current SOI. Furthermore, the Committee noted that given local elections in this period the previous committee wished to leave space for the incoming Joint Committee to review and provide any further recommendations in the next triennium.

Most of the requests were therefore around clarification and editorial. The main request being to show shareholder contributions in a clearer way.

## Changes Requested

### 1. Funding description

*"Please strengthen the description of how Northland Inc is funded by its shareholders. This should clearly outline the respective contributions from each shareholder, including any operational funding arrangements, and reflect the shared commitment to regional economic development. Transparency in funding sources and mechanisms will support stakeholder understanding and reinforce accountability".*

This has been done in the Introduction showing the contribution to Northland's Inc's 2026/27 core opex and showing how the Investment & Growth Reserve (IGR) works between Opex, Project Development funding and Enabling Funding.

### 2. Strategic Pou 1 – Investment and Infrastructure

The Objective under Strategic Pou 1 currently refers to "business support services," which are also addressed under Strategic Pou 4 – Innovation and Enterprise. To avoid duplication and ensure clarity, we recommend rewording the Objective to avoid confusion and focus more explicitly on infrastructure and investment facilitation.

*We have addressed this by changing the Objective Box to "investment and infrastructure support".*



# NorthlandInc

Growing Northland's Economy

Kia tupu ai te ōhanga o Te Tai Tokerau

### 3. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

*"As in the current 2024/25 SOI, KPIs should be clearly labelled as either Output or Outcome indicators. This distinction is important for tracking performance and impact, and for enabling shareholders to assess progress against strategic goals."*

This has been done.

### Operational Funding

*"Please provide a forecast financial budget within the SOI based on receiving the following level of operational funding from the Investment and Growth Reserve: \$2.809M for 2026/27, \$2.406M for 2027/28 and \$2.552M for 2028/29."*

*The 2026/27 level of funding is based on adding the Tuputupu Grow Northland and Inward Delegations activities, funded in 2025/26 through IGR Enabling Investment allocations, to the 2025/26 level of operational funding, and an inflation adjustment of 2.5%.*

*The 2027/28 and 2028/29 levels of operational funding are lower because the WDC funding commitment to the IGR only lasts until 2026/27. Operational funding for these two years will need to be revised as part of the 2027/28 SOI and 2027-2037 Long Term Plan processes."*

We provide a forecast financial budget as requested. Please note the Inward Delegations money is now noted as a separate line item as this is additional funding as per JREDC request to undertake this work. Also please note the Tuputupu programme outputs have been reduced given the reduced funding available to maintain this Pou. We are seeking external funding to be able to fully activate the work programme.

We have been encouraged by the positive engagement with JREDC members and elected members from across the four shareholder Councils at the beginning of this new triennium. Our board looks forward to further strategic conversations as we work together to advance our region's aspirations. We acknowledge the ongoing local government reform and offer our support, and we will continue to demonstrate regional collaboration done well.

Ngā mihi,



Suzanne Duncan  
Chair



Paul Linton  
Chief Executive

Cc Darryl Jones, NRC



9 October 2025

Suzanne Duncan and Paul Linton  
Chair and Chief Executive Officer Northland Inc. Limited  
PO Box 1762  
Whangārei 0140

Sent by email: [huhana.duncan@gmail.com](mailto:huhana.duncan@gmail.com) and [paul.linton@northlandnz.com](mailto:paul.linton@northlandnz.com)

Dear Suzanne and Paul

#### **NORTHLAND INC LTD STATEMENT OF INTENT 2026/27: LETTER OF EXPECTATIONS**

On behalf of the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee (Joint Committee) and therefore representing the shareholders of Northland Inc Limited (Northland Inc), I am pleased to outline the expectations of shareholders as you prepare Northland Inc's 2026/27 Statement of Intent (SOI). These expectations align with the strategic vision for Northland and aim to strengthen Northland Inc's role in supporting regional economic development.

The Joint Committee requests that Northland Inc consider the following comments in preparing the draft SOI. These are intended to support clarity, consistency, and alignment with shareholder expectations. As a general note, the Joint Committee is not seeking substantive changes to the 2026/27 SOI. This reflects the significant revisions made to previous SOIs, and the alignment of council Long Term Plans (2024–2034) with the current SOI. We acknowledge the importance of allowing Northland Inc time to operate under the revised SOI. Furthermore, with local elections approaching, the current Joint Committee wishes to leave space for the incoming Joint Committee to review and provide any further recommendations in the next triennium.

- **Funding description**  
Please strengthen the description of how Northland Inc is funded by its shareholders. This should clearly outline the respective contributions from each shareholder, including any operational funding arrangements, and reflect the shared commitment to regional economic development. Transparency in funding sources and mechanisms will support stakeholder understanding and reinforce accountability.
- **Strategic Pou 1 – Investment and Infrastructure**  
The Objective under Strategic Pou 1 currently refers to “business support services,” which are also addressed under Strategic Pou 4 – Innovation and Enterprise. To avoid duplication and ensure clarity, we recommend rewording the Objective to avoid confusion and focus more explicitly on infrastructure and investment facilitation.



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Private Bag 9021, Te Mai, Whangarei 0143



- **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**  
As in the current 2024/25 SOI, KPIs should be clearly labelled as either Output or Outcome indicators. This distinction is important for tracking performance and impact, and for enabling shareholders to assess progress against strategic goals.
- **Operational Funding**  
Please provide a forecast financial budget within the SOI based on receiving the following level of operational funding from the Investment and Growth Reserve: \$2.809M for 2026/27, \$2.406M for 2027/28 and \$2.552M for 2028/29.

The 2026/27 level of funding is based on adding the Tuputupu Grow Northland and Inward Delegations activities, funded in 2025/26 through IGR Enabling Investment allocations, to the 2025/26 level of operational funding, and an inflation adjustment of 2.5%. The 2027/28 and 2028/29 levels of operational funding are lower because the WDC funding commitment to the IGR only lasts until 2026/27. Operational funding for these two years will need to be revised as part of the 2027/28 SOI and 2027-2037 Long Term Plan processes.

These levels of operational funding and the budgeted allocation of \$300K per annum for Project Development funding provides the next Joint Committee with around \$1 million in funding that can be allocated through the Enabling Investment category of the IGR. The Joint Committee would like to reiterate that it wishes to use the Enabling Investment funding category to support third party economic development projects in accordance with the IGR criteria and not Northland Inc.

As this is the last letter of expectations from the current Joint Committee before the end of the triennium, we wish to acknowledge Northland Inc's continued commitment to regional economic development and its responsiveness to shareholder guidance. We appreciate the collaborative spirit in which Northland Inc has engaged with the Joint Committee and look forward to a smooth transition into the next governance cycle. Thank you for your ongoing contribution to the prosperity and resilience of Te Tai Tokerau.

Yours sincerely,

**FNDC Cr John Vujcich**

**Chair of Joint Regional Economic Development Committee**

CC FNDC Cr Penetaui Kleskovic (Deputy Chair), KDC Mayor Craig Jepson, KDC Deputy Mayor Jonathan Larson, WDC Mayor Vince Cocurullo, WDC Deputy Mayor Phil Halse, NRC Chair Geoff Crawford and NRC Deputy Chair Tui Shortland



Private Bag 9021, Te Mai, Whangarei 0143



## NorthlandInc

Growing Northland's Economy  
Kia tupu ai te ōhanga o Te Tai Tokerau

# Annual Snapshot

*2024-2025 Financial Year*



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## CHAIR'S COMMENT

The past year has been one of meaningful progress and continued collaboration across Te Tai Tokerau. Guided by a strong sense of purpose, Northland Inc has worked alongside local and central government, iwi, hapū, and industry partners to deliver projects that create lasting benefit for our region. Our shared commitment to resilience, innovation, and sustainable growth continues to shape the economic future of Te Tai Tokerau.

From enterprise development to destination management, investment attraction to infrastructure planning, the breadth of Northland Inc's mahi reflects the strength of its partnerships and the skill of its people. Taking a leadership role in the development of the Northland Regional Deal proposal, alongside advocacy for key regional funding and investment, demonstrates an organisation that is both future-focused and deeply grounded in its regional identity.

On behalf of the Board, I want to acknowledge the dedication of the Northland Inc team in supporting our region. They have delivered exceptional outcomes in a challenging environment. As we look ahead, we remain confident in the direction of this organisation and its ability to drive positive, enduring change for Te Tai Tokerau.



Suzanne  
Duncan

CHAIR, NORTHLAND INC BOARD

**NO REIRA, NGĀ MIHI  
MAIOHA, NUNUI HOKI KI A  
KOUTOU KATOĀ O TE RAKI.  
TĒNĀ KOUTOU, TĒNĀ  
KOUTOU, TĒNĀ TĀTOU  
KATOĀ.**

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S COMMENT



Paul Linton

CHIEF EXECUTIVE,  
NORTHLAND INC

This year has been defined by collaboration, connection, and an enduring belief in what Te Tai Tokerau can achieve when we work together. Across every portfolio, our focus has remained clear: enabling growth that is inclusive, sustainable, and distinctly Northland. Whether it's supporting hundreds of local enterprises through the Business Innovation and Growth team, strengthening the visitor economy through domestic and international promotion, or supporting new investment in infrastructure and innovation, our collective efforts have helped unlock opportunity across the region.

Advocacy has been a central part of our work this year, particularly around infrastructure and roading resilience. Working closely with our shareholders, the four councils of Northland, we have continued to act as a strong economic and destination voice for the region. We also worked alongside NZTA and regional leaders to progress solutions for the Brynderwyns, advocate for a four-lane highway, and support wider infrastructure priorities spanning food processing, energy resilience, and regional connectivity. These efforts reflect the strength of our partnerships and a shared determination to build a resilient, opportunity-rich future for Northland.

As we look ahead, the path before us is one of momentum. The foundations we have built, through collaboration, capability, and courageous leadership, position Te Tai Tokerau to continue growing as a region that not only thrives economically, but does so in a way that honours our people, our culture, and our place.

# KAUPAPA MĀORI, ENTERPRISE & INNOVATION

## BUSINESS, INNOVATION & GROWTH

Across 2024/25, Northland Inc's Business, Innovation & Growth (BIG) Team continued to be a trusted partner for enterprises navigating change, growth, and innovation. Working across Te Tai Tokerau, the team engaged with 358 businesses through the Regional Business Partner Network, supporting local businesses to build capability, connect with funding, and strengthen resilience. Businesses most often sought guidance on planning and marketing, with manufacturing, construction, and professional services among the most engaged industries. Nearly a third of all engagements identified as pakihi Māori, reflecting our ongoing partnership with Te Hiringa Trust to ensure equitable access to support. The team also maintained an exceptional client satisfaction rating, with a Net

Promoter Score of 73, consistently above national benchmarks (>50), demonstrating the value of trusted local relationships and tailored advice.

Through Callaghan Innovation, Northland Inc helped regional enterprises access \$158,510 in grant funding to advance research, technology, and product development, with many stepping into innovation and R&D pathways for the first time. From the rollout of one-to-some learning programmes to targeted workshops across Kaikohe, Dargaville, Kerikeri, and Whangārei, the BIG Team's reach and impact continues to grow, helping Northland's businesses adapt, innovate, and thrive.

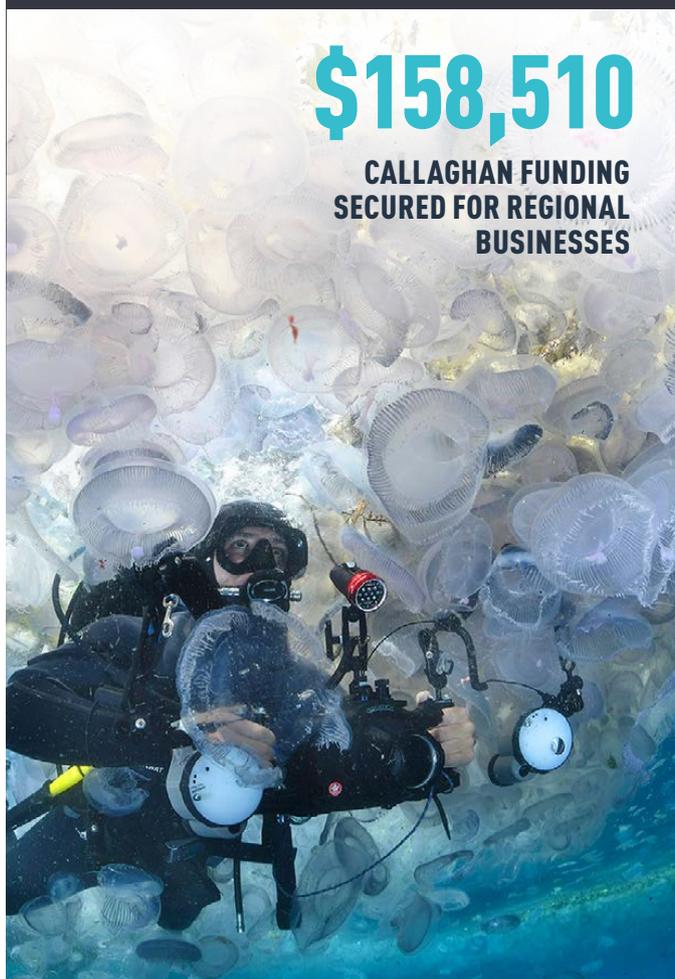
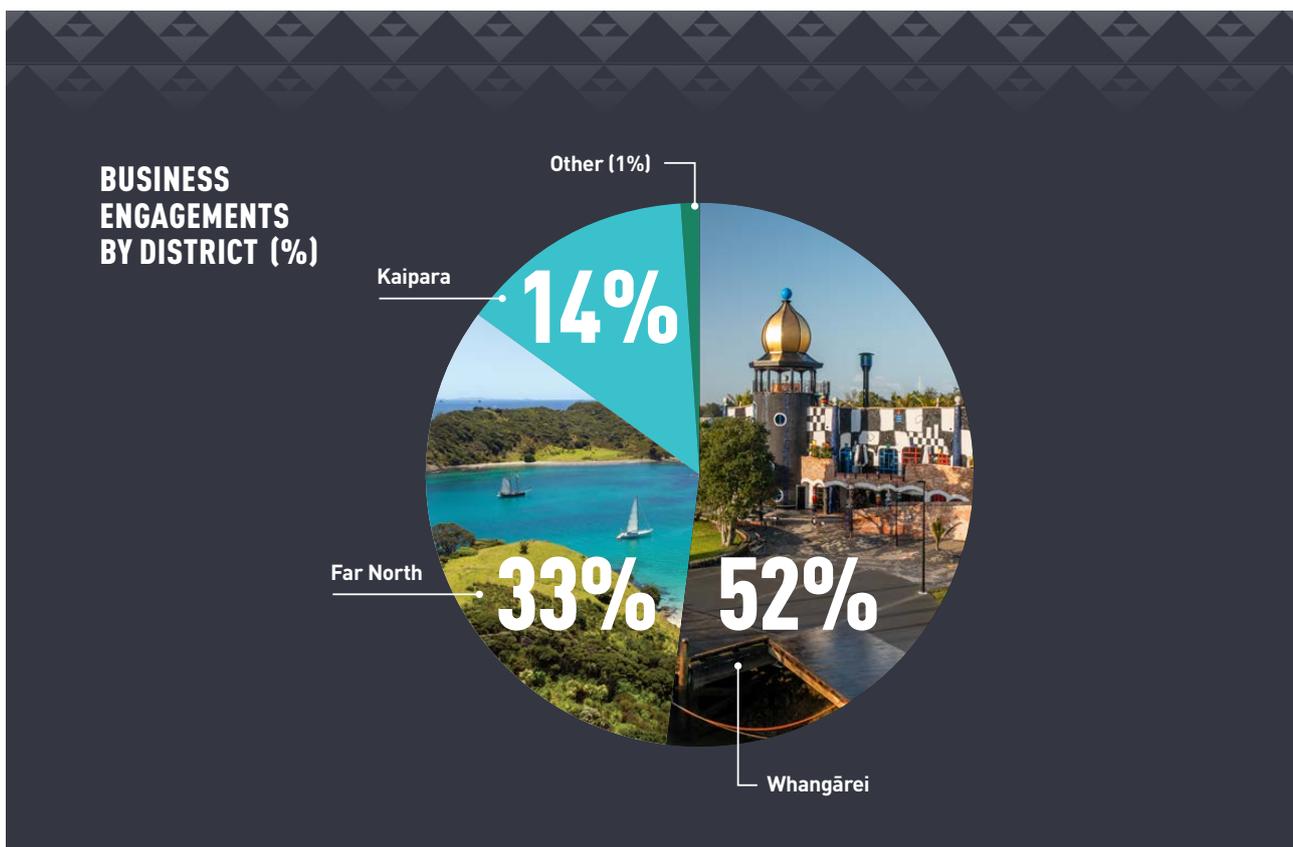
**"HAVING A CUSTOMER NAVIGATOR  
[VIA NORTHLAND INC] HAS BEEN  
KEY TO THE SUCCESS OF NAUT."**

- FIONA BYFIELD, CEO, NAUT



ANNUAL SNAPSHOT 2024 - 2025





**181** NEW REGIONAL BUSINESS  
PARTNER NETWORK  
REGISTRATIONS

**70** NET PROMOTER SCORE  
(BENCHMARK >50)

**\$51,638** IN REGIONAL  
BUSINESS PARTNER  
NETWORK FUNDING  
INTO REGIONAL  
BUSINESSES



## Spotlight on **BONNO DOG CHEWS**

Born out of a backyard moment in Northland, Bonno creates natural, eco-friendly dog chews made from waste Mānuka wood. What started as a curious accident turned into a purpose-driven business committed to sustainability, quality, and innovation - with a little help from Northland Inc along the way.

### A SPARK OF INSPIRATION

While smoking fish one day, co-founder Tony noticed his dog chewing happily on a piece of Mānuka. Unlike other woods, it didn't splinter, and that sparked an idea.

Together with his partner Stef, the pair began testing, and eventually the idea took shape: Bonno Dog Chews, a sustainable treat for dogs and their humans alike.

### NAVIGATING THE JOURNEY

Stef and Tony connected with Northland Inc early on, first through a workshop in Kerikeri, then more formally through a Northland Inc Growth Advisor.

The support they received ranged from product development advice to funding guidance and referrals to key contacts and training opportunities.

"The advice, the contacts, the follow-ups - it was just amazing. I kept thinking, 'What do I have to lose?' So, we followed the suggestions and picked what worked for us" says Stef.

One of those contacts led them to Marx Design, a sustainable packaging agency that helped bring Bonno's brand and packaging to life. They also completed the NZ Entrepreneur course, earning a

scholarship and building valuable knowledge around marketing, IP, and business strategy.

"From helping navigate funding pathways to making introductions to industry leaders, the support from Northland Inc has been both practical and motivating."

### GAINING TRACTION

Bonno had a soft launch in late 2024, followed by organic growth through word of mouth and small local stockists. One retailer's post on social media sparked wider interest, and soon other pet stores came knocking.

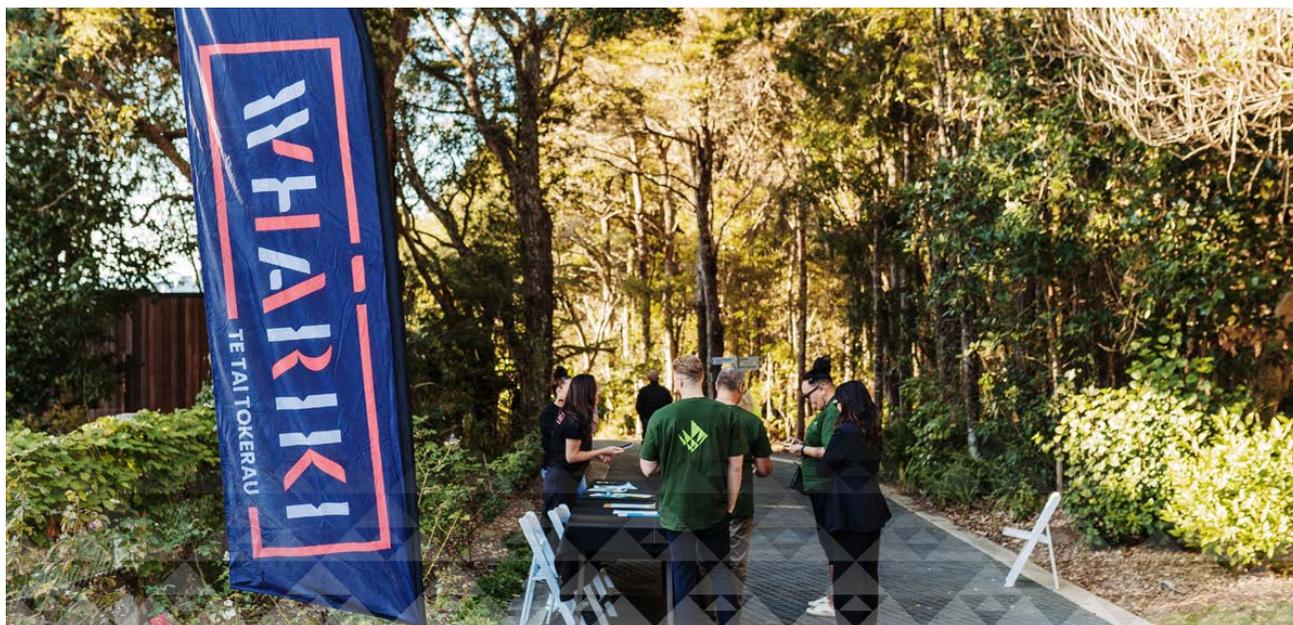
Now, Bonno is stocked in multiple stores, is in talks with a national distributor, and has secured approval to use the New Zealand FernMark on its packaging - an important step for exports.

"If there's one thing we've learned, it's this: think big. You won't grow big unless you think big. Northland Inc helped us think that way - and gave us the tools to act on it."

### THE ROAD AHEAD

With strong foundations in place, Bonno is now preparing for the next stage of growth. Exporting is on the horizon, alongside expanding its local retail network

"Northland Inc has been our go-to. We can call for advice, get contacts, and receive encouragement every step of the way. Without them, we wouldn't be here. The positivity, the follow-ups, the belief in our idea, it's kept us going when things felt overwhelming. And now, we're seeing the results." And as for the dogs? They're loving it too.



## WHĀRIKI BUSINESS NETWORK

Northland Inc's partnership with Whāriki Te Tai Tokerau, formalised through the Waka Hourua Agreement in 2023, continues to strengthen the Māori business ecosystem across Te Tai Tokerau. Acting as the umbrella organisation to support Whāriki's mahi, Northland Inc helps enable events, capability building, and collaboration opportunities for pakihi Māori across the region. Over the past year, Whāriki delivered 15 events, including WhārikiX, Mana Mindset, Chat AI, and Pūtea Pū kōrero, connecting Māori businesses with expert advice, digital capability training, and growth networks. Highlights included the Boost by Meta workshop in Whangārei, attended by over 60 Māori entrepreneurs and professionals, and the Chat AI wānanga at Ngāwhā, where participants explored emerging technology tools. Together, Northland Inc and Whāriki continue to build pathways for Māori enterprise to thrive, grounded in connection, innovation, and shared prosperity.



**“Northland Inc has truly helped amplify the voice and visibility of Māori enterprise across Te Tai Tokerau. Their partnership, belief, and genuine backing of our kaupapa have enabled Whāriki to grow into a powerful movement. A movement that uplifts, connects, and champions our people every step of the way.”**

- CHOOK HENARE, CHAIR, WHĀRIKI TE TAI TOKERAU



Launched as part of the Cyclone Gabrielle recovery effort, the Taitokerau Business Resilience Project was designed to strengthen Northland’s business community following years of disruption - from severe weather and infrastructure failures to the lingering impacts of the pandemic. Funded by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) and delivered by Northland Inc in partnership with NorthChamber, Whāriki Te Tai Tokerau, the Kaitaia Business Boosters, Te Hiku Iwi Development Trust, and local Business Associations, the initiative offered practical, accessible support to help enterprises build confidence, capability, and connection across the region.

The programme was shaped by a regional survey of 270 businesses conducted one year on from Cyclone Gabrielle, which revealed that 30% of Northland businesses felt underprepared for future unexpected events. In response, Northland Inc designed a suite of workshops, mentoring, and resources to address the areas of greatest demand, including financial management, business continuity, marketing, and wellbeing. This followed Northland Inc’s earlier advocacy for and administration of \$8.67 million in direct recovery funding to businesses on behalf of MBIE, and the successful advocacy for further business and tourism support through 2024.

By mid-2024, the programme had supported more than 1,900 participants through 70+ training events, workshops, and mentoring sessions, reaching

businesses across all districts - 38% in the Far North, 36% in Whangārei, and 26% in Kaipara. Participants praised the relevance and accessibility of the sessions, with many describing the experience as transformational for their planning, leadership, and confidence.

Northland Inc Chief Executive Paul Linton said the project directly reflected what local businesses had been asking for - sustained, practical support rather than short-term relief. The project’s success lies not only in its reach but in its collaborative delivery model, which brought together government, iwi, and industry partners to co-design and deliver solutions that meet Northland’s unique needs. Though the formal programme concluded in August 2024, its legacy continues through the strengthened networks, shared resources, and renewed resilience of Northland’s business community.

**“THE HR ESSENTIALS PACK WAS EXACTLY WHAT OUR SMALL BUSINESS NEEDED! THE COACHING SESSION WITH KIMBERLEY REALLY HELPED CLARIFY EVERYTHING TO GET OUR NEW SYSTEMS IN PLACE”.**

DYLAN AND HOLLIE - NORTHLAND MOBILE WINDSCREENS



**70** PARTICIPANTS  
**61%** PAKIHI MĀORI  
**8** YEARS RUNNING  
**6** FINALISTS **1** WINNER

*Spotlight on* **THE PICK**

Now in its eighth year, Northland Inc's The Pick programme has become Taitokerau Northland's premier business ideas competition, helping aspiring entrepreneurs across the region turn great ideas into viable, scalable businesses. Founded by Northland Inc and delivered in 2025 by NorthChamber, in partnership with Whāriki Te Tai Tokerau and the Ministry of Social Development, the programme continues to grow in reach and impact. This year, nearly 70 participants took part in a 10-week journey of mentoring, capability-building workshops, and networking sessions - with 61% identifying as pakihi Māori in 2025. Participants explored everything from product innovation to social enterprise, reflecting the creativity and diversity that drive Northland's economy.

The programme culminated in a pitch night, where six finalists presented their ideas to a panel of judges and an audience of more than 70 regional business leaders and supporters. Georgia Keys was named overall winner for her product idea, MAED Innovations - a smartphone-integrated defibrillator designed to make lifesaving technology more accessible. The Pick continues to foster Northland's entrepreneurial pipeline, giving participants access to expert mentors and industry insights, and building the resilience and ambition of the region's start-up community. Each year, new businesses and ideas emerge ready to grow, employ, and contribute to a more sustainable and inclusive regional economy.



**“[THE PICK] IS MORE THAN JUST A PROGRAMME. IT GAVE ME THE ENERGY AND THE ABILITY TO KNOW THAT WHAT I'M DOING IS RIGHT AND TO KEEP ON PERSEVERING...I'VE GAINED A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT.”**

2025 Winner: Georgia Keys, MAED Innovations



Northland Inc provided broad support to Māori organisations across Te Tai Tokerau throughout the year, helping strengthen enterprise, tourism, and sustainability outcomes. This included assisting iwi and Māori groups to develop new visitor products, undertake feasibility studies, and embed cultural storytelling within regional destination planning. Support ranged from eco-lodges and treks to local tourism strategies and marketing development. The team partnered with Māori business networks and regional programmes to build capability, resilience, and

access to funding and worked with iwi and hapū on strategic asset planning, leadership development, and alignment with wider regional economic priorities.

Northland Inc reconnected with national Māori organisations to secure project funding, strengthen relationships, and ensure Taitokerau operators are visible within the national tourism landscape. The collective mahi has helped grow Māori participation and leadership in Te Tai Tokerau's economy, driving sustainable, culturally grounded enterprise and regional prosperity.

**25** IWI/HĀPU GROUPS AND MĀORI ORGANISATIONS ACTIVELY SUPPORTED DURING THE YEAR.

**87%** SATISFACTION RATE FROM MĀORI ENTERPRISES ENGAGING WITH NORTHLAND INC.

**DESTINATION MANAGEMENT & MARKETING**

**\$1.28M**  
GOVERNMENT-FUNDED MARKETING,  
AND NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC'S BEST OF  
THE WORLD 2025 RECOGNITION.

**61%**  
UPLIFT IN TICKET SALES  
AIR NEW ZEALAND PARTNERSHIP

**11.6M**  
AIR NEW ZEALAND  
PARTNERSHIP  
IMPRESSIONS

**6M+**  
SOCIAL REACH  
INDIA KEY OPINION LEADER FAMIL

## REGIONAL PROMOTION

Northland Inc's marketing activity over 2024/25 focused on showcasing the region's unique stories, people, and experiences to both domestic and international audiences. Through strategic partnerships and creative campaigns, the team worked to inspire visitation, strengthen regional pride, and position Northland as a must-visit destination across all seasons. The Enjoy the Journey, #NorthlandStyle autumn campaign generated more than 500,000 views and 13,000 landing page visits, engaging 40 local operators through partnerships, giveaways, and shared storytelling. In spring, collaboration with Air New Zealand produced a high-impact national campaign featuring Northland across digital, social, and broadcast channels - achieving 11.6 million impressions, a 96% video completion rate, and a 61% uplift in ticket sales into the region.

Northland's marketing reach was amplified through strong media and publicity activity, including international and domestic famils that resulted in widespread coverage across publications such as Traveller Australia, AA Directions, Kia Ora Magazine, and Motorhomes, Caravans and Destinations. Highlights included a Tourism New Zealand India Key

Opinion Leader famil, reaching more than 6 million followers. Recognition of Northland's growing international reputation was further cemented when the region was named among National Geographic's "Best of the World 2025", shining a global spotlight on our region's culture, landscapes, and experiences.

Support from Central Government's Regional Tourism Boost Fund enabled further collective marketing investment, with Northland participating in two successful applications worth \$1.28 million. These include the Upper North Island "2Easy" campaign, promoting self-drive itineraries to the Australian market, and the national "Explore More of New Zealand" campaign targeting North American travellers. Complementing these initiatives, niche product promotion continued to grow, including the rollout of Northland golfing itineraries and hero video in partnership with North Golf Association, positioning the region as a standout golfing destination. Together, these activities demonstrate Northland Inc's collaborative approach to building awareness, deepening industry engagement, product development and attracting high-value visitors to the region.



## TRADE MARKETING

Trade marketing plays a vital role in raising Northland's international profile and helping travel sellers around the world confidently promote the region. This work connects Northland Inc with global travel agents, wholesalers, and inbound tour operators to ensure our stories, experiences, and people are visible in the itineraries that reach visitors before they even arrive in Aotearoa. Through presentations, appointments, training sessions, and familiarisation visits, the team works to equip trade partners with the knowledge and tools they need to sell Northland as a visitor destination.

Over the 2024/25 year, Northland Inc's Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) team, led by our Trade Marketing Manager, attended or hosted more than 10 major trade events and facilitated over 400 direct engagements with international agents across North America, Europe, Asia, and Australia. Highlights included a four-city sales trip across Australia, participation in Tourism New Zealand's Kiwi Link events in UK and Europe, with planning underway to attend Kiwi Link India next year, and the TRENZ 2025 trade show in Rotorua - where Northland's largest-ever delegation of 11 businesses showcased the region to global buyers. Closer to home, the team hosted multiple Chinese media and product manager delegations, an annual Mega Famil for top agents and Flight Centre's leading sellers, ensuring that trade partners experienced the region's manaakitanga firsthand.

## TAITOKERAU NORTHLAND DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

It has been another strong year for the Taitokerau Northland Destination Management Plan (TNDMP), with progress made across several key actions. The Responsible Tourism Programme continued to grow, delivering workshops on regenerative storytelling, inclusive tourism, and Qualmark.

The Russell local destination planning process launched in April 2024, generating excellent community engagement and early implementation of identified actions. Northland Inc staff completed the Expedia Climate Champions programme, contributing valuable insights to a forthcoming Climate Action Plan for the regional visitor industry, while a new partnership with Maverick Digital saw the delivery of targeted digital marketing workshops for operators.



## Spotlight on **TOURISM CARBON FOOTPRINT PROJECT**

The Tourism Carbon Footprint Project was a Northland Inc initiative delivered in partnership with the Northland Regional Council to help tourism businesses measure and reduce their carbon emissions. Using CarbonTrail, an AI-driven emissions tool, tourism businesses across Taitokerau Northland took part in this pilot programme, gaining a clearer understanding of their environmental impact at no cost. Participants also received practical advice and tailored strategies from Dr. David Ermen (Destination Capacity) to improve efficiency, lower costs, and strengthen sustainability performance. The project took a business-first approach to sustainability, helping operators make informed decisions that were good for both the environment and their bottom line. It also contributed to a regional benchmark for tourism emissions, creating a data foundation to guide future sustainability planning and funding. Results from the pilot are due in October 2025, with follow-up actions already in planning to build on the

findings. By supporting tourism businesses to operate more efficiently and responsibly, this initiative strengthened Northland's reputation as a region that leads with care for its people, environment, and economy.



### **REGIONAL EVENTS SUPPORT**

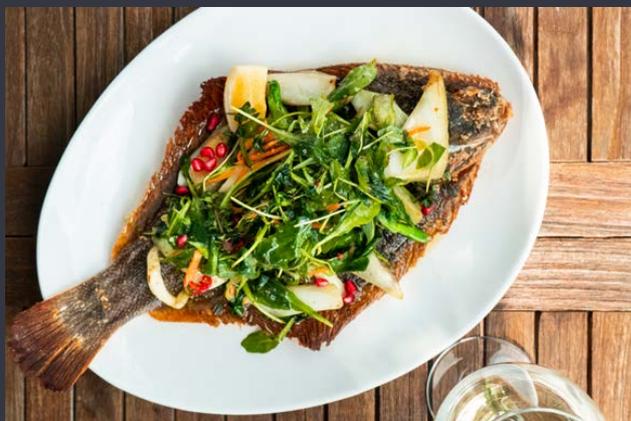
Northland Inc continued to support the growth of the region's events calendar through the administration of national and regional funding programmes designed to drive visitation and strengthen the local visitor economy. The fifth and final contestable round of the Northland Events Fund concluded during the year, with applications requesting more than \$500,000 in support. With only \$150,000 available, the allocation process was highly competitive, resulting in funding for 10 events, including Bay of Islands Sailing Week, Brew of Islands, Matariki ki Mangawhai, Vibes on Vine, Waitangi Day Commemorations, and the Lake Ōmāpere Matariki Festival. Established as part of central government's pandemic response, the Regional Events Fund formally concluded on 30 June 2025, marking the end of a four-year programme that played a significant role in encouraging domestic travel and showcasing the vibrancy of Taitokerau Northland's communities.

The first round of allocations from central government's Regional Events Promotion Fund was announced in August 2024, with six Northland events receiving support - the Bay of Islands Music Festival, Bay of Islands Walking Weekend, Fritter Festival, Mangawhai Lions Food and Wine Festival, Oktoberfest, and The Great New Zealand BBQ. Northland Inc worked closely with event organisers to prepare and submit applications, helping secure funding to boost marketing activity and extend audience reach.

**\$217,000+**  
**ADMINISTERED IN EVENTS SUPPORT**

**22** **EVENTS SUPPORTED ACROSS  
NORTHLAND IN THE 2024/25  
FINANCIAL YEAR**

## Spotlight on SAVOUR NORTHLAND



**125**  
EVENTS

**46**  
VENUES

**36**  
CHALLENGE  
ENTRANTS

**49**  
DISHES

**REGIONAL SPREAD  
FROM MANGONUI  
TO MANGAWHAI**

October 2024 marked the inaugural Savour Northland event, a month-long celebration of Taitokerau Northland's food and beverage industry that brought together producers, chefs, venues, and visitors in a showcase of regional creativity and collaboration. The Taitokerau Northland Destination Management Plan identified a need to develop Northland's food and beverage offering as a key action, which later evolved into the Food & Beverage Action Plan. With support lead by Northland Inc over multiple years, Savour Northland was the first major initiative to activate that plan and bring the industry together under one regional banner.

Over 125 events took place at 46 venues across the region, featuring hands-on workshops, culinary collaborations, themed dining experiences, and festivals. Adding a competitive edge, the Savour Northland Challenge saw 49 entries from 36 venues showcase their take on the essence of Northland - expressed through locally inspired dishes and drinks that highlighted the region's creativity and flavour.

Developed in partnership with the local hospitality and producer community and supported through seed funding from Northland Inc and the Regional Events Fund, Savour Northland reflected the strength and ambition of the region's food and beverage sector.

The event was backed by a major marketing campaign featuring partners including The Northern Advocate, NZME, Coast FM, and Cuisine Magazine, alongside the Northland Winegrowers Association, Explore Group, and Air New Zealand Grabaseat. Together, these partnerships helped attract visitors, strengthen regional pride, and lift the national profile of Northland as a culinary destination. Building on years of industry collaboration and passion, Savour Northland 2024 laid the foundations for a signature annual event - one that celebrates local flavour, fosters innovation, and drives lasting benefit to the region's visitor economy.

**“THE WORK NORTHLAND INC DOES HAS FLOW-ON EFFECTS ACROSS THE WHOLE COMMUNITY – SUPPORTING JOBS, BOOSTING TOURISM, AND KEEPING MONEY IN THE LOCAL ECONOMY.”**

- NICK KEENE  
SCHNAPPA ROCK & PRESIDENT, HOSPITALITY NZ



## INVESTMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE

The Investment and Infrastructure team supports Northland's economic growth by creating an enabling environment for key economic development and infrastructure projects, working with key stakeholders to improve the investment readiness of the region and attract capital into it. Working closely with central government agencies such as NZTE, MBIE, MPI, and Kānoa – Regional Economic Development and Investment Unit, the team connects investors and industry partners with opportunities that strengthen regional industries and create quality jobs. Through project facilitation, feasibility support, and advocacy for enabling infrastructure, the team helps advance initiatives in key sectors like manufacturing, energy, agribusiness, and tourism, ensuring Northland is positioned as a competitive and sustainable place to invest and do business.

Over the 2024/25 year, the team has supported a range of projects through the Project Development Fund, which provides funding support to economic development projects within the region for the purpose of making them investment ready. Northland Inc have partnered with the private sector, Māori and central government on projects across the primary, aquaculture and tourism sectors leveraging every dollar contributed from the fund by four. If these projects come to fruition, they also have the potential to catalyse over \$100 million of future investment and create an estimated 800 jobs, delivering tangible benefits for Northland's communities and economy.

The year also saw growing momentum in the energy and advanced manufacturing sectors, particularly following Channel Infrastructure's announcement of an energy precinct at Marsden Point. This development has attracted significant domestic and international interest, with the six delegations the team hosted and over half of the high-impact projects supported by the team,

connected to emerging opportunities in alternative fuels and clean energy. Collectively, these projects, along with projects in the manufacturing and tourism sectors represent more than \$845 million in prospective investment, positioning Northland as a leader in the transition to a low-emissions economy.

Much of this work the team does is incorporated within or aligns closely with the Northland Regional Deal proposal, which provides a shared framework for enabling long-term, sustainable regional growth. By continuing to collaborate with government, iwi, industry, and local partners, the Investment and Infrastructure team remains focused on driving investment, unlocking infrastructure, and delivering outcomes that build prosperity and resilience across Te Tai Tokerau.



### PRIMARY SECTOR

In 2024, Northland Inc launched Pūtake Whakatupu (Foundation for Growth), a transformative project designed to identify, support, and develop sustainable land use and value-add manufacturing opportunities across Taitokerau Northland. As the inaugural project under the Tuputupu Grow Northland initiative, it was delivered with funding from the Ministry for Primary Industries' Sustainable Food and Fibre Futures Fund and the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee.

The initiative aims to ensure that Northland’s primary sector, people, and environment thrive through adaptation and innovation, leading to new commercial opportunities and longer-term resilience.

Through 2024, the project undertook extensive engagement with landowners, iwi and hapū, industry representatives, and growers to build a clearer picture of Northland’s primary industries and associated manufacturing landscape. This included a regional survey and a series of four workshops held across the region in November 2024, which were attended by almost 100 people, gathering insights that were used to inform a series of Market Opportunity Reports to be released in 2025. Insights from the workshops and other follow up engagements led to the Market Opportunity Reports focusing on newer and novel crops. They take a market led approach working back from retail pricing and commercialisation to capability to grow in region and include consideration of subtropical, specialty root and alternative arable crops.

There are also a number of projects underway across the sector, which are designed to build understanding, capability and support growers decision making across various industries, with the Tuputupu providing varying levels of support from being the project lead through to simply providing support or insights. Pūtake Whakatupu also focuses on collaboration with and by Māori, for a Māori approach ensuring that Māori aspirations for their whenua, whānau, and enterprise are embedded in future planning.



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCY COLLABORATION AND LEADERSHIP

Collaboration remains central to Northland Inc’s leadership role in driving regional and national economic development. Through the Primary Sector EDA Collaboration Initiative, Northland Inc continued to work alongside Venture Taranaki, Great South, Venture Timaru, and Central Economic Development Agency to share insights, streamline project delivery, and reduce duplication across regions. A visit to Southland in late 2024 further strengthened these relationships, enabling knowledge exchange around land use, value-add manufacturing, and diversification opportunities in the primary sector. The collaboration also led to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Venture Taranaki, formalising joint work on de-risking the introduction of new and novel crops, leveraging expertise from Massey University and the respective regional initiatives.

Northland Inc also engaged with a range of national and research partners to ensure Northland’s voice was represented in key discussions shaping the future of regional development. The Climate Commission’s Taitokerau Northland visit provided an opportunity to share local insights on climate adaptation risks and opportunities, while ongoing collaboration with the Foundation for Arable Research (FAR) supported crop diversification trials across the region. Northland Inc also hosted representatives from the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) to highlight opportunities for increased exports and investment in Northland’s food and fibre sector. These engagements continued to reinforce Northland Inc’s leadership role in national conversations around sustainability, innovation, and the future of regional economies.

### PROJECT PARTNERS

**Ministry for Primary Industries**  
Manatū Ahu Matua

**JOINT REGIONAL ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**NorthlandInc**  
Growing Northland’s Economy  
Kia tupu ai te ōhanga o Te Tai Tokerau

**4 WORKSHOPS  
HELD**

**1 REGIONAL  
SURVEY**

**KEY FOCUS AREAS: SUSTAINABLE LAND USE,  
VALUE-ADD MANUFACTURING, BY MĀORI FOR  
MĀORI PARTNERSHIP.**

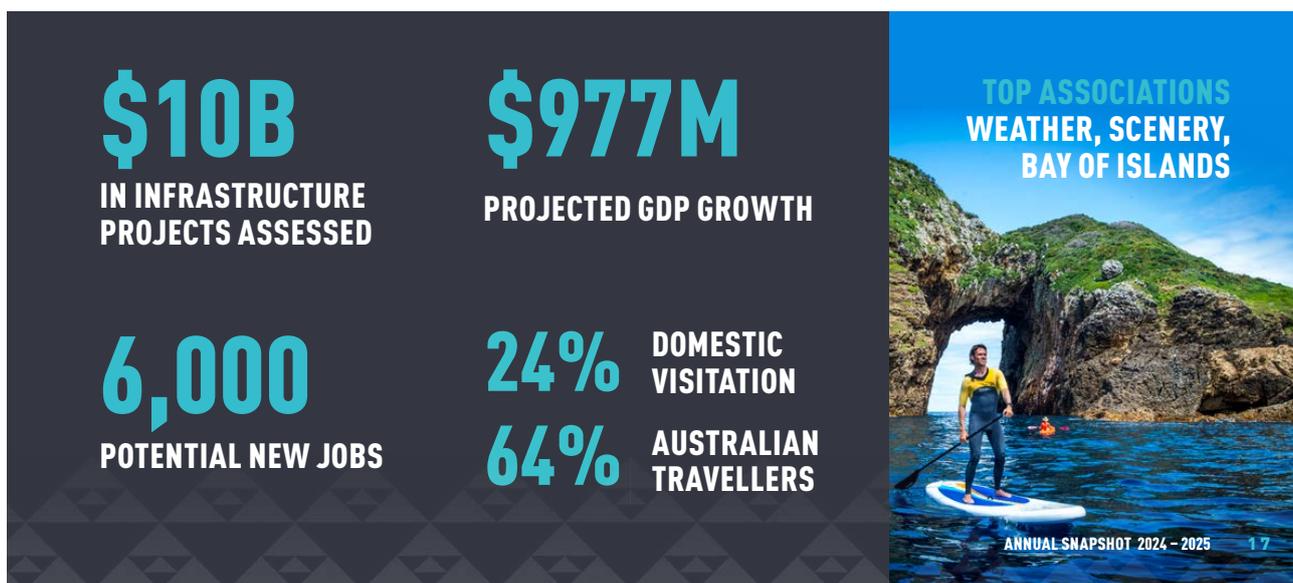
## REGIONAL INSIGHTS & LEADERSHIP

Northland Inc continued to lead regional collaboration and insight-driven planning through the Northland Regional Deal, a proposal submitted to central government in February 2025 on behalf of the four Councils of Northland. The deal set out a bold yet achievable vision to increase Northland's GDP by \$977 million, create over 6,000 new jobs, and boost exports by \$877 million, while lifting incomes and reducing unemployment across the region. The proposal outlined four key sectors for growth - Future Energy, Marine Manufacturing, Primary Industries, and the Visitor Economy - supported by critical investment in infrastructure, policy reform, and private sector co-investment. The Regional Deal demonstrated Northland's readiness to deliver, building on strong partnerships between local government, iwi, and industry, and a proven track record of collaboration. It also showed how the four councils successfully work together through Northland Inc for increased regional prosperity.

In support of this ambition and to help the region plan ahead, Northland Inc commissioned a Social Impact Assessment Report to understand the effects of major infrastructure projects across the region. The study identified over \$10 billion in proposed infrastructure development over the next decade, assessing potential impacts on workforce supply, small businesses, and vulnerable communities. Funded in partnership with Te Whatu Ora, MSD, Kāinga Ora, and Northland Inc, the report provided valuable insights into how major projects could create jobs and regional opportunities while also guiding mitigation strategies to ensure growth is inclusive and sustainable.

Complementing these regional insights, Northland Inc joined MBIE's Angus & Associates Visitor Insights Programme to develop the first Market Perception Report for Northland. The initial findings, released in mid-2024, revealed that two-thirds (64%) of New Zealanders have visited Northland at least once, with the region's weather and natural scenery ranking among its strongest assets. For the Australian market, 24% of visitors to New Zealand had travelled to Northland - primarily families and travellers aged 30-39 - with the Bay of Islands remaining the most recognised destination. These insights are helping to shape future marketing and investment priorities, ensuring Northland's tourism and economic development strategies remain grounded in evidence and aligned with regional aspirations.

Advocacy and collaboration around roading resilience remained a key priority for Northland Inc throughout the year. Northland Inc worked closely with NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) around the timing of the Brynderwyn Hills closures for repairs - to bring our community voices together, to gather sector wide views and ensure Northland's transport priorities were well understood and effectively communicated to NZTA decision-makers. Significant focus was placed on the reopening of State Highway 1 over the Brynderwyn Hills, vital for reconnecting Northland with Auckland and the rest of New Zealand., and to ensure there was minimal impact on Northland's economy. Through this, Northland Inc has helped support a unified regional voice on roading, supporting the views of the Northland Mayoral Forum, and advocating for long-term investment that supports safety, connectivity, and economic resilience.





Following advocacy from Northland Inc, Northland MP Grant McCallum and regional leaders, the region secured a \$1 million Resilience Fund from Transpower and its service provider Omexom, established to improve energy and economic resilience in the wake of the June 2024 power outage. The first allocation from the fund provided \$250,000 in seed funding ring fenced to progress development of a Health Simulation and Training Centre at Whangārei's new Knowledge, Education & Arts (KEA) Hub - Northland's first purpose-built facility of its kind. This world-class centre will replicate real-life clinical environments to train health professionals, emergency responders, and care workers, addressing critical workforce shortages and positioning Northland as a leader in health training and education. Further allocations from the fund are supporting the development of a Regional Infrastructure Strategy, led by Northland Inc, to align regional priorities and attract long-term investment.

In parallel, the Te Tai Tokerau Impact Fund, also supported through Transpower's regional commitment, was established to strengthen community and kaupapa-driven projects across Northland. Administered by Northland Inc and NorthChamber, the fund was designed to back initiatives that deliver long-term regional benefit through collaboration and enterprise. Across two

funding rounds, a total of \$430,000 was distributed to 32 projects throughout Taitokerau, supporting initiatives in education, business development, community safety, events, and environmental action. The projects were wide ranging in their support of our communities, such as a joint Kerikeri and Bay of Islands Business Association project focussed on CCTV installations and community safety. Nearly half of all successful projects were Māori-led.

Together, these funds reflected the success of Northland Inc's ongoing advocacy for meaningful, locally delivered investment. By securing and administering targeted funding streams, Northland Inc ensured that resources were directed where they could make the most lasting impact - supporting regional resilience, enabling new infrastructure, and empowering communities and businesses to lead Northland's growth from the ground up.

**"On behalf of Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Rēhia Trust, I'd like to sincerely acknowledge and express our deep appreciation for this support. This investment will enable us to activate the first phase of our eco-tourism development at our Sanctuary and help bring to life a kaupapa that blends cultural storytelling, environmental restoration, and whānau-led enterprise."**

- ANITA TIPENE, TE RŪNANGA O NGĀTI RĒHIA TRUST

**\$1M** RESILIENCE  
FUND SECURE

**\$250K** HEALTH  
SIMULATION  
CENTRE

**\$430K** DISTRIBUTED THROUGH  
THE IMPACT FUND

(32 PROJECTS, 47% MĀORI-LED)



The More FM Touristy Tour crew interview Dr Joost de Bruin, Director of the Hundertwasser Art Centre in Whangārei

## AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Northland Inc received notable national and international recognition during the year - acknowledgements that, while not the focus of our mahi, reflected the quality, professionalism, and impact of the work delivered across Te Tai Tokerau.

A major highlight was Northland's inclusion in National Geographic's Best of the World 2025 list, placing the region on the global stage and celebrating the cultural and natural experiences that set Taitokerau apart.

At the Economic Development New Zealand (EDNZ) Awards, three Northland Inc initiatives received Highly Commended recognition:

- Te Rerenga (Integrated Strategy)
- Northland Peanut Trials (Innovation)
- Primary Sector EDA Collaboration Initiative (Collaboration)

These acknowledgements highlighted Northland Inc's leadership in forward-thinking strategy, regional innovation, and cross-agency collaboration, all central pillars of our approach to delivering long-term regional impact.

The organisation also celebrated national success at the New Zealand Radio and Podcast Awards, where the Touristy Tour campaign won Best Single Station Promotion. Developed to keep visitation flowing during the Brynderwyns closure, the campaign was recognised for its creativity, community connection, and strong regional reach.

Together, these recognitions demonstrated that while awards are not the goal of our work, they affirm the calibre of the initiatives delivered for our communities, partners, and the wider region.



Pic's Peanut Butter founder, Pic Picot, at the harvest

# NorthlandInc

**Growing Northland's Economy**

Kia tupu ai te ōhanga o Te Tai Tokerau

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[NorthlandNZ.com](https://www.northlandnz.com) | [#NorthlandNZ](https://twitter.com/NorthlandNZ)

**TITLE:** Northland Inc Limited: Directors - Appointment for term commencing 1 July 2026

**From:** Codie McIntyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist

**Authorised by Group Manager/s:** Bruce Howse, Pou Taumatua – Group Manager Corporate Services, on 02 March 2026

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### Executive summary/Whakarāpopototanga

The purpose of this paper is to seek the approval of the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee (Joint Committee) to reappoint Suzanne Duncan and Michael Lightfoot as directors of Northland Inc Limited (Northland Inc) for further terms of three and two years respectively.

Suzanne Duncan and Michael Lightfoot are currently in their first terms as directors of Northland Inc and Suzanne Duncan is currently the Chair. A further term for them both is being proposed to:

1. Provide a level of continuity amongst the group of directors, who have all been on the board for less than three years
2. Maximise the staggered nature of director appointment terms, especially as it relates to other council processes, e.g. Local Government elections.

Suzanne Duncan and Michael Lightfoot have both indicated that they are keen and available to stay on as directors.

Making this decision is consistent with the Northland Inc Shareholders' Agreement and the Policy on the appointment of directors to Northland Inc (**Attachment 1**). Staff recommend that the Joint Committee approve the reappointment.

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### Recommendation(s)

1. That the report 'Northland Inc Limited: Directors - Appointment for term commencing 1 July 2026' by Codie McIntyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist and dated 13 February 2026, be received.
2. That Suzanne Duncan be reappointed to the Board of Northland Inc Limited for a term of three years beginning 1 July 2026.
3. That Michael Lightfoot be reappointed to the Board of Northland Inc Limited for a term of two years beginning 1 July 2026.

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### Options

No.	Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
1	Reappoint Michael Lightfoot for a term of two years ending 30 June 2028 and Suzanne Duncan for a term of	Avoids disruption to the current board structure and ensures continuity.  Minimises the short-term time and effort in	Removes the ability to test the market currently.  No fresh perspective or broader skillsets and expertise added

	three years ending 30 June 2029	<p>appointing directors.</p> <p>Maximises the staggering of director appointment terms.</p> <p>Minimises the time and effort in appointing directors.</p>	
<b>2</b>	Reappoint Suzanne Duncan and Mike Lightfoot for a term of three years- consistent with the maximum allowable- ending 30 June 2029	<p>Avoids disruption to the current board structure and ensures continuity.</p> <p>Minimises the time and effort in appointing directors.</p>	<p>Removes the ability to test the market currently.</p> <p>No fresh perspective or broader skillsets and expertise added</p> <p>The timing of the end of both directors' term would occur in a possible period of change, directly following local government elections.</p>
<b>3</b>	Run an open selection process.	<p>Tests the market.</p> <p>Could enable the addition of new perspectives, skillsets or expertise.</p>	<p>Time and effort to undertake the process.</p> <p>Chance of losing the existing Chair and an experienced board member if they choose not to participate</p>
<b>4</b>	Not appoint anyone to the position.	<p>Legally permissible to operate with only three directors, ensuring compliance with regulations.</p> <p>Provides an opportunity to assess the Board composition.</p>	<p>Reduces the number of Board Members to three.</p> <p>Loses the existing Chair and an experienced board member and diversity (including regional reach) they collectively bring.</p>

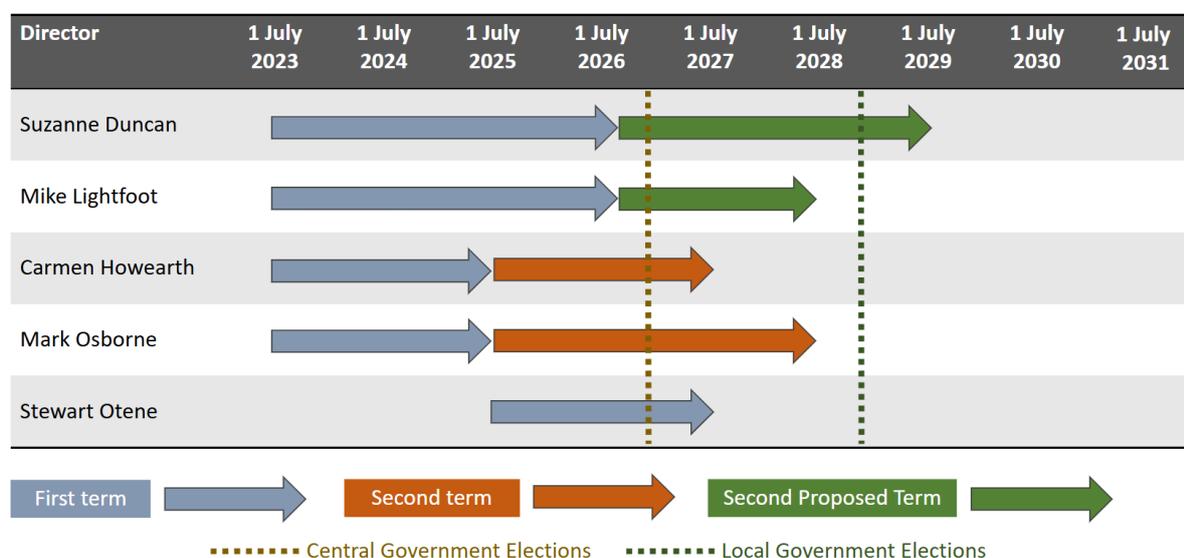
The staff's recommended option is Option 1. The policy for the appointment of directors to Northland Inc is clear that directors should have no expectation of reappointment at the end of their term of appointment, with the standard expectation being that they resign.

However, the market was tested in early 2025 when the Joint Committee sought to find a replacement for Kris MacDonald who had served the maximum of three terms as Director of Northland Inc. As part of this process, the Joint Committee, assisted in part by Suzanne Duncan in her role as Chair of Northland Inc, went through a process of advertising, shortlisting, interviewing, and recommending the appointment of a new member to the Board of Northland Inc for the period beginning 1 July 2025. Furthermore, the terms of three other

current directors conclude on 30 June 2027 and 2028 and those would seem a more appropriate time to re-test the market.

As part of the same recruitment process all of the Northland Inc directors completed an assessment of their skills which helped to inform a skills matrix. With the appointment of Stewart Otene, whose term commenced 1 July 2025, there is a good level of complementary skills across the matrix. Leading into Central Government elections and with uncertainties in the Local Government environment, it seems more appropriate to focus on ensuring continuity on the Board of Northland Inc, rather than seeking fresh perspectives and broader skillsets and expertise.

## Northland Inc Directors – Current terms



### Considerations

#### 1. Alignment to council strategic direction - community outcomes

The matters covered in this report relate to the following community outcomes:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Protected and flourishing native life                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy waters, land and air                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Safe and resilient transport networks                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A sustainable, innovative and equitable economy  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meaningful partnerships with tāngata whenua            | <input type="checkbox"/> Carbon neutral, resilient communities in a changing climate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Efficient, progressive and transparent council systems |  |

#### 2. Climate Impact

There are no climate impacts associated with this issue that needs to be considered.

#### 3. Environmental Impact

There are no environmental risks or negative impacts associated with this decision.

#### **4. Community views**

There are no community views on this issue that need to be considered.

#### **5. Māori impact statement**

There are no known particular impacts on Māori which are different from others in the community. The policy on the appointment of directors actively supports diversity and inclusion when making board appointments with a view to the board reflecting Northland demographics. The reappointment of these two directors is consistent with this.

#### **6. Financial implications**

There are no budget implications associated with this decision.

#### **7. Implementation issues**

Agreeing to reappoint Suzanne Duncan and Michael Lightfoot is a simple administrative matter. The option of testing the market through an open advertising process would take considerable time and effort on the part of both members of the Joint Committee and staff. This includes establishing a matrix of skills, knowledge and experience, advertising the position, assessing applications, conducting interviews, and preparing paper for Joint Committee approval.

#### **8. Significance and engagement**

This matter does not trigger council's Significant and Engagement Policy, and no public consultation is required for the Joint Committee to make the decisions.

#### **9. Policy, risk management and legislative compliance**

Under Section 4.1 of Northland Inc Limited Shareholders' Agreement signed on 4 September 2024, the appointment of directors is a matter for Joint Committee decision. Under the policy on the appointment of directors to Northland Inc, the Joint Committee can make the decision as set out in this paper.

- a) The policy gives the Joint Committee the power to decide not to advertise a vacancy.
- b) Under the policy, the maximum number of consecutive terms for any director is three. This will be Suzanne Duncan's and Michael Lightfoot's second term.
- c) Appointing Suzanne Duncan for a new three-year term and Michael Lightfoot for a new two-year term will give a total of six- and five-years continuous appointment, respectively. This is not precluded by the policy. Under the policy, reappointments exceeding six continuous years are considered on a case-by-case basis.

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### **Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga**

Attachment 1: JREDC Policy on the appointment of directors to Northland Inc Limited [↓](#) 

# Policy on the appointment of directors to Northland Inc Limited

Section 57(1) of the Local Government Act (LGA) 2002 (“the Act”) requires local authorities to adopt a policy on the appointment of directors to their council organisations. As at 1 July 2021, Northland Inc Limited (Northland Inc) is a council-controlled organisation jointly and equally owned by Northland Regional Council, Far North District Council and Kaipara District Council. This document sets out a consistent policy for the appointment of directors to Northland Inc for all three local authorities.

## Definitions

“Council organisations” include council-controlled organisations and council-controlled trading organisations. According to the Act, a council-controlled organisation is an organisation in which the council, either on its own or when combined with other local authorities, controls, directly or indirectly, 50 percent or more of the votes or has the right, directly or indirectly, to appoint 50 percent or more of the directors, trustees or managers.

“Joint Committee” means the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee.

## Other relevant legislation/regulation

This policy seeks to give effect to the requirements under the Shareholders’ Agreement for Northland Inc Limited and the Constitution of Northland Inc Limited. The Shareholders’ Agreement, Constitution, and legislation take precedence over this policy, but internal policies of Northland Inc do not.

## Key principles of this policy

1. Ensure that the Joint Committee appointment process selects the best person for the role having regard to the needs of Northland Inc and the mix of skills on the board.
2. All appointments will be made through an objective, transparent and accountable process.
3. All appointments will be made on the basis of merit.
4. All directors will be appointed on the basis of the contribution they can make to Northland Inc, not on the basis of representation.
5. That all parties share a clear and agreed approach to director appointments prior to the process commencing.

## Appointment process

Vacancies will be advertised unless good reason exists not to. The power to decide not to advertise a vacancy is to reside with Joint Committee. In making a decision not to advertise, the Joint Committee will consider:

- The costs of any advertisement and selection process;
- The already known availability of qualified candidates;
- The urgency of the appointment, e.g. Northland Inc is without a quorum cannot hold a board meeting;
- The degree of potential interest, including public interest, in the vacancy; and
- Whether there is a high prospect that an incumbent will be reappointed.

An ad hoc committee will be established to consider applications and / or nominations, conduct interviews and make a recommendation on preferred candidate(s) to the Joint Committee. The ad hoc committee shall normally comprise members of the Joint Committee. The ad hoc committee may also include key stakeholders, one or more directors of Northland Inc, or any person who has particular knowledge or skills that would be beneficial in the selection process.

Ad hoc committee members and candidates are required to declare any potential conflicts of interest.

## General core competencies

A matrix will be developed to outline the skills and experience required of board members. All board members are expected to meet core competencies as well as relevant industry or other technical / specialist skills required.

## Person specifications

Nominees for specific vacancies shall be assessed and ranked for their particular skills, knowledge and experience using the matrix.

## Diversity

Diversity encompasses gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, education and cultural background. In making its selection, the Joint Committee shall actively support diversity and inclusion with a view to the board reflecting Northland demographics, and to ensure governance experience is gained by Northlanders.

The Joint Committee believes that supporting diversity and inclusion when making board appointments will enhance the overall strength and capability of the governance function. In practice, this means that the appointment process will actively seek out people with a variety of background and abilities.

## Appointment restrictions

Councillors and council staff should not be appointed as directors, unless good reason exists for an exception.

Staff of Northland Inc should not be appointed to its board. In the event the board decides one of its members should fill a vacancy in Northland Inc, the board member must first resign from their position on the board.

Any board member applying for employment with the shareholder councils shall offer to resign from the board immediately following an acceptance of appointment.

Any board member who is a candidate in a local body election (or a general election or placed on any political party's list) must offer to stand down from nomination day until the election results are notified.

## Term of appointment

Appointments shall be for a maximum three-year term, subject to any review the Joint Committee considers necessary.

Directors should have no expectation of reappointment at the end of their term of appointment.

Reappointment may not occur for reasons unrelated to the performance of the board member, such as other changes to the composition of the board or changes to the direction of Northland Inc or the environment in which it operates.

The maximum number of consecutive terms for any director is three, but with reappointments exceeding six continuous years being considered on a case-by-case basis.

The Joint Committee shall generally review the performance of Northland Inc and its board after the local body election.

Where reappointment of an incumbent is proposed, the Joint Committee may decide that advertising the vacancy is inappropriate. Consideration will be given as to whether the reappointment will be consistent with the broader policies in this section, and whether the reappointment of the incumbent:

- Will match the projected activities and governance requirements of Northland Inc;
- Is appropriate having regard to the mix of skills now on the board; and
- Will further the diversity policy.

### Remuneration of directors

Remuneration for directors of Northland Inc will be determined on a case-by-case basis taking into account:

- Each specific role;
- Any existing legal or constitutional requirements;
- The form and purpose of Northland Inc; and
- Any previous level of fees paid by the shareholder.

Directors are not to undertake consulting work for Northland Inc under any circumstances.

### Removal of directors

Directors may be removed from office in accordance with the constitution of the company and the general law; particularly section 156 of the Companies Act 1993 which provides for removal of a directors by ordinary resolution of the shareholders.

**TITLE:** Annual Work Plan 2026

**From:** Codie McIntyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist

**Authorised by** Bruce Howse, Pou Taumatua – Group Manager Corporate Services, on 02  
**Group Manager/s:** March 2026

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### Executive summary/Whakarāpopototanga

The purpose of this report is to seek agreement on the annual work plan for 2026 for the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee (Joint Committee).

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### Recommendation(s)

1. That the report 'Annual Work Plan 2026' by Codie McIntyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist and dated 25 February 2026, be received.
  2. That the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee agrees to the Annual Work Plan 2026 as set out in Attachment 1 to this report.
- 

### Options

No.	Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
1	Agree to the proposed annual work plan	Provides all necessary steps for developing Northland Inc's SOI and other key activities required by the Joint Committee to meet its responsibilities	Could give the impression that there is no flexibility to the items recommended for discussion by the Joint Committee
2	Do not agree to the proposed annual work plan	Provides greater flexibility to the items discussed by the Joint Committee	Could negatively affect the sound and efficient operation of the development of Northland Inc's SOI and other matters the Joint Committee is responsible for (i.e., appointment of directors to the Northland Inc board)

The staff's recommended option is Option 1. The annual work plan sets out a schedule of meeting dates and agenda items that allows the Joint Committee to meet its statutory obligations in relation to the development of Northland Inc's Statement of Intent and other key activities. While the annual work plan sets out known specific items that will be brought to the Joint Committee for decision and discussion, it is anticipated that additional items will be added to the agendas as issues and matters for discussion arise during the year. The proposed workplan was circulated amongst appropriate council and Northland Inc staff for input and feedback prior to being brought to the Joint Committee.

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## Considerations

### 1. Alignment to council strategic direction - community outcomes

The matters covered in this report relate to the following community outcomes:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Protected and flourishing native life                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy waters, land and air                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Safe and resilient transport networks                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A sustainable, innovative and equitable economy  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meaningful partnerships with tāngata whenua            | <input type="checkbox"/> Carbon neutral, resilient communities in a changing climate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Efficient, progressive and transparent council systems |  |

### 2. Climate Impact

There is no climate impact in relation to this decision.

### 3. Environmental Impact

There is no impact on the environment in relation to this decision.

### 4. Community views

There are no community views that require consideration in relation to this decision.

### 5. Māori impact statement

There are no particular impacts on Māori which are associated with this decision.

### 6. Financial implications

At the time of writing this report there are no known financial implications of this decision.

### 7. Implementation issues

There are no implication issues associated with this decision as of the writing of this report. Issues may arise in relation to location / venue of the meetings of the Joint Committee and member attendance. However, with agreeing to this annual work plan, those issues will be eliminated.

### 8. Significance and engagement

An agreement to an annual work plan provides security and support to the Joint Committee responsibilities for the year 2025.

### 9. Policy, risk management and legislative compliance

This report is submitted for consideration by the Joint Committee and is considered to be of low risk and compliant with legislative requirements.

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## Background/Tuhinga

The Joint Committee was established on 1 July 2021 by the Northland Regional Council (NRC), Far North District Council (FNDC) and Kaipara District Council (KDC) to provide shareholder oversight of Northland Inc and collectively provide for a better focus on economic development across the region. Whangarei District Council (WDC) became a member of the Joint Committee on 4 September 2024 when it became a joint shareholder of Northland Inc.

Staff propose that the Joint Committee agrees to the annual work plan for 2026 as set out in **Attachment 1**. The annual work plan proposes five public meetings of the Joint Committee, including this one. Additional meetings and workshops could take place if necessary and agreed to. Flexibility to amend and add to the work plan as the work progresses is available. It is proposed that the meetings be held on Fridays to align with the Northland Mayoral Forum.

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### Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Attachment 1: Proposed Annual Work Plan 2026 [↓](#) 

Joint Regional Economic Development Committee - Annual Work Plan for 2026

Item	Meeting dates in 2026				
	Friday, 6 March	Friday, 24 April	Friday, 7 August	Friday, 25 September	Friday, 11 December
Location	WDC	NRC	KDC	FNDC	WDC
<b>Northland Inc: Statement of Intent</b>	Receive NINC's draft SOI 2026/27	Agree to the Shareholders Comments to be sent to NINC re draft SOI 2026/27	Agree to NINC's board approved SOI 2026/27		Letter of expectations to NINC re SOI 2027/28
<b>Northland Inc: Reporting Against KPIs</b>	2025/26 Quarter 2 and half year financials		2025/26 Quarter 3	2025/26 Annual Report	2026/27 Quarter 1
<b>Northland Inc Quarterly Highlights</b>	Present Quarterly Highlights Report		Present Quarterly Highlights Report	Present Quarterly Highlights Report	Present Quarterly Highlights Report
<b>Northland Inc: Appointment of Directors</b>	Decision on Director Position(s) (term ending 30 June 2026), currently held by Suzanne Duncan & Mike Lightfoot			Discussion on appointment process for the two directors whose terms end 30 June 2027- Carmen Howearth & Stewart Otene	Agree on appointment process for two directors whose terms end 30 June 2027
<b>Northland Inc: Director Remuneration</b>		Discussion re directors' remuneration	Decision on directors' remuneration		
<b>Economic update</b>	Economic update by Infometrics based on revised Annual Economic Profile (Infometrics) released end of January: Year-in-review analysis of Northland's economic performance and outlook for 2026	Primary Sector Focus, including trends, challenges, opportunities, etc.	Economic update by NRC staff including comments on Budget 2026	Economic update by NRC staff with a focus on tourism	Economic update by Infometrics (provided as part of annual service)
<b>Annual Work Plan</b>				Agree to Annual Work Plan for 2027	Review the committee's achievements in 2026: projects assessment?
<b>Regional Infrastructure Fund</b>	Update from MBIE: Robert Pigou	Update as appropriate	Update as appropriate	Update as appropriate	Update as appropriate
<b>Northland Infrastructure Plan</b>	Draft Towards a Regional Infrastructure Plan provided	Update as appropriate	Update as appropriate	Update as appropriate	Update as appropriate
<b>Regional Deals Initiative</b>		RD Update - potential for 2nd Tranche application			
<b>Suggested focus topics: Anchored around Northland Inc Pou</b>	1. Impact & Outcomes Report 2. Te Rerenga Update on implementation plan	1. Primary Sector Pou: Update by Ninc on Tutuputu activities including things like emerging opportunities, practical examples of adaptation and innovation in landuse, partnerships underway, etc. 2. NIWA Kingfish presentation	1. <i>Innovation &amp; Enterprise Pou:</i> Update by Ninc on BIG Team activities, including things like results from 25/26 across RBP programme, the Pick, etc. - including regional spread, impact stories/case studies of businesses who have engaged in programmes, events/workshops run, etc. 2. Northland Corporate Group Presentation	1. Tourism & Destination Management Pou: Update by NINC on key activities, including providing insight into tourism trends, opportunities, and challenges for NLD.	Investment & Infrastructure Pou: Update by Ninc on key activities, including things like Summary of I&GR funds allocated in past 12-24 months and how projects are progressing, case studies of promising projects that Ninc have attracted, nurtured or helped shape, overview of current investment pipeline including high level investor profiles, etc. 2. Potential Northport Group Limited Presentation
<b>IGR Management &amp; Funding decisions</b>	As appropriate	As appropriate	Discussion on NINC's SOI 2027/28 (to feed into/inform 2027/28 Long Term Plan development across all councils)	As appropriate	As appropriate

**TITLE:** Northland Infrastructure Plan - Update

**From:** Codie McIntyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist

**Authorised by** Bruce Howse, Pou Taumatua – Group Manager Corporate Services, on 02  
**Group Manager/s:** March 2026

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### Whakarāpopototanga / Executive summary

The Joint Regional Economic Development Committee (Joint Committee) is the governance body for the development of the Northland Infrastructure Plan (Plan). A high-level overview of the Plan is provided as **Attachment 1**. The purpose of this agenda item is to provide an update to the Joint Committee on the development of the Plan (**Attachment 2**), receive any feedback from the Joint Committee, and discuss next steps. The intention is to bring a full version of the plan to the next Joint Committee meeting on Friday 24 April 2026. The project consultants (Beca) will be in attendance to provide an update to the Joint Committee.

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### Ngā mahi tūtohutia / Recommendation

That the report 'Northland Infrastructure Plan - Update' by Codie McIntyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist and dated 18 February 2026, be received.

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### Background/Tuhinga

The development of the Northland Infrastructure Plan (Plan) is an initiative that arose out of the Northland Forward Together (NFT) strategic workshop held in July 2024. Previous economic development strategies and the Regional Deal proposal highlighted the importance of infrastructure and the need for a clear, actionable, overarching Northland Infrastructure Plan that identifies infrastructure needs and gaps and guides development and sequencing. It was also identified in the Regional Deals proposal that Northland would undertake the development of a Regional Infrastructure Plan as part what the region would bring to a regional deal:

*“Security of core infrastructure is key to Northland’s future prosperity. Northland’s topography and demographics – a long thin area with relatively scattered population – is a challenge to those looking to ensure provision of services across all infrastructure areas. Coordinating infrastructure planning, decision-making and investment is key. Taking a collaborative approach will provide a clear and comprehensive picture of the required investments and ensure a robust and sustainable planning, prioritisation and delivery process occurs. The region has committed to completing a Regional Infrastructure Strategy which is underway.”*

As such, the Plan is a strategic initiative to unlock sustainable economic growth and community wellbeing across Northland. It aims to provide a clear, actionable roadmap for infrastructure development that supports regional economic growth, through setting out a 30-year vision and 10-year investment pipeline for the region.

The CEO / Mayoral Forum, who are responsible for retaining oversight of the Northland Forward Together programme considered that the Joint Committee was the most appropriate governance body to oversee this work, with Northland Inc, the most appropriate council organisation to manage the task with the close support of appropriate staff from the four councils, e.g. council infrastructure managers. As can be seen in Figure 1, the latter two groups make up the Project Steering Group.

The Plan was funded by Northland Inc through the \$1 million fund established by Transpower and its service provider Omexom following the collapse of a transmission tower on 20 June 2024 that left 88,000 customers in Northland without power. It is being delivered by consultants BECA and Martin Jenkins who were appointed at the conclusion of an RFP process.



Figure 1: Regional Infrastructure Plan- Delivery Structure

The previous Joint Committee held two workshops with BECA (the lead consultant) in September 2025, prior to local government elections, regarding the plan.

- **8<sup>th</sup> September 2025: Workshop**- This initial engagement session was designed to ensure alignment between the consultant’s methodology and the Joint Committee’s expectations, particularly in relation to regional aspirations on infrastructure and economic development, inter-agency coordination and previous work done, engagement with other partners and desired outcomes for the region etc.
- **26<sup>th</sup> September 2025: Workshop**- BECA provided an update on key activities that were underway, especially as they related to phase 1 (see Figure 1) and sought the Joint Committee’s feedback across a number of areas:
  - Establishing the regions pipeline of infrastructure projects (collated from the National Infrastructure Pipeline, Council’s LTP’s input from other infrastructure providers)
  - Providing some examples of how the QuickBase tool can be used to provide greater insights into the value, type, funding status, etc. of planned and proposed infrastructure
  - On a range of questions, including things like, what are the key infrastructure requirements, priorities, and projects/programmes for Northland? What critical infrastructure gaps need addressing to unlock regional economic growth, support resilience, and improve wellbeing? What opportunities do you see for infrastructure investment that could deliver significant regional benefits? Etc.

- An overview of the demand side perspective for infrastructure, including how the Northland region is structured both socially and economically from a social, economically and how it currently performs in terms of infrastructure
- The criteria for the prioritisation of infrastructure project

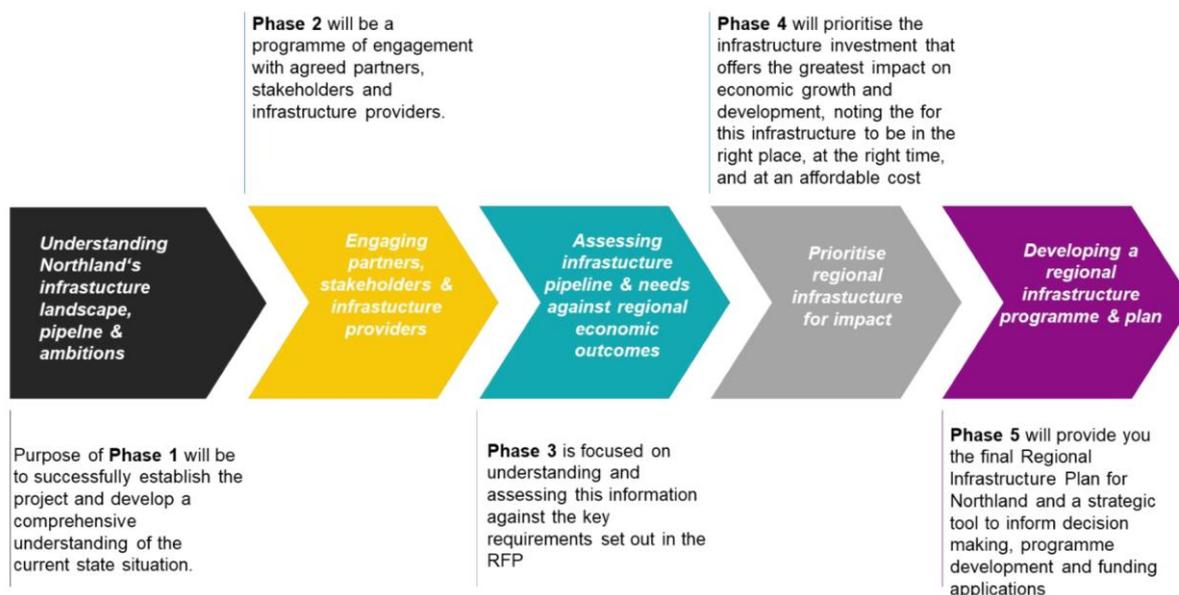


Figure 1: Process for Developing the Regional Infrastructure Plan

A presentation on the Plan was also provided to the first Northland Forward Together Strategic Planning Workshop of this triennium held on 16 December 2025 to ensure all elected members were made aware of the plan, its origins and the purpose.

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## Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Attachment 1: Northland Infrastructure Plan - Project Overview [↓](#) 

Attachment 2: Northland Infrastructure Plan - Presentation [↓](#) 

Sensitivity: General

## Northland Infrastructure Plan – Project Overview

### Purpose

The Northland Infrastructure Plan is a strategic initiative to unlock sustainable economic growth and community wellbeing across Te Tai Tokerau. It aims to provide a clear, actionable roadmap for infrastructure development that supports regional economic growth.

The development of the Northland Infrastructure Plan is an initiative that arose out of the Northland Forward Together (NFT) strategic workstream between the four northland Councils in July 2024. Previous economic development strategies and recent Regional Deal proposal highlighted importance of infrastructure and need for a clear, actionable, overarching regional Infrastructure Plan that identifies infrastructure needs and gaps and guides development and sequencing.

### Vision

To set out a 30-year infrastructure vision and 10-year investment pipeline for Te Tai Tokerau that enables an innovative, resilient, and growing economy that supports regional community wellbeing and betterment.

### Objectives

- Identify infrastructure that supports the economic growth of Northland and aligns with regional strategies such as Te Rerenga, Northland Forward Together, the Regional Deals Light Touch Application.
- Identify targeted infrastructure focus areas with indicative procurement and delivery timeframes and anticipated benefits.
- Facilitate collaboration between public and private infrastructure authorities, regional economic agencies, central government stakeholders and funding/financing agencies.
- Interpret investment streams to support long-term economic, social, and environmental wellbeing.
- Deliver a high-quality, actionable plan for strategic use by regional stakeholders.

### Scope

The Plan will build on the existing Te Waihangā National Infrastructure Pipeline, as well as other planned infrastructure investment to identify and assess both public and private sector investment that aligns with relevant regional strategies and supports economic growth outcomes for Te Tai Tokerau. The Plan will recognise that projects that are at different stages, from aspirational to funded, and may identify gaps and further work required to address those gaps. Where infrastructure can be located in different places, for example a new airport or a bypass over the Brynderwyns, the Plan will not select a preferred location but provide a basis for future spatial planning and infrastructure location optioneering.

Governance oversight will be provided by the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee (JRED) and the Project Steering Group, which comprises representatives of all four Northland Councils. The Plan will be delivered by Beca and MartinJenkins.

### Methodology & Timeline

Delivered in the following key phases from August to December 2025:

1. Review current and planned infrastructure investment across the region
2. Identify the infrastructure likely to have the most significant impact on regional economic growth and wellbeing

Sensitivity: General

3. Develop a Northland infrastructure plan that identifies the priority and sequencing of future infrastructure investment

### **Engagement Approach**

Engagement is central to the Plan's success, involving Tangata Whenua via Te Kahu o Taonui, local Councils, infrastructure providers, national agencies.

### **Key Messages**

- Northland needs infrastructure and market access to unlock its economic potential.
- The Plan seeks to identify priority projects and/or work programmes that will deliver the most impact for the region.
- The Plan will be informed by a dynamic prioritisation and assessment tool that can be used again in the future to guide future investment and decision-making.
- Designed to support future funding applications, including Te Waihanga's Infrastructure Priorities Programme.

### **Outputs**

- Northland Infrastructure Project Directory
- Prioritisation Framework
- Final Northland Infrastructure Plan.



Sensitivity: General

# Content

- Alignment with National Infrastructure Plan (released Dec 2025)
- Feedback sought – are we heading in the right direction?
  - Regional infrastructure priorities
  - Infrastructure Plan objectives to respond to priorities
  - Regional Transformers – programmes of work that deliver against Objectives
- Next steps

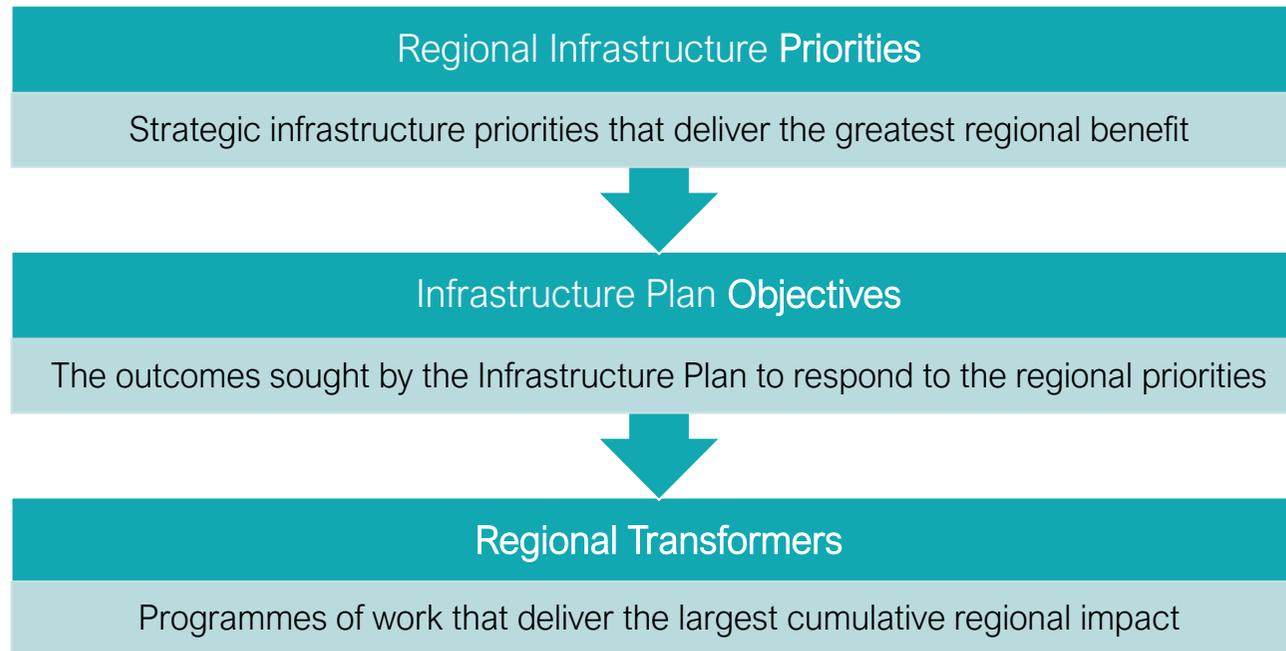
Sensitivity: General

# National Infrastructure Plan – Feb 2026

- Key messages of the National Plan:
  - Emphasises affordability and sequencing
  - Renewals and maintenance first
  - Demand-led staging
  - Right-sized solutions
  - Stronger institutional coordination.
- Aligns with Northland’s infrastructure ambitions:
  - Growing populations will require greater investment in health, electricity, and water resilience (education may face more moderate demand)
  - Sequencing investment and avoid over-committing to unfunded megaprojects
  - Prioritise maintenance, targeted resilience works, and sustainable funding models
  - Shifting to user-funded networks (water, transport) will change how infrastructure is delivered in affordability-challenged areas
- But..
  - Northland’s has long-standing socio-economic disparities that are holding communities back
  - Existing regional strategies including Te Rerenga and the Regional Deal Proposal highlight the need to transformation

Sensitivity: General

# Northland Infrastructure Plan - Framework



# Northland's Strategic Infrastructure Priorities

## Priority 1: Build System Resilience & Investment Confidence



Enhance reliability and support long-term investment

## Priority 2: Improve Access to Places, Services & Markets



Connect communities and strengthen transport links

## Priority 3: Build Climate Resilience & Readiness



Adapt and prepare for a changing climate

## Priority 4: Deliver Right-Sized & Value for Money Infrastructure



Ensure efficient, effective, and affordable solutions

# Northland Infrastructure Plan

## Building a Resilient, Connected & Prosperous Northland

**Our Purpose:** To build a more resilient, connected and economically dynamic Northland to drive long-term prosperity.



## Northland's Regional Transformers Framework



Sensitivity: General

# Funding and Financing

- Regional coordination and governance
- Iwi and Hapū partnership and co-investment opportunities
- Funding and financing approaches
- Value for money and right-sized delivery principles
- Central and local government funding programmes
- Targeted rates, development contributions and user charges
- Commercial and private financing instruments

Sensitivity: General

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# Implementation, Sequencing, Next Steps

- Project prioritisation and sequencing principles
- Governance and ongoing management of the Plan
- Immediate next steps
- Keeping the Plan alive

Sensitivity: General

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# Project Team Next Steps

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Issue final draft for Project Steering Group **review** (2 March 2026)

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Confirm any further works required (mid-March 2026)

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Design final product (April 2026)

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Submit **final** to JREDC (April 2026)

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Council and sector socialisation and adoption/endorsement (April – June 2026)

**TITLE:** Lake Ōmāpere Project - Briefing for Joint Committee  
**From:** Darryl Jones, Economist and Codie McIntyre, Economic Policy Advisor  
**Authorised by** Bruce Howse, Pou Taumatua – Group Manager Corporate Services, on 02  
**Group Manager/s:** March 2026

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### **Whakarāpopototanga / Executive summary**

The purpose of this agenda item is to provide an opportunity for representatives from the Lake Ōmāpere Trust to provide the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee (Joint Committee) with an update on the programme of work they are undertaking to develop Lake Ōmāpere as a distributed water storage resource. This is being brought to the attention of the Joint Committee because of the potential economic benefits that could arise from this programme.

A project brief is provided as **Attachment 1**. Dr Marise Stuart, Deputy Chairperson, Lake Ōmāpere Trust, will attend the Joint Committee meeting online to provide an update to the Joint Committee and answer any questions.

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### **Ngā mahi tūtohutia / Recommendation**

That the report 'Lake Ōmāpere Project - Briefing for Joint Committee' by Darryl Jones, Economist and Codie McIntyre, Economic Policy Advisor and dated 25 February 2026, be received.

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### **Background/Tuhinga**

Not applicable.

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### **Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga**

Nil

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**TITLE:** **Regional Infrastructure Fund - Update on projects**

**From:** Darryl Jones, Economist and Codie McIntyre, Economic Policy Advisor

**Authorised by** Bruce Howse, Pou Taumatua – Group Manager Corporate Services, on 02  
**Group Manager/s:** March 2026

### Whakarāpopototanga / Executive summary

The purpose of this agenda item is to provide an opportunity for the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee (Joint Committee) to receive an update on the Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF).

Table 1 lists all the Northland projects that have been publicly announced as being allocated RIF funding since approvals began. While funding approval has been granted, receipt of the allocated funds may vary depending on project timelines. Since the Joint Committee meeting held on 26 September 2025, five Northland based announcements have been made (marked with \*) totalling \$12,553,200.

**Table 1: Regional Infrastructure Fund Northland-based Projects**

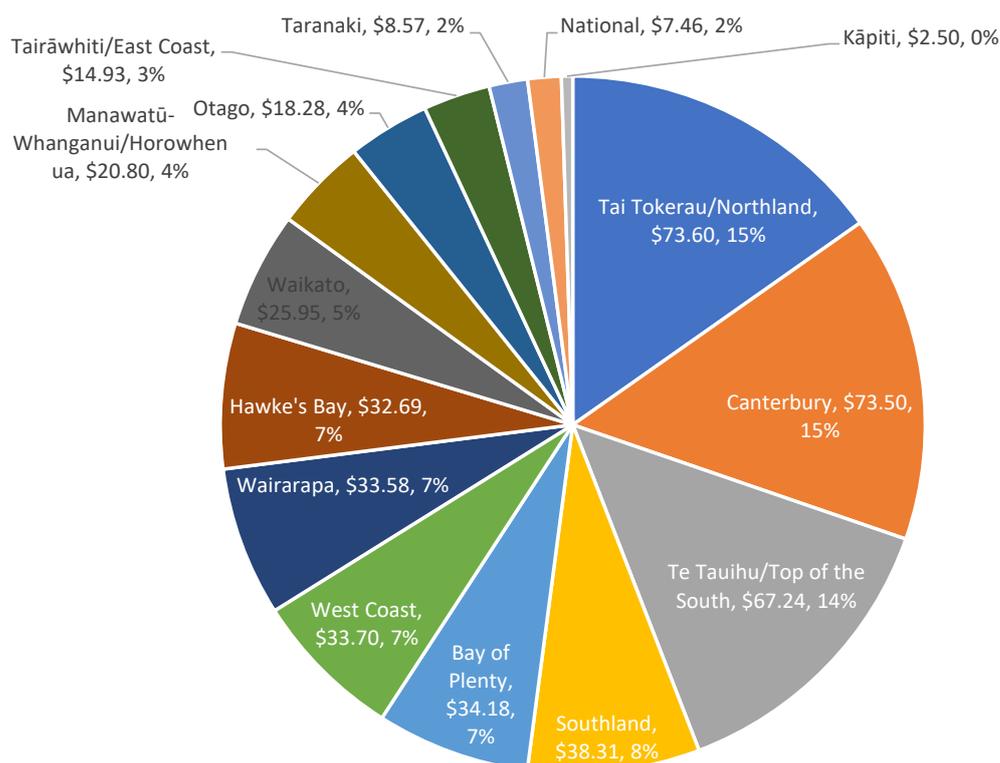
Project Title	Recipient	Approved Funding	Funding Type
Northland Regional Council – Quarry Road – Phase 1 (RIF Tranche 1)	NRC	\$300,000	Grant
Northland Regional Council – Quarry Road – Phase 2 (RIF Tranche 2)	NRC	\$360,000	Grant
Overhaul and Modernise Key Visitor Infrastructure at Waitangi	Waitangi Limited	\$10,200,000	Grant
Commissioning Infrastructure and Mid North Pipeline - Otawere Reservoir	Te Tai Tokerau Water Trust	\$11,000,000	Loan
Commissioning Infrastructure and Mid North Pipeline - Pipeline	Te Tai Tokerau Water Trust	\$13,000,000	Loan
Te Waihekeora Pipe Network Extension (Kaipara Pipeline)	Te Tai Tokerau Water Trust	\$17,500,000	Loan
Dargaville to Te Kopuru Stockbank (RIF Tranche 1)	Te Tai Tokerau Water Trust	\$7,800,000	Grant
Te Kao Community Microgrid Project	Tū Mai Rā Energy General Partner Limited	\$3,000,000	Grant
Waimamaku Community Solar Resilience Programme	Wekaweka Valley Community Trust	\$1,348,000	Grant
Energy Bridge investigation	MBIE	\$2,000,000	Grant
* Horeke Valley Energy Infrastructure Upgrade	Utakura Hiko Hapori Trust	\$1,589,000	Grant
* Bissett Road infrastructure	Te Hau Ora O Ngapuhi Limited	\$4,000,000	Grant

Project Title	Recipient	Approved Funding	Funding Type
* Northland Regional Council – Lower Whangatane Spillway Stopbank Setback	NRC	\$1,501,200	Grant
* Mid-North Kiwifruit	Oromahoe and Rangihamama Omapere trusts	\$4,000,000 \$200,000	Loan Grant
* Whiti Mai Te Ra Solar	ANT Trust, Kaitaia	\$1,263,200	Grant
<b>TOTAL Value of approved funding</b>		<b>\$79,061,200</b>	

Kānoa report that at 31 January 2026 a total of \$602.4 million has been approved (allocated) in funding from the RIF to 126 projects, with a further \$571.8 million ringfenced. Together, approved and ringfenced funding (\$1.174 billion), represents 98% of the total RIF budget of \$1.2 billion.

As at 31 December 2025, the \$73.6 million in approved funding to Northland based projects represents 15% of the total allocated (Figure 1).

**Figure 1. Approved (allocated) RIF funding by region as at 31 December 2025, \$M**



Jo Litten, Principal Regional Advisor Te Tai Tokerau, Kānoa, will attend the meeting to provide an update on Northland RIF applications including progress with the Energy Bridge investigations and dry dock development at Northport.

**Ngā mahi tūtohutia / Recommendation**

That the report 'Regional Infrastructure Fund - Update on projects' by Darryl Jones, Economist and Codie McIntyre, Economic Policy Advisor and dated 25 February 2026, be received.

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**Background/Tuhinga**

Not applicable.

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**Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga**

Nil

**TITLE:** **Economic Update - Infometrics Regional Economic Profile 2025**

**From:** Codie McIntyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist

**Authorised by** Bruce Howse, Pou Taumatua – Group Manager Corporate Services, on 02  
**Group Manager/s:** March 2026

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### Whakarāpopototanga / Executive summary

The purpose of this report is to provide the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee (Joint Committee) with the latest information available on Infometrics' online Regional Economic Profile (REP). The REP is updated at the beginning of each calendar year. Highlights for the year ended March 2025 for the region and the three district council areas provided as Attachments 1-4).

Brad Olsen, Chief Executive and Principal Economist, Infometrics, will be in attendance and present some of the important trends from the latest release, as well as focusing in on other topical trends.

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### Ngā mahi tūtohutia / Recommendation

That the report 'Economic Update - Infometrics Regional Economic Profile 2025' by Codie McIntyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist and dated 13 February 2026, be received.

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### Background/Tuhinga

The REP provides an in-depth description of a region or district's economic structure and performance over time. It combines a comprehensive, robust set of economic data with a dynamic and interactive web-based interface. The REP covers a wide range of topics including GDP, employment, unemployment, productivity, standard of living, population, wellbeing, skills, businesses, and tourism.

The Northland region REP is available at <https://regions.infometrics.co.nz/northland-region>, from which separate REPs for the three districts can be accessed from the drop-down menu at the top. All four Northland councils subscribe to this Infometrics service so that a common set of economic data is used for reporting and assessment

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### Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Attachment 1: Infometrics Northland Regional Economic Profile 2025 [↓](#) 

Attachment 2: Infometrics Far North District Economic Profile 2025 [↓](#) 

Attachment 3: Infometrics Whangarei District Economic Profile 2025 [↓](#) 

Attachment 4: Infometrics Kaipara District Economic Profile 2025 [↓](#) 

2025 AT A GLANCE  
**Infometrics** | **Northland Region**

**Economy**

Gross domestic product, 2025

**\$10,653.4m** | **-0.9%** | **2.5%**  
 in 2025 prices | growth in 2025 | of national total

Largest industries, 2025 (% of total)



Economic growth, 2000-2025



Largest contributors to GDP growth, 2024 - 2025

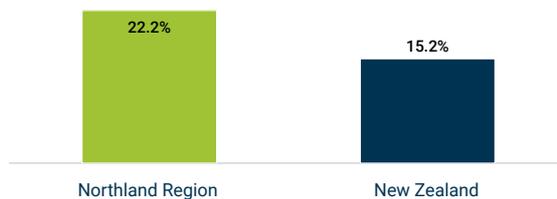
Rental, hiring and real estate services	\$46.5m
Health care and social assistance	\$21.0m
Education and training	\$19.4m
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	\$16.3m
Information media and telecommunications	\$1.0m
All other industries	-\$193.2m
<b>Total economy</b>	<b>-\$94.8m</b>

**Employment**

Total employment, 2025

**81,923** | **-1.2%** | **3.0%**  
 filled jobs | growth in 2025 | of national total

Self-employment rate, 2025



Employment growth, 2000-2025



Industries which created most jobs, 2024 - 2025

Health care and social assistance	292
Education and training	145
Electricity, gas, water and waste services	33
Arts and recreation services	31
Public administration and safety	10
All other industries	-1,506
<b>Total economy</b>	<b>-995</b>

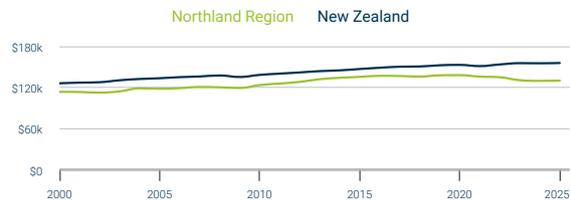


### Productivity

GDP per filled job, 2025

**\$130,042** | **\$155,707**  
Northland Region | New Zealand

GDP per filled job, 2000-2025



### Businesses

Number of business units, 2025

**24,351** | **1.0%** | **3.7%**  
Business units | growth in 2025 | of national total

Industries with most business units

Agriculture, forestry and fishing	4,701
Rental, hiring and real estate services	4,158
Construction	3,690
Professional, scientific and technical services	1,842
Financial and insurance services	1,350
All other industries	8,610
<b>Total economy</b>	<b>24,351</b>

### Population

Population, 2025

**201,100** | **0.3%** | **3.8%**  
Estimated resident population | growth in 2025 | of national total

Population % change, 1996-2025



### Income and housing

Mean household income, 2025

**\$109,105** | **\$135,266**  
Northland Region | New Zealand

Average house value, 2025



2025 AT A GLANCE  
**Far North District**

**Economy**

Gross domestic product, 2025

**\$3,422.8m**  
in 2025 prices

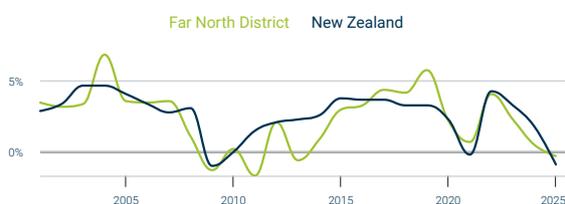
**-0.3%**  
growth in 2025

**0.8%**  
of national total

Largest industries, 2025 (% of total)



Economic growth, 2000-2025



Largest contributors to GDP growth, 2024 - 2025

Rental, hiring and real estate services	\$21.5m
Education and training	\$6.8m
Health care and social assistance	\$5.5m
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	\$2.8m
Manufacturing	\$2.2m
All other industries	-\$50.9m
<b>Total economy</b>	<b>-\$10.9m</b>

**Employment**

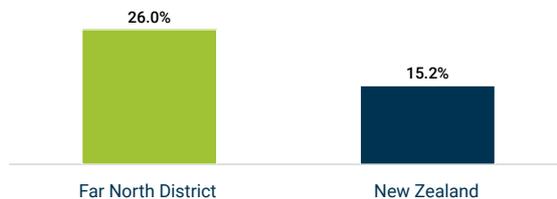
Total employment, 2025

**27,332**  
filled jobs

**-1.2%**  
growth in 2025

**1.0%**  
of national total

Self-employment rate, 2025



Employment growth, 2000-2025



Industries which created most jobs, 2024 - 2025

Health care and social assistance	77
Education and training	55
Public administration and safety	31
Arts and recreation services	25
Electricity, gas, water and waste services	17
All other industries	-538
<b>Total economy</b>	<b>-333</b>

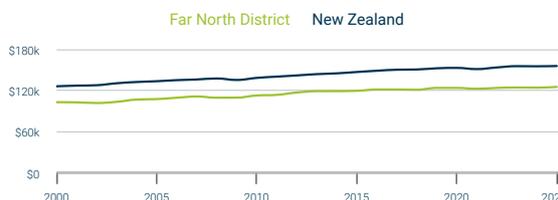


## Productivity

GDP per filled job, 2025

**\$125,230** | **\$155,707**  
Far North District | New Zealand

GDP per filled job, 2000-2025



## Businesses

Number of business units, 2025

**8,568** | **0.2%** | **1.3%**  
Business units | growth in 2025 | of national total

Industries with most business units

Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1,923
Rental, hiring and real estate services	1,350
Construction	1,215
Professional, scientific and technical services	603
Accommodation and food services	465
All other industries	3,012
<b>Total economy</b>	<b>8,568</b>

## Population

Population, 2025

**73,700** | **0.4%** | **1.4%**  
Estimated resident population | growth in 2025 | of national total

Population % change, 1996-2025



## Income and housing

Mean household income, 2025

**\$99,647** | **\$135,266**  
Far North District | New Zealand

Average house value, 2025



2025 AT A GLANCE  
**Whangarei District**



## Economy

### Gross domestic product, 2025

**\$5,974.3m**  
in 2025 prices

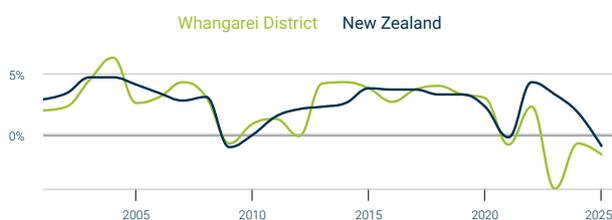
**-1.6%**  
growth in 2025

**1.4%**  
of national total

### Largest industries, 2025 (% of total)



### Economic growth, 2000-2025



### Largest contributors to GDP growth, 2024 - 2025

Rental, hiring and real estate services	\$14.6m
Health care and social assistance	\$13.2m
Education and training	\$9.9m
Information media and telecommunications	\$2.6m
Financial and insurance services	\$0.8m
All other industries	-\$129.2m
<b>Total economy</b>	<b>\$-98.1m</b>

## Employment

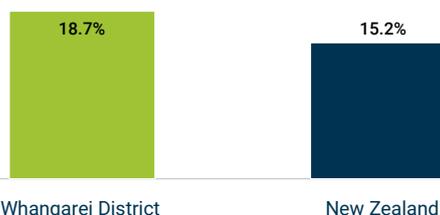
### Total employment, 2025

**44,993**  
filled jobs

**-1.4%**  
growth in 2025

**1.6%**  
of national total

### Self-employment rate, 2025



### Employment growth, 2000-2025



### Industries which created most jobs, 2024 - 2025

Health care and social assistance	185
Education and training	64
Electricity, gas, water and waste services	13
Arts and recreation services	9
Financial and insurance services	4
All other industries	-917
<b>Total economy</b>	<b>-643</b>

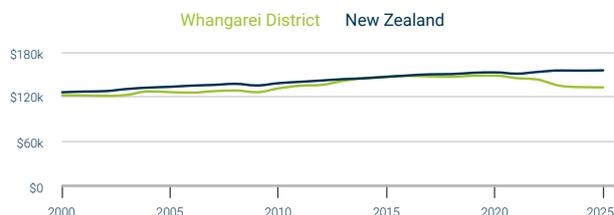


## Productivity

GDP per filled job, 2025

**\$132,783** | **\$155,707**  
Whangarei District | New Zealand

GDP per filled job, 2000-2025



## Businesses

Number of business units, 2025

**11,670** | **1.0%** | **1.8%**  
Business units | growth in 2025 | of national total

Industries with most business units

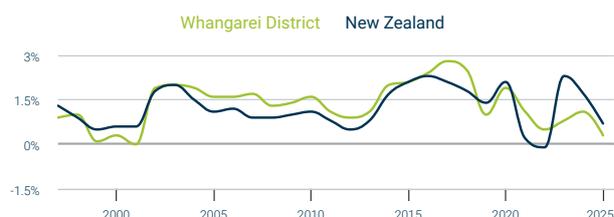
Rental, hiring and real estate services	2,016
Construction	1,794
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1,626
Professional, scientific and technical services	978
Financial and insurance services	894
All other industries	4,359
<b>Total economy</b>	<b>11,670</b>

## Population

Population, 2025

**100,600** | **0.3%** | **1.9%**  
Estimated resident population | growth in 2025 | of national total

Population % change, 1996-2025



## Income and housing

Mean household income, 2025

**\$116,170** | **\$135,266**  
Whangarei District | New Zealand

Average house value, 2025



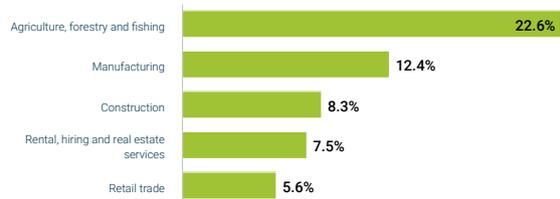
2025 AT A GLANCE  
**Infometrics** | **Kaipara District**

**Economy**

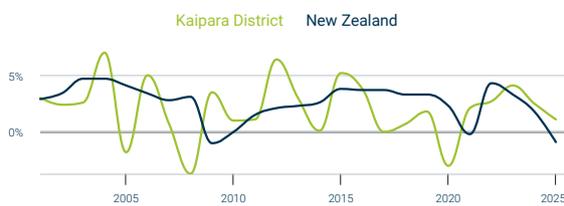
Gross domestic product, 2025

**\$1,256.3m**  
 in 2025 prices | **1.1%** growth in 2025 | **0.3%** of national total

Largest industries, 2025 (% of total)



Economic growth, 2000-2025



Largest contributors to GDP growth, 2024 - 2025

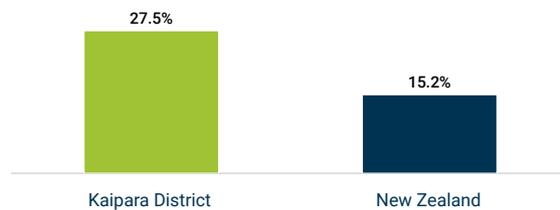
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	\$13.6m
Rental, hiring and real estate services	\$10.3m
Education and training	\$2.6m
Health care and social assistance	\$2.2m
Manufacturing	\$1.3m
All other industries	-\$19.1m
<b>Total economy</b>	<b>\$14.2m</b>

**Employment**

Total employment, 2025

**9,597**  
 filled jobs | **-0.2%** growth in 2025 | **0.3%** of national total

Self-employment rate, 2025



Employment growth, 2000-2025



Industries which created most jobs, 2024 - 2025

Health care and social assistance	31
Education and training	26
Construction	17
Other services	8
Public administration and safety	7
All other industries	-108
<b>Total economy</b>	<b>-20</b>

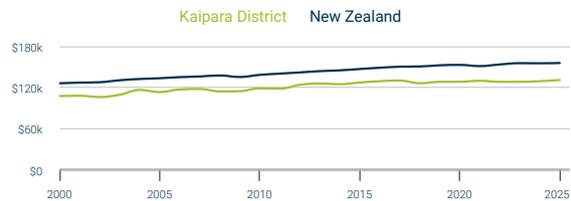


### Productivity

GDP per filled job, 2025

**\$130,905** | **\$155,707**  
 Kaipara District | New Zealand

GDP per filled job, 2000-2025



### Businesses

Number of business units, 2025

**4,110** | **2.4%** | **0.6%**  
 Business units | growth in 2025 | of national total

Industries with most business units

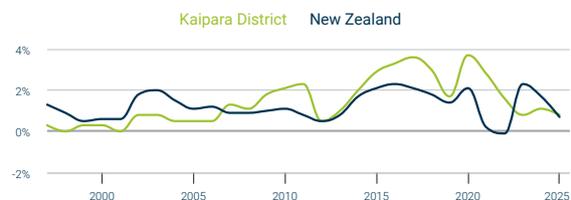
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1,149
Rental, hiring and real estate services	789
Construction	678
Professional, scientific and technical services	258
Other services	174
All other industries	1,050
<b>Total economy</b>	<b>4,110</b>

### Population

Population, 2025

**26,800** | **0.8%** | **0.5%**  
 Estimated resident population | growth in 2025 | of national total

Population % change, 1996-2025



### Income and housing

Mean household income, 2025

**\$108,434** | **\$135,266**  
 Kaipara District | New Zealand

Average house value, 2025

