

ACTION PLAN UPDATE

2025/26

TAPUAE
MAKE WAY
ROA
FOR TARANAKI

Tapuae Roa
refers to the footprints
across centuries, looking into the past
and looking ahead to the future.
It acknowledges the importance
of taking a long-term intergenerational
view to drive the right collective
behaviour and investment decisions.
The core focus of Tapuae Roa is people.
It is people who take economies
forward.

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Message from iwi of Taranaki

**Tukua e au taku Tapuae Roa, Ko Huakinuku, Ko Huakirangi
Tēnā ka whai tapuae, tēnā ka whai taumata
Te whāinga i te taumata nō Rongo
Te taumata o Taranaki Maunga e tū nei
Hoia tukua ko te Tapuae Roa ki te ao.**

Titiro whakamuri kia anga whakamua, ā, me whai i ngā tapuae o rātou mā. Whakaraupohia e te iwi kia kōtahi te rautaki whai rawa, mā ngā iwi o Taranaki Maunga mā te hapori whānui.

Kua puta kētia te rautaki o Tapuae Roa kei konei ōna tū mahi hei whāinga mō ngā rā kei mua i te aroaro tīhei mauriora.

Me kī pēnei haere ngā mate, haere ngā mihi, haere tēnei kaupapa kia eke ki ōna taumata.

As tangata whenua, iwi of Taranaki take an intergenerational approach to developing our strategic endeavours and future planning.

Tapuae Roa acknowledges our past to ensure we step confidently into the future. The Treaty settlements which have been completed for the eight iwi of Taranaki and is close to completion for Taranaki Maunga have helped us to regroup after 180 years of major upheaval where our tūrangawaewae, our economic base was taken from us.

By working on this strategy with our councils and others, iwi of Taranaki are continuing to work together as Treaty partners supporting, our communities on the ground socially culturally and economically.

Iwi of Taranaki are strong and this is having a positive impact on us economically and in turn is of benefit to the wider community. The Tapuae Roa strategy and action plan will have impact when our strengths are brought to bear on the economic opportunities in Taranaki. With this in mind let us all be prepared to work together.

'Ki te hoe'

Iwi of Taranaki



Message from the Taranaki Mayoral Forum

Adapt or perish.

This is the situation we find ourselves in.

We have an economy primarily built around the production of high-quality food and energy resources, which the world and New Zealand desperately need.

However, the world is also struggling with the fact its addiction to cheap energy is driving irreversible changes to our climate.

Significant and rapid changes are required to the structure of the global economy if we are to achieve net carbon zero by 2050.

Energy policy decisions driven out of Wellington by recent administrations were not grounded in science or economics and as a result the economic outlook for Taranaki has been damaged along with New Zealand's energy sovereignty, security, and ability to attract international investment.

We need a higher quality of energy policy, developed with bipartisan support, geared toward the attraction of the sort of long-term investment required to drive an economic transformation that will take at least the next 30 years to deliver.

While we have a relatively new government with more pragmatic views around energy policy and economic growth, concern from international investors about political risk remain largely unchanged due to the fleeting nature of New Zealand political cycles and the significant variations in policy that follow administration changes.

We are also faced with the prospect that the current central government administration is focused on managing costs down with just \$1.2 billion allocated over three years for the regional infrastructure fund, constraining its ability to support future focused regional economic development initiatives.

It is with this backdrop that we must chart a course to maintain the standard of living of the people who call Taranaki home, aiming to sustainably build our economy in the face of challenging external factors over which we have little or no control.

So we have focused on our strengths:

- Energy
- Our growing Maori economy
- Food
- Tourism

These four areas are our future, and we understand our ability to sustainably grow our economy in these areas will ultimately determine the quality of employment and wealth creation opportunities in our region for generations to come and flow through to the collective standard of living of all people who live in Taranaki.

In driving this work, we are acutely aware that we need to collaborate with central government, working across parties in an attempt to gain political commitment to our region and identify opportunities to unlock economic growth but understanding the bar to secure central government investments has increased materially.

What we have learned through the last decade of economic development work in Taranaki is that what happens next is ultimately going to be up to us.

Our response is to work together to make Taranaki the place where it is easy for people to do business, with a focus on energy, food, Maori economic growth and tourism.



Neil Holdom

Mayor, New Plymouth District



Neil Volzke

Mayor, Stratford District

We are committed to working proactively with government to strip out poor regulation and drive down compliance costs whilst ensuring we protect our environment with a focus on intergenerational equity.

We vow to work together to identify and eliminate barriers to sustainable investment. We are committed to smart growth aligned to the four futures which reflect our shared values and have the highest potential to help our people generate wealth and high-value employment opportunities.

In developing this shared plan for our region, we have worked hard to ensure Mana Whenua have been provided every opportunity to shape and refine the goals and the tactics we will employ to achieve these regional objectives.

This 2025/26 Action Plan update reflects our collective view on the way forward for Taranaki, but we are acutely aware it is a snapshot, reflecting a moment in time. Our expectation is that we will constantly refine this plan as changes and developments unfold.

Our commitment is to engage with the people and organisations who share our values, goals and aspirations for our region and for New Zealand, to keep our minds open and focused on creating a quality of life in Taranaki that future generations deserve.

Tapuae Roa is an invitation to others who share our aspirations to invest and make good things happen now and into the future in Taranaki.



Phil Nixon

Mayor, South Taranaki District



Charlotte Littlewood

Chairperson, Taranaki Regional Council

Executive Summary

2025/26 Action Plan Overview



	ENERGY FUTURE	FOOD AND FIBRE FUTURE	MĀORI ECONOMY FUTURE	VISITOR FUTURE	NEW INDUSTRY AND INVESTMENT FUTURE
	<p><i>Taranaki is New Zealand's energy hub, harnessing our capability, infrastructure, systems, and resources to create benefits now and in the future.</i></p> <p>Coordinated energy leadership and communications: Alignment of national and regional energy leadership + delivery of coordinated communications plan to smooth transition over coming years.</p> <p>Optimisation of existing regional energy industry: Projects and partnerships to adapt to current challenges and pivot to new opportunities.</p> <p>Strengthening the supply chain through transition, diversification and new opportunities: Support local energy supply chain to adapt offerings, collaborate and ensure workforce needs are met.</p> <p>Advancing and accelerating renewable energy development opportunities: Engagement to remove key barriers, enable renewable energy development and harness opportunities + identify, package and promote demand-side regional energy opportunities.</p>	<p><i>Taranaki has a diversified, resilient, and well-connected food and fibre system, driven by in-region value chain innovation and high-value production.</i></p> <p>Branching Out – Phase three: Secure funding for Phase Three project plan to further de-risk and catalyse land diversification opportunities</p> <p>Land availability and diversification assessment tool: Collection of further information and creation of tool allowing information required for diversification to be more accessible.</p> <p>Emerging food and beverage producers' acceleration: Targeted support for producers to validate ideas, test and improve products, create connections, access funding and investment, and develop export opportunities.</p> <p>Link Taranaki – transport and logistics solutions: Investigate and consider solutions to reduce freight and logistics costs for food businesses that trade out of region.</p>	<p><i>Taranaki Māori economy is diverse and innovative with an intergenerational focus on healthy living and home ownership, food sovereignty, developing future skillsets, renewable energy solutions, collective investment in commercial activity, tourism and restoration of the environment.</i></p> <p>In Taranaki, the Māori economy is diverse and innovative with iwi, hapū, whānau and uri continually unleashing new ways of thinking and leading out new and improved solutions to local opportunities and challenges with an intergenerational focus.</p> <p>Looking ahead, there is a need to:</p> <p>Assess the size, scale, and context of the current Māori economy in Taranaki; and</p> <p>Develop a Regional Māori Economic Development Strategy.</p> <p>Doing this will ensure alignment with Government strategies and action plans and to drive and track positive economic outcomes for Māori in Taranaki.</p>	<p><i>Taranaki is a unique world-renowned destination, recognised for Taranaki Maunga and high-quality, sustainable, and authentic tourism offerings.</i></p> <p>Taranaki Maunga: A coordinated approach to effectively manage and promote tourism opportunities on the Maunga.</p> <p>Regional events: Additional support to fund, grow and launch events in Taranaki attracting out of region visitors.</p> <p>Visitor product development: Further support to develop commissionable products to realise full economic potential of visitors to region, including sites of significance, cultural experiences, and trail development.</p> <p>Cruise sector extension: Further investment to achieve and exceed target of 28 cruise ships to visit Taranaki during in the 2028 season.</p>	<p><i>Taranaki has a diverse, innovative economy that is driven by investment into the region and enabled by accessible information and suitable regulatory settings.</i></p> <p>Applied Innovation Centre: Establishment of a research and development centre to support creation of new, non-extractive industries.</p> <p>Centralised regional data depository: Development of a centralised regional data depository and tool to enable improved decision and investment decisions.</p> <p>'Open for business' regional investment prospectus: Promotion of enabling and favourable business conditions to attract investment to the region.</p> <p>Economic Innovation Zone (EIZ): Create a business case for advocacy to Government about the creation of an economic innovation zone in Taranaki targeted at enabling and incentivising new energy/industry opportunities in the region.</p>
FOUNDATIONS	<p>EDUCATION, PEOPLE, AND INNOVATION</p> <p>Taranaki has a thriving network of ecosystems that fosters innovation and connects community, education and jobs.</p>	<p>Tertiary education refresh: Regional leadership and collaboration to support wider tertiary education system to adapt and transition to a new operating model following disestablishment of the Review of Vocational Education.</p>	<p>International education and Attraction: Enhance and promote regional offering to attract international students to live, work and learn in Taranaki.</p>	<p>Taranaki Workforce Development Network: Alignment of sector stakeholders and shared aspirations to ensure successful results for learners, employers, and funders across Taranaki.</p>	<p>Advancement of innovation ecosystem: Further support for the innovation ecosystem to increase reach and impact throughout Taranaki.</p>
	<p>INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY</p> <p>Taranaki has resilient and fit-for-purpose infrastructure that enables regional economic growth.</p>	<p>Future focused Port Taranaki upgrades: Appropriate development and diversification of Port Taranaki infrastructure to meet future industry needs, and access new opportunities.</p>	<p>Infrastructure resilience: Maintain and upgrade key roading and water infrastructure across the region to ensure resilience, availability for future development and sustainable environmental management.</p>	<p>Planning alignment and fit for purpose regulations: Review of Council consenting, and regulatory processes to ensure consistency and unity across district plans to enable investment and growth.</p>	<p>Acceleration of low emissions and transport infrastructure: Identification, assessment, and development of future and alternative transport infrastructure to support regional growth.</p>
	<p>VIBRANCY AND LIVEABILITY</p> <p>Taranaki is a dynamic and vibrant place to live that attracts and retains a talented workforce.</p>	<p>Housing Strategy implementation: Delivery and enablement of actions under the Taranaki Regional Housing Strategy.</p>	<p>Key community infrastructure: Complete construction of regional community facilities.</p>	<p>Development of the creative sector: Support and strengthen the creative sector through strong regional collaboration, and a coordinated regional arts and creative strategy.</p>	<p>Environment: Support and delivery of projects and collective action to protect, restore, and enhance biodiversity, ensuring resilient ecosystems and a sustainable future.</p>



THE JOURNEY SO FAR

Tapuae Roa 2017

Tapuae Roa - Make Way for Taranaki (TR 2017) is the Regional Economic Development Strategy for Taranaki. The strategy was the culmination of work undertaken by a group of regional leaders, with the support of the three district councils, Taranaki Regional Council and Ngā Iwi o Taranaki.

TR 2017 was built on a foundation of a detailed economic analysis, in-depth interviews, and insights from councilors, community organisations and other key stakeholders. First published in 2017, an action plan to take steps to realise the vision of the strategy was released in early 2018. For the purposes of this 2025/25 Action Plan update, the 2017 Strategy and 2018 Action Plan will be collectively referred to as TR 2017.

We acknowledge the key stakeholders and the Lead Team that were involved in the process to create TR 2017. The strategy and initial action plan supported to unite the economic efforts across Taranaki and has contributed to a more prosperous region.

WHAT'S BEEN ACHIEVED

Significant progress has been made in the pursuit of the actions outlined as part of the TR 2017. Some of the key actions that have been completed (or are near completion) include:

- Establishment of a New Energy Development Centre (Ara Ake).
- Development of the Taranaki H2 Roadmap.
- Funding and support for the Branching Out Programme ('Farm Futures' Programme) now in Phase 2 of crop trials and market development.
- Development of Iwi Strategy and creation of Te Aranga to support Ngā Iwi initiatives.
- Creation of a Taranaki Cruise Strategy and reception of seven cruise vessels in the first season.
- The Taranaki Crossing.
- SH43 upgrade and improvements.

TARANAKI 2050

In addition to TR 2017, another regional strategy document was developed in 2019 - Taranaki 2050 (T2050). T2050 was co-created with the Taranaki community in response to the then Government's restrictions on oil and gas exploration and the need for a regional transition. This strategy had a greater focus on well-being and environmental improvements, balancing these with economic opportunities and outcomes. T2050 had significant community buy-in and support, and for a number of years was managed alongside TR 2017.

Of the 166 actions identified as part of TR 2017 and T2050 (once duplicate or similar actions were merged), 123 have been completed or were underway. The latest update of this work from 2021 can be viewed [here](#)

LOOKING AHEAD

The outstanding actions from T2050 that have alignment with Tapuae Roa and remain relevant have been incorporated as part of this update. Moving forward, the 2025/26 Action Plan will be the only regional plan that is funded and prioritised by regional leadership. While the long-term aspirational vision of T2050 remains, and the T2050 document is still publicly available, there is no further resource allocated to manage and progress the actions within the strategy that are not included within this 2025/26 Action Plan.

The 2025/26 Action Plan also retains its roots in the original Tapuae Roa strategy that was published in 2017, with this work simply updating actions rather than the fundamental aspects of the strategy.

WHY AN UPDATE IS NEEDED

As was articulated in TR 2017, the recurring disruptions in various industries have underscored the vulnerability of relying solely on established economic pillars. It's evident that the landscape of our economy is constantly evolving, propelled

by shifting consumer preferences, increasing environmental pressures, an ever-changing political landscape, and the need to move towards a net zero future economy. In recent years this change has become far more evident and new research and information shows that change is occurring at an ever-increasing rate. The region needs to be prepared for these changes by coming together to communicate a clear plan through a relevant and up to date regional strategy that highlights aligned priorities and key actions.

As we revisit our regional economic development strategy seven years on, our impetus is driven by these significant disruptions. Now, more than ever, the Taranaki community must proactively anticipate future challenges and seek out opportunities. It's crucial for our region to remain forward-thinking, to anticipate emerging trends, and to strategically plan for the road ahead. This 2025/26 Action Plan update offers a chance to review progress since TR 2017 and plan a future where innovation and collaboration enable Taranaki to navigate challenges, create opportunities, drive growth, and ensure long-term prosperity, while staying committed to sustainability and community resilience.

REGIONAL PRIORITIES

This 2025/26 Action Plan update is not intended to be a wish list of large projects that would not progress without government funding. It is a prioritisation of projects and work from across Taranaki that should be able to be completed through existing resource from within the region. It is a clear indication that the region is united and on the same page when working towards future economic outcomes.

This action plan is a living document, with clear intentions to review annually and update more substantially every three years.



2025/26 ACTION PLAN OVERVIEW

GUIDING VISION

The TR 2017 Action Plan included a version of the table below that provided a high-level overview of the mission, vision and goals of the strategy, as well as the core values that underpinned its development and delivery. Additionally, it summarised the futures, foundations, and delivery mechanisms to progress the strategy.

The updated table below has been taken from the TR 2017 Action Plan and amended slightly to reflect the updated priorities and focus areas of the region, and to incorporate the essence of Taranaki 2050.

THE MISSION <i>"Where talent becomes enterprise."</i> 'Kia eke panuku' - Making people the centre of development				
VISION	Attractive Lifestyle	Talented People	Modern, High-Value Economy	Strategy
GOALS	The Taranaki life-style offering retains and attracts people	Taranaki is a place where talented people want to live and work	Taranaki businesses are able to adapt to future changes and create more value in region	
VALUES	Whanaungatanga: Relationships Our people thrive on a foundation of trust and respect.	Kaitiakitanga: Guardianship We are all responsible for our environment, people and place.	Tuakana teina: Succession We better ourselves by learning from each other's experience.	
Futures		Foundations		Action plan
ENERGY FUTURE		Talent, Enterprise and Innovation		
FOOD AND FIBRE FUTURE				
MĀORI ECONOMY FUTURE		Infrastructure and Connectivity		
VISITOR SECTOR FUTURE				
NEW INDUSTRY AND INVESTMENT FUTURE		Vibrancy and Liveability		
Leadership and oversight Coordination and ongoing programme maintenance to be provided by Venture Taranaki.				Delivery
Funding and Delivery Various funding mechanisms will be required to implement the strategy including Local councils, regional council, central government, Post-settlement Governance Entities, business, private investors, trusts and philanthropic organisations, and individuals.				

STRUCTURE OF THE 2025/26 ACTION PLAN

Significant time, effort and resources were committed to developing both the initial TR 2017 framework, and the T2050 Roadmap. At a high-level, the overarching principles, vision and approach of the previous strategy remain sound and do not require significant attention. The 2025/26 Action Plan update remains connected to the original strategy intent and framework. However, work is needed to reflect and amend the near-to-medium term priorities to ensure we can continue making progress towards the planned vision.

This 2025/26 Action Plan remains structured around the TR 2017 futures and foundations that still represent the region's primary sectors and key enablers. However, some adjustments have been made to reflect the current regional economic priorities and opportunities. These changes include:

- The Investment Foundation has been elevated to become the New Industry and Investment Future, with emphasis on the region being open for business and enabling investment to grow new industry.
- The Food Future has been renamed Food and Fibre Future, to indicate the greater role fibre will play as part of the primary industries sector in Taranaki and to align with best practice terminology in New Zealand.
- The Access and Connectivity Foundation has been renamed Infrastructure and Connectivity Foundation, as this more accurately represents the focus of priorities within this section.
- The Skills, Talent and Innovation Foundation has been renamed the Education, People and Innovation Foundation based on feedback from the sector workshop. This feedback indicated that including the term Education may allow the 2025/26 Action Plan to have a wider application as a regional Education Strategy that could be used for future funding opportunities.
- The 2025/26 Action Plan includes current actions for each priority area but has replaced medium-term actions with an overarching section vision. There are a number of reasons for this approach:
 1. The pace at which change is occurring in the region means that medium-term actions may likely become obsolete or unnecessary once the time comes to undertake them.
 2. There is intent to review and refresh the action plan more regularly, so any new actions that arise can be easily incorporated in the future.
 3. The majority of current actions have already been planned and resourced which ensures a higher level of ownership, delivery, and accountability.
- The organisation, agency, or groups responsible for leading on delivering priorities within each section has been identified.

Regional Economic update

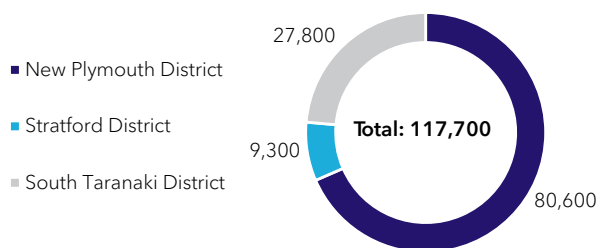
TR 2017 was built upon a foundation of statistical analysis of the Taranaki Economy. This section provides a high-level overview of the Taranaki economy in 2023, using data and analysis sourced from Infometrics and Stats NZ.

POPULATION

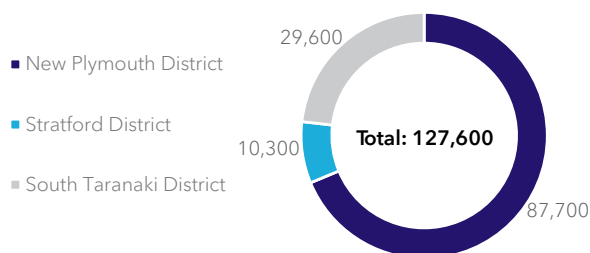
The first two charts below show the total population of Taranaki, split into the three Districts in 2017 and 2023. The average population growth across the three Districts in Taranaki has been between 0.93% per annum since 2017. This is slightly below the national average of 1.37% across the same time period, even when accounting for negligible growth in 2021 and 2022 due to the effects of Covid-19.

The second chart shows population by 5-year age group, comparing 2023 data in Taranaki to the New Zealand average. What is evident is that Taranaki has far fewer people aged between 20 and 35 years of age than many other regions in New Zealand.

Taranaki population by District - 2017

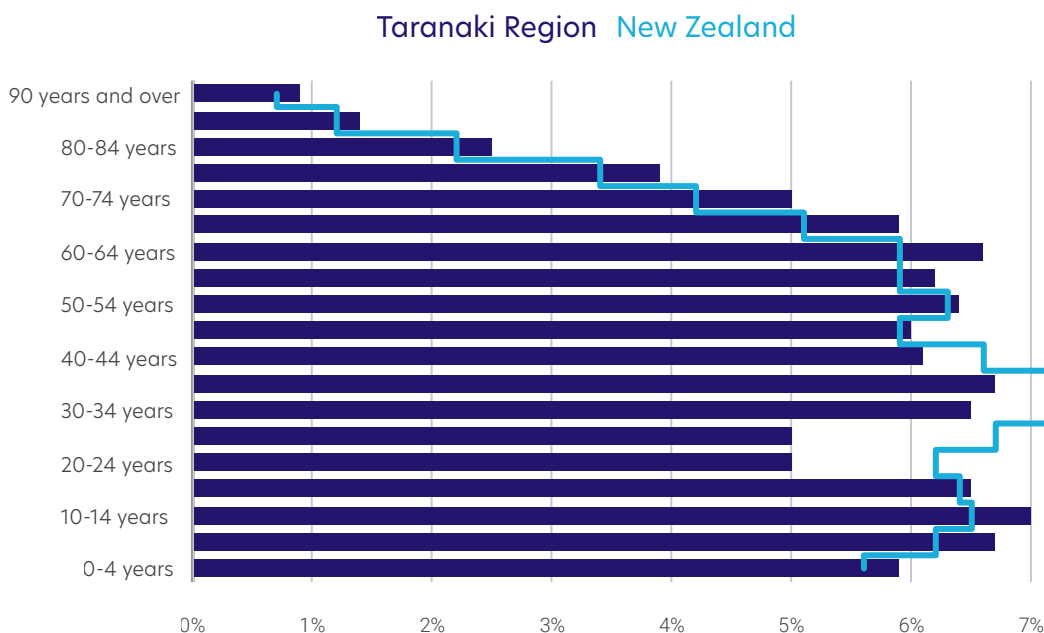


Taranaki population by District - 2023



Population by 5-year age group, 2024

% of total, as at 30 June



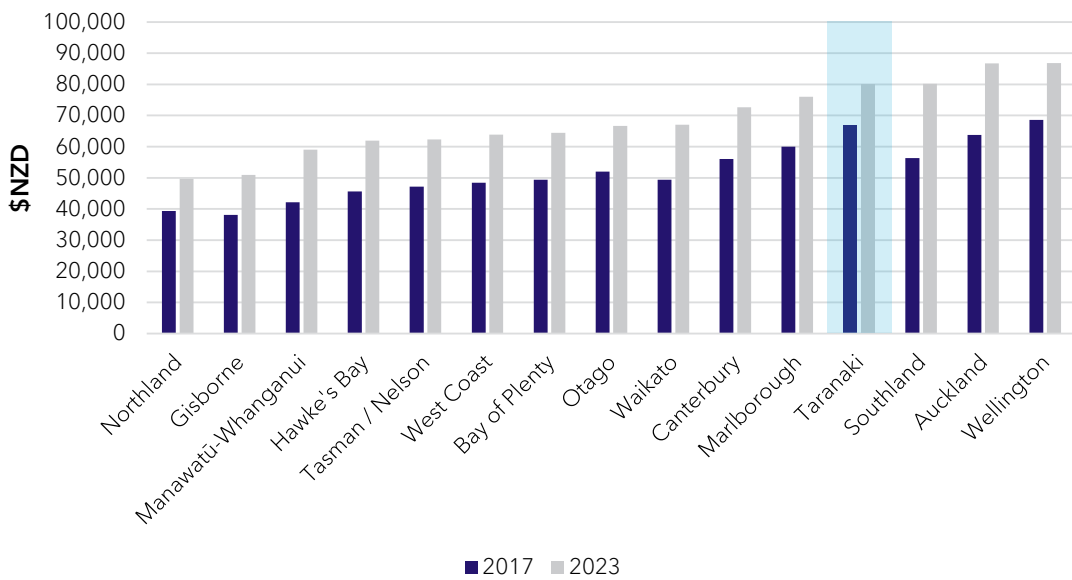
GDP PER CAPITA:

The first chart below shows GDP per capita by region, comparing data from 2017 and 2023.

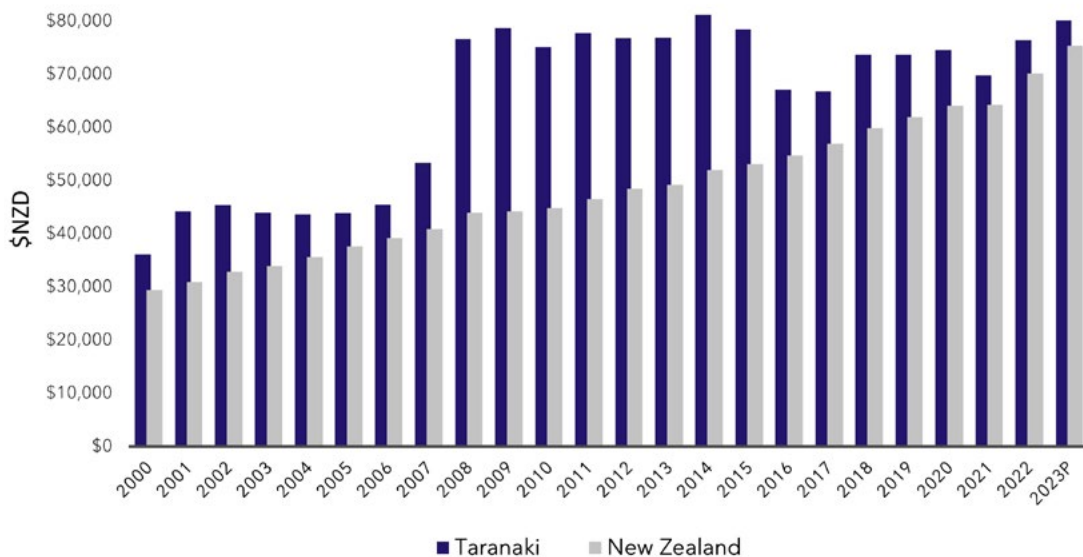
Taranaki generated \$80,072 in regional gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in 2023. This placed the region 4th when compared to other regions in New Zealand, behind Auckland, Wellington and Southland. Taranaki had ranked first in GDP in 2017 but a decline in the output from the mining sector has resulted in slower growth than other regions.

The second chart shows how GDP growth in Taranaki has stagnated since 2008 and that over that time other regions across New Zealand have begun to catch up.

GDP per capita by region - 2017 and 2023



GDP per capita, Taranaki vs New Zealand

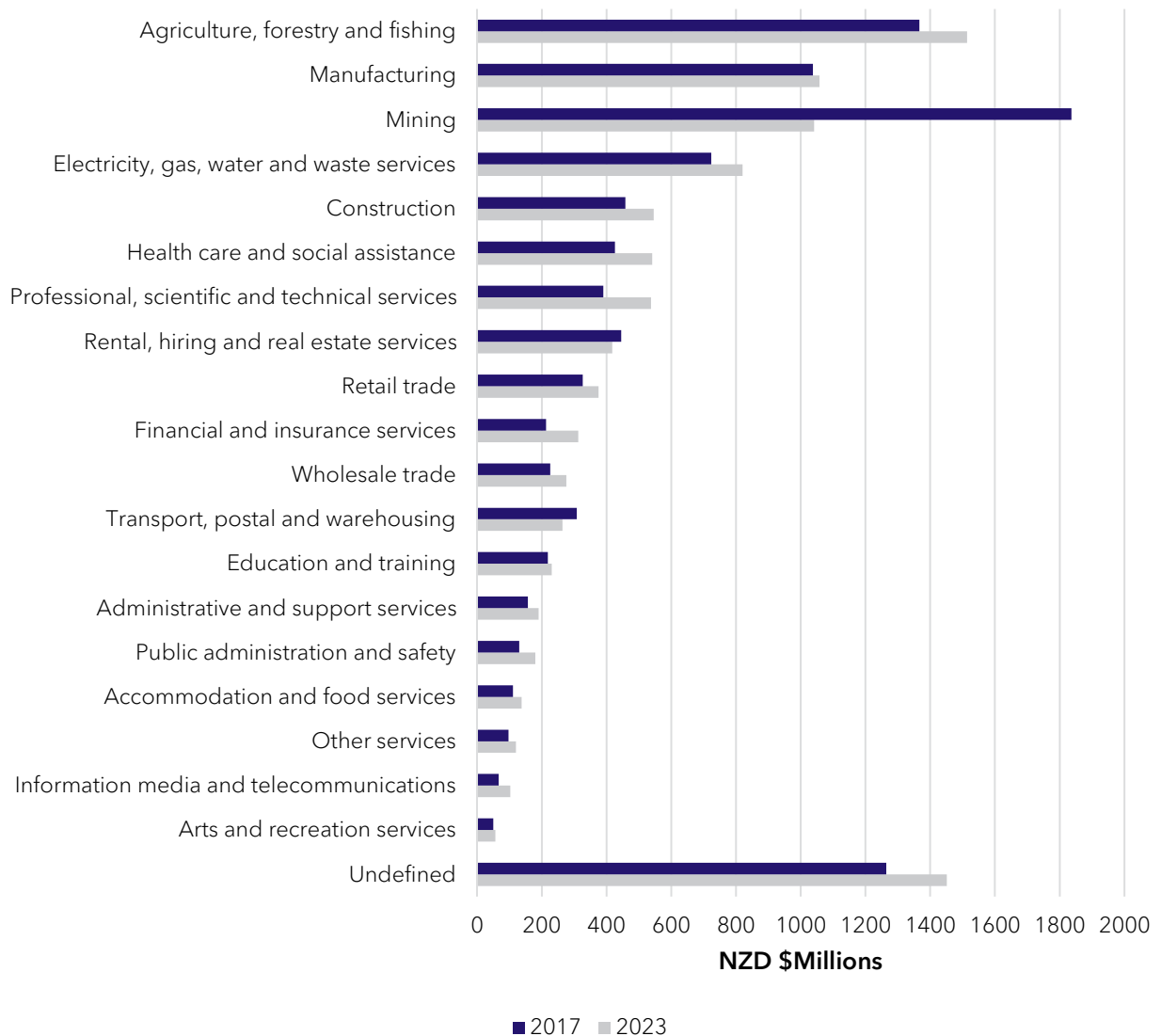


GDP BY SECTOR:

The chart below shows the total value of each sector in Taranaki, comparing the 2017 and 2023 financial years using the Level 1 ANZSIC codes.

The Taranaki economy is dominated by a few sectors, with Agriculture, forestry and fishing, Manufacturing, and Mining representing over 35% of the regional economy in 2023. These sectors represent the regions primary industries, farming and food processing, and energy production. The noticeable difference between the 2017 and 2023 data is the sharp drop off in the GDP from Mining, reinforcing the anecdotal evidence that the sector is in decline.

GDP by sector, Taranaki - 2017 and 2023



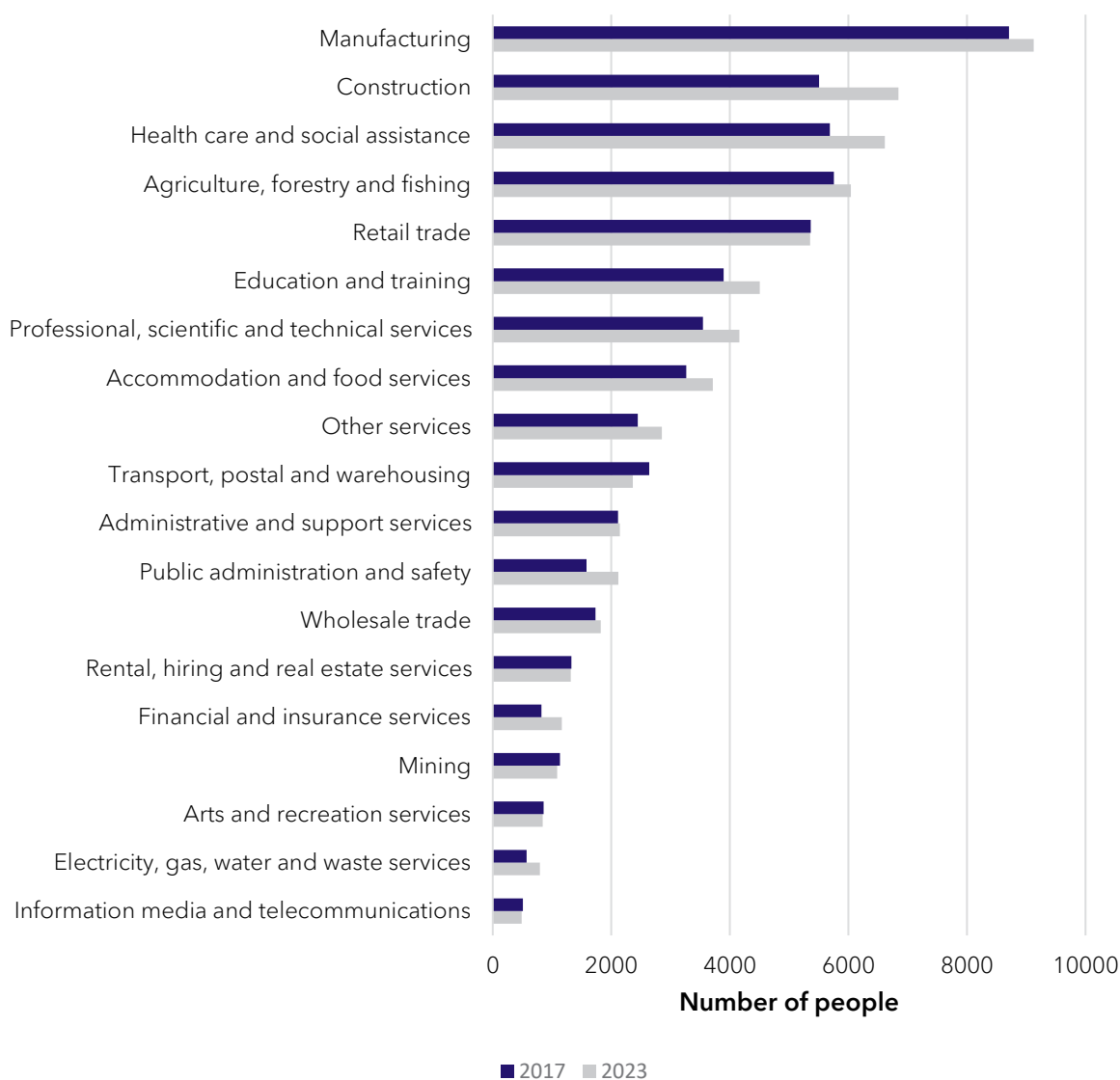
EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR:

The below chart shows the number of people employed in each sector in Taranaki, comparing the 2017 and 2023 financial years using the Level 1 ANZSIC codes.

There is some alignment between this information and the GDP generated by each sector. Both Manufacturing and Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing account for both significant GDP and job numbers. However, while Mining represents a large percentage of regional GDP, despite a decline between 2017 and 2023, it does not represent a significant number of direct jobs in the region.

Additionally, while the income from Mining has declined, the job numbers have remained relatively steady. On the other hand, an increase in the value of the Construction and Health care and social assistance sectors appears to have resulted in strong growth of jobs in these sectors.

Employment by sector, Taranaki - 2017 and 2023



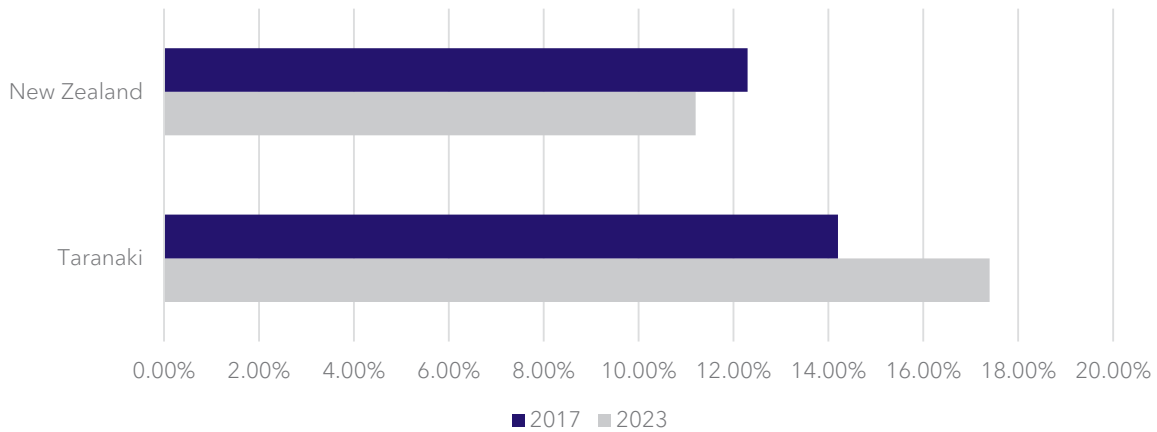
NEET RATES:

NEET rates refers to those people aged 15-24 years of age that are not in employment, education or training. NEET rates are an indicator of youth engagement in work and education, and can be a useful indicator into the size, shape and skill level of a future workforce.

The chart below compares the NEET rates of Taranaki to the national average in 2017 and 2023. As can be seen, Taranaki had significantly higher NEET rates than the national average in both 2017 and 2023. What is interesting to note is that the NEET rates in Taranaki are at levels similar to that in both Northland and the Gisborne, where GDP per capita is significantly lower than Taranaki (as noted on page 17).

Preliminary data from 2024 indicates a reduction in NEET rates in Taranaki, but reducing this number should remain of primary interest for the region.

Taranaki and New Zealand NEET rates - 2017 and 2023







ENERGY FUTURE

Vision

Taranaki is New Zealand's energy hub, harnessing our capability, infrastructure, systems, and resources to create benefits now and in the future.

Overview

Taranaki has a well-established energy sector, dating back many decades. This sector was founded on abundant oil and gas reserves, allowing for the creation of value-added products such as methanol and ammonia-urea. This activity has also created the need for a much wider supporting sector, with many businesses servicing the operations and maintenance requirements of production and manufacturing facilities around the region.

The landscape for the petrochemical energy industry has changed dramatically since TR 2017 was published. Growing concerns about the impact of climate change have prompted action around the world to reduce emissions. In 2018, the then Labour-led coalition Government announced an end to all new offshore oil and gas exploration permits and restrictions on onshore permits. While existing permits remained, investor confidence was negatively affected.

Presently, there are concerns from the sector about the current gas production levels. This may have significant implications for the security of supply to both key customers, such as Methanex, as well as to the national electricity grid, where gas-fueled generation provides an increasingly necessary peak load function. The flow-on effects for Taranaki, in terms of reduced exports, direct jobs losses, and reduced disposable local income could prove to be very challenging for the regional economy.

Despite these challenges to respond to, Taranaki has identified and advanced various opportunities for renewable energy, including the H2 Taranaki Roadmap (2019), Offshore Wind - A New Energy Opportunity for Taranaki (2020), and Power to X (2021). The region is well-positioned to capitalise on its abundant wind and solar resources, transitioning existing skills, services, and infrastructure to support a growing renewable energy market in New Zealand. Nearly 1GW of onshore renewable energy projects have been consented in region and local firms have already begun pivoting to



meet the needs of a new sector, with many providing services to other regions around New Zealand. With increased demand for electrification, opportunities for smart networks, demand flexibility and storage are gaining momentum.

Taranaki is becoming a hub for organisations focused on the hydrogen economy and, since 2020, has been home to Ara Ake, the National New Energy Development Centre. The South Taranaki Bight's world-class offshore wind resources have attracted numerous developers, positioning Taranaki as a potential leader in offshore wind energy in New Zealand. This could pave the way for Power to X initiatives, new industry development, capability development opportunities and exports.

However, since TR 2017, the pace of the gas decline in Taranaki and New Zealand has accelerated, and the transition to renewable energy has proven more prolonged, costly, and complex than initially anticipated. Taranaki now faces the challenge of managing and mitigating the economic and workforce impacts of the declining oil and gas industry, while bridging the gap before a fully realised renewable energy and associated value-add industry future can be achieved.

Priorities

COORDINATED ENERGY LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNICATIONS

▶ DELIVERY LEAD: Regional Leadership and Venture Taranaki

Context

Taranaki is the traditional energy hub for New Zealand and continues to play a crucial role in providing security for the national energy system.

The energy sector is one of the largest contributors to the regional economy, accounting for more than 10% of GDP. As social and political changes continue to impact the energy sector, high levels of coordination, engagement and leadership are required at a national level to ensure energy security and resilience for the country, and at a regional level to ensure a suitable transition for the people of Taranaki. There is merit in aligning these two strands of leadership by reducing the geographic proximity between them and creating space for them to co-exist in Taranaki.

Additionally, a clear regional plan and support to work alongside iwi is required to lead and stimulate the reinvigoration of Māori in the energy space which is pivotal for creating confidence in the economic future of the region. Given the opportunities and challenges ahead, the plan must comprise meaningful actions, within the control of the region, which can make a tangible difference and influence outcomes and progress. Inclusion of key partners in this process, especially the private sector is crucial, and will help create the foundations of a strong communications plan.

Actions

- Establish and maintain a regional political leadership energy group, fostering effective relationships with, and advocating directly to, central government politicians and agencies on energy matters.
- Advance the energy aspirations of iwi in respect to policy, legislation, and regulation.
- Understand the roles existing organisations and business within Taranaki might have in contributing to a coordinated energy sector leadership group.
- Work with relevant parties to develop a case for MBIE energy representatives to be located in Taranaki, and for the establishment of a dedicated Ministry of Energy
- Advocate and drive for a national bipartisan energy strategy.
- Create and drive a communications plan to support awareness and momentum of regional energy issues, actions and progress.

OPTIMISATION OF EXISTING REGIONAL ENERGY INDUSTRY

▶ DELIVERY LEAD: Regional Leadership and Venture Taranaki

Context

The energy system in New Zealand is facing challenges with the limited supply of gas and increasing demand for electricity having wide ranging effects across the country.

As outlined in recent reports, there are a number of complex factors impacting the gas sector and the declining gas production situation in Taranaki. It is nevertheless expected that gas will continue to be an important part of the energy mix that ensures security and resilience in the energy system. Taranaki also has strong and vested interests in the rapidly growing electricity industry. Keeping pace and playing a proactive role with policies and developments in this space remain critical.

Supporting our existing energy industry, planning for the future, removal of barriers and adaptation and pivoting to pursue new opportunities, especially those within regional control, need to be prioritised.

Actions

- Develop future scenarios to inform planning and track impacts to regional jobs, enterprise revenue, and investment relating to energy industry changes.
- Identify barriers, enablers, regional partnerships, and actions to help alleviate energy challenges and retain or grow jobs in the region.
- Undertake analysis and collate regional thought leadership on energy issues and options for the future of the industry.
- Support private sector led projects on energy industry responses and solutions e.g. alternative energy, asset repurposing, distributed energy resources and demand flexibility, energy systems enhancements, decommissioning, refocusing, and repurposing etc.
- Support Port Taranaki, and other key infrastructure/industry on future plans and their role in the energy sector - *Connection with Infrastructure and Connectivity Foundation*.



STRENGTHENING THE SUPPLY CHAIN THROUGH TRANSITION, DIVERSIFICATION AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES

▶ DELIVERY LEAD: Venture Taranaki and private sector organisations

Context

The decline of indigenous gas production has already commenced in the region and is taking place at rates higher than expected.

This is translating into a contraction of the oil and gas workforce which could continue within Taranaki for some years. The challenge lies with how to retain net numbers of our energy talent, given their significance to the regional economy. A key risk associated with the potential loss of specialist capability lies with diminished critical mass and loss of necessary skill sets for maintenance of the energy system and advancement of our energy future.

The shift to renewables will take time and may not generate the same level of workforce opportunities. Diversification and new opportunity development is critical and given the likelihood that there may be less energy project work within region, it is imperative to repositioning Taranaki as an energy and industrial supply chain 'talent export hub' which secures work nationally and internationally. There may also be an increased demand for businesses and the workforce capable of supporting decommissioning and infrastructure repurposing within region.

Actions

- Create industry clusters and consortiums to retain work, promote local capabilities, and open doors to new opportunities.
- Establish a diversified pipeline of projects, targeting not only New Zealand but international and new markets, to help sustain regional economic activity.
- Initiate activities to foster new commercial relationships such as trade missions, hosting delegations, and collaborations around shared satellite offices and trade showcasing.
- Position Taranaki as a leading energy and industrial supply chain talent export hub - to capitalise on the region's lifestyle benefits whilst working in other regions.
- Engage with energy supply chain businesses and employees to understand the future workforce needs, then develop support programmes such as upskilling, retraining, product and/or export development, sector diversification and new career opportunities to help businesses and workers adapt.

ADVANCING AND ACCELERATING RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

▶ DELIVERY LEAD: Venture Taranaki and private sector organisations

Context

The Taranaki energy sector is continuing to evolve with an increasing focus on renewable forms of electricity generation. A number of large-scale projects (onshore wind and solar) have already been consented around the region. Beyond this, there continues to be demand from developers to build new generation, including significant interest in offshore wind opportunities off the coast of South Taranaki.

There is also growing interest in biomass and bio economy opportunities given the need for diversity and optionality in the energy mix. The creation of smart networks and strategies that combine the integration of distributed electricity resources, flexibility, digital platforms and operations and potential investment is also an area of immense opportunity. This transition to a new energy future also allows for the growth and development of Māori business, with a focus on a more equitable transition that ensures inclusive social, cultural, environmental, and economic imperatives are balanced.

The aspiration for the region to become the new energy hub for New Zealand lies with the potential to secure the large-scale offshore wind and other renewable energy opportunities. This generation potential would then flow through to the creation of new energy intensive industries such as data centres and Power to X processes involved in the production of green hydrogen, ammonia, and methanol. Several of these Power to X products will also require the development of a supply

chain for net zero CO₂. Whilst this long-term future is positive and plausible, there remains significant barriers, challenges, and uncertainties to realising it, such as investment, policy and regulatory settings, timing of market demand (including the impact of market acceptance of premium pricing for green products), and infrastructure (including limited network transmission capacity out of the region or demand flexible network operations within the region). Resolving these issues is the key to unlocking and accelerating a meaningful energy transition for the region, and enabling further opportunities such as Power to X. Identification of near-term hydrogen developments and projects within region, which leverages our renewable resources would also help to break down barriers, create practical progress on the decarbonisation of transport and industry, pioneer Power to X manufacturing, catalyse opportunities for reducing exposure to geopolitical events e.g. replacing diesel with green hydrogen and new skill development.

With a concentration of electricity network owners, innovative businesses and already engaged consumer segments and cross sector energy planning already initiated (eg farm, transport), the region is well placed to leverage opportunities through supporting distributed energy resources, smart energy systems and demand flexibility solutions. The region is also well-placed to develop bioenergy opportunities including biogas, electricity generation, and the production and storage of net zero CO₂.

¹ EECA's Regional Energy Transition Accelerator.



Actions

- Create a Regional Energy Industry Group to advance this 2025/26 Action Plan and progress opportunities for the region related to:
 - Offshore Wind Energy - continue engagement with key players, identify and respond to barriers and enablers, and build connections and information to underpin potential realisation of benefits for the region and nation.
 - H2 Taranaki Roadmap - support of private sector-led projects, identify and respond to barriers and enablers, and promote regional progress.
 - Bio economy/biomass regional opportunities - building awareness and understanding of opportunities for the region, roadmap development and catalysing potential projects.
 - Geothermal - Exploring opportunities for the region, initiating feasibility work as required.
 - On-farm and community energy generation, efficiency and sustainability projects - building resilience and fostering energy solutions as well as progressing smart energy management, smart networks, and local energy ownership and resilience.
 - Near and mid-term projects across a broad range of energy options e.g. onshore wind, solar, gas, CO2 market/demand, energy storage etc.
- Further to the above, map existing resources and ways this can be utilised and advanced, presenting opportunities for investors to enable short-term and long-term wins to be planned out.
- Package demand-side investment opportunities for energy intensive industries, considering the merits of precincts for high energy users, and the potential for infrastructure repurposing.
- Work with Transpower to better understand the capacity of transmission infrastructure connecting to the region, planned near-medium term maintenance and upgrades, and benefits of investing in transmission infrastructure to support the local economy and ensure national energy resilience.
- Leverage the presence of Ara Ake, collaborate with EECA, the Electricity Authority, Callaghan Innovation, and other agencies - Encourage local use of RETA and other business development and R&D programmes to access industry energy transition support, advance renewable energy innovation and industry opportunities, and accelerate delivery of affordable energy opportunities for Taranaki consumers (e.g. transport transition planning, household electrification, efficiency and flexibility, community energy projects).
- Provide proactive development of the regional workforce to ensure capability and capacity for future needs are met.
- Position Taranaki as a location for energy workforce training, fostering international partnerships to leverage skill and workforce development.
- Support the provision of evidence-based research and the development of programmes that enable communities to collaborate in order to enhance their energy resilience and security.



**FOOD
AND FIBRE
FUTURE**

Vision

Taranaki has a diversified, resilient, and well-connected food and fibre system, driven by in-region value chain innovation and high-value production.

Overview

F&F (represented by Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing and various manufacturing sub-sectors) represents the largest single sector in Taranaki, accounting for over 20% of regional GDP and more than 11,000 jobs around the Maunga and in the eastern Taranaki hill country. This sector has been established upon a foundation of dairy farming and meat processing, with small goods production traditionally making up only a small percentage of the mix. In more recent years the growth of high-value products, such as honey and craft alcohol are playing more of a role.

However, the sector is currently experiencing considerable disruption, prompted by changing consumer preferences, an increased focus on climate change and adaptation, new technology and increasing cost pressures. These challenges are likely to have a significant impact, particularly for our farming communities. Ambitious emissions reduction goals from international consumers, including Nestlé and Mars, have already led to discussions about the cost of reducing the environmental impact of cattle farming and the balance between production and emissions. Early signs also indicate that the gap is quickly closing between the perceived sustainability of products from New Zealand compared to competitors from other markets, such as Europe and America.

These challenges are not limited just to our region and is something many others also face. While the risks presented are significant there is also great opportunity for the region to lean on its existing knowledge, experience, and drive to adapt, to lead and emerge as a responsible and diverse food producing region. Work already completed through Branching Out, a project first identified in TR 2017, has indicated several areas where diversification and value chain development could create new, long-lasting industries in region. Additionally, there is now a clear pathway and support for emerging food and beverage producers to progress from hobbyists to wide-scale distribution.

As the landscape of the wider economy shifts and the prospects of the energy sector change, it's likely that there will be a gap in the regional economy. The food and fibre sector has the opportunity to address this change, but further investment is required to realise the true potential of the food sector in Taranaki.



Priorities

BRANCHING OUT – PHASE THREE

► DELIVERY LEAD: Venture Taranaki and District Councils

Context

Phase One of Branching Out was launched in 2020 as a response to an action in TR 2017.

It identified 11 innovative, commercially viable food and fibre value chain opportunities, with potential to strengthen and diversify the Taranaki economy. The project also engaged with a range of key stakeholders, from government departments to local landowners interested in diversifying.

Phase Two is currently underway, building on the research of Phase One by conducting crops trials around the region, completing targeted commercial viability studies, and further investigating value chain development opportunities. Phase Two is set to be completed in 2025, but further work is still required to meaningfully de-risk opportunities and develop full value add and export opportunities for farmers, growers, manufacturers, landowners, and investors in Taranaki.

Actions

- Determine objectives for Phase Three, with consideration given to a focus on market development and export, product value creation, science led opportunities (such as plant breeding) and resourced support for large scale land diversification and cluster development.
- Understand the role and need for governance and strategic support as part of de-risking diversification and a system change approach.
- Develop a costed project plan and timeline for Branching Out Phase Three.
- Engage with key partners and stakeholders to secure co-funding to deliver Phase Three.
- Secure funding for delivery of Branching Out Phase Three.
- Begin delivery of priorities within Phase Three.

LAND AVAILABILITY AND DIVERSIFICATION ASSESSMENT TOOL

▶ DELIVERY LEAD: Venture Taranaki, Taranaki Regional Council and District Councils

Context

Significant time and resource have been invested in progressing the Branching Out project, with the intention to de-risk food and fibre diversification in Taranaki.

To ensure the information generated through this work can be accessed and applied by as many people as possible, there is a need to develop a diversification toolkit. This toolkit should be freely available and support members of the public through the practical steps required to approach diversification.

Underpinning this work is the need to collect further information about micro-climates and land use from around Taranaki. Climate data is one of the most crucial pieces of information that is required to determine which crop a farmer, landowner or investor may wish to grow and it should be a primary element of any land diversification tool, along with other critical decision-making parameters e.g. market demand, pathway to market, investment/return, risk etc. Colloquially, there are a number of micro-climates around Taranaki, in places such as Urenui and the valleys of the east Taranaki hill country. However, there is limited collated climate data around the region and the extrapolated data that is available is not always reliable. Additionally, the future impacts of climate change are not well known but the opportunity exists to include this information to create a more comprehensive and useful tool.

Actions

- Assess different micro-climates around Taranaki, engaging with farmers and organisations that hold existing climatic data.
- Understand possible alignment with Ministry of Primary Industry (MPI) objectives related to soil and topography mapping.
- Develop a diversification toolkit, incorporating micro-climate data, future climate change scenarios, and Branching Out findings.
- Promote toolkit to wider public to encourage uptake of diversification opportunities (weave into wider Taranaki Story content).
- Actively engage with industry bodies, such as Zespri, seeking to diversify their growing locations to ensure product resilience.
- Ensure council regulation supports and enables diversification – *Connection with Planning alignment and fit-for-purpose regulations (Infrastructure and Connectivity Foundation)*
- Integrate toolkit into Centralised Regional Data Repository – *Connection with Centralised Regional Data Depository (New Industry and Investment Future)*

EMERGING FOOD AND BEVERAGE PRODUCERS' ACCELERATION

▶ DELIVERY LEAD: Venture Taranaki and private sector organisations

Context

The reputation of the Taranaki food sector has been built upon the in-region processing and operation capabilities of large industry players, such as Fonterra, ANZCO, Silver Fern Farms, Tegel and Yarrows.

While the retention and growth of local operations for these big players remains important, there exists an exciting opportunity to support the acceleration of new and emerging food and beverage producers. These businesses too can have an impact on our regional economy with recent examples such as Egmont Honey, Green Meadows Beef, Van Dyck's Fine Foods, and Juno Gin showing it is possible to successfully grow a food brand to significant scale in Taranaki. These types of businesses help to diversify and provide security and resilience to the food sector in the region. This approach to supporting emerging producers can also play an important role in enabling Māori communities to become self-sustaining through māra kai (gardening for food) and distributing and trading kai.

In order to enable and support the growth of new and emerging food businesses a range of interventions are required to create opportunities for people to validate their ideas, test and improve their product, meet customers, engage with each other, and create industry connections, access funding and investment, and generate income through sales.

Actions

- Maintain and engage the Taranaki Food Network, providing opportunities for them to learn, connect and collaborate.
- Create a cluster of food and fibre businesses with a focus on sustainability frameworks and sharing best practice.
- Consider food distribution models that provide an avenue for small and medium-sized food producing business, including Māori producers, to connect with local markets and community to support regional food security and sovereignty.
- Develop avenues for emerging businesses to access mentoring, and governance/strategic advice from established food producers in region.
- Develop a list of certified manufacturing facilities to actively connect people that have space with people that require additional equipment to scale-up (e.g, Marae, and sports clubs).
- Continue to support existing pathways that provide producers with the opportunity to grow, such as the Taranaki Farmers' Market and attendance at the Auckland Food Show as a regional collective.
- Develop deeper connections with NZTE to provide access to information and support for producers seeking to export internationally.
- Create a cluster of export ready businesses to understand steps required to access international markets, including consideration of trade delegations and in-region famils.
- Support the rural sector to advance opportunities relating to decarbonisation and emissions reduction approaches.



LINK TARANAKI – TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS SOLUTIONS

▶ DELIVERY LEAD: Venture Taranaki

Context

The Taranaki region can be perceived as relatively isolated compared to some other parts of the country. While road access is seeing some improvements, with upgrades and maintenance to SH3 and SH43, rail and sea access remains challenging.

Train services in and out of the region have been reduced to once a day and the future of the rail network appears uncertain with short-medium term KiwiRail funding cuts currently proposed. Port Taranaki remains the only deepwater port on the west coast of New Zealand, but it does not offer regular container shipping and has not done so since 2014. Additionally, consideration is being given by producers to the emissions cost of transport and how a lower carbon footprint can benefit product value at market.

Collectively, this means that the cost of transporting goods into and out of Taranaki is a significant challenge for many in the food sector. In some cases, domestic chilled and frozen transport can be twice as expensive as other regional centres, such as Hawkes' Bay. Others have reported needing to pay to transport an empty container to Taranaki, just so they can fill it with product to send back out of region. Some have even indicated that this challenge may lead to them relocating out of the region and moving closer to a better serviced distribution facility or port. Further work is required to understand the scale and impact of this challenge and to develop solutions that support the retention and growth of food and beverage businesses in Taranaki. This work may also have benefit for other industry with import and export requirements in region and has significant *crossover with the priorities detailed within the Infrastructure and Connectivity Foundation*.

Actions

- Compile statistics and engage with key local stakeholders to understand the scale and size of the challenge.
- Connect with other comparable regions to understand their approach to reducing logistical barriers.
- Create a network of producers importing and exporting to understand what alignment exists and if further connections can be made to share costs and services.
- Develop a business case to fully understand the cost/benefit analysis of investing in logistical solutions (including infrastructure options) in Taranaki.
- Connect key regional logistics firms with initiatives to transition assets to using renewable fuel sources.
- Consider and progress further opportunities related to coastal trade and shipping.





**MĀORI
ECONOMY
FUTURE**

Vision

Taranaki Māori economy is diverse and innovative with an intergenerational focus on healthy living and home ownership, food sovereignty, developing future skillsets, renewable energy solutions, collective investment in commercial activity, tourism, and restoration of the environment.

► **DELIVERY LEAD:** He Toronga Pākihi, Venture Taranaki and Iwi

Overview

Nationally, Māori businesses play a vital role in sustaining Māori communities, particularly in regional and rural areas and provide meaningful opportunities for Māori to engage with the economy. The Māori economy is now recognised as growing faster than the national New Zealand economy.

Across Aotearoa in 2019/2020, Māori-owned businesses made up 8.8% of all New Zealand business, while Māori sole traders made up 14.7% of the 401,000 sole traders, and 5.6% of businesses were significant employers of Māori in Aotearoa.

Māori-owned businesses are represented across most industries and sectors with more than half concentrated across four key industries including construction; agriculture, forestry, and fishing; professional, scientific and technical services; and rental, hiring and real estate services. Māori-owned businesses employ 43% Māori on average, three times the rate of non-Māori businesses. There are close to 10,200 significant employers of Māori and over 3,000 of these are Māori businesses.

In Taranaki, the Māori economy is diverse and innovative with iwi, hapū, whānau and uri continually unleashing new ways of thinking and leading out new and improved solutions to local opportunities and challenges with an intergenerational focus. This includes stimulating healthy living and home ownership, building resilient communities through kai sovereignty,



developing future focused skillsets, renewable energy solutions, collective investment in projects aligned to values and aspirations, tourism, and restoration of the environment which the existence of the Taranaki economy is reliant upon. He Toronga Pākihi ki Taranaki, the Māori Business Network for the Taranaki region, plays a crucial role in promoting Māori businesses and collaborating among their members, thus enhancing the capacity of Māori businesses to build their brands, sell their products and grow in an ever changing, highly complex economic landscape. With that said, the Māori economy in Taranaki is not well defined in terms of data available to baseline the current state.

Looking ahead, there is a need to assess the size, scale, and context of the current Māori economy in Taranaki and develop a Regional Māori Economic Development Strategy to ensure alignment with Government strategies and action plans and to drive and track positive economic outcomes for Māori in Taranaki.

Actions

- Develop a Regional Māori Economic Development Strategy.
- Baseline the size, scale, and context of the current Māori economy in Taranaki - and track progress over time with regular monitoring.





VISITOR FUTURE

Vision

Taranaki is a unique world-renowned destination, recognised for Taranaki Maunga and high-quality, sustainable, and authentic tourism offerings.

Overview

The visitor sector has the ability to generate many positive direct and indirect benefits throughout Taranaki. For the year ended March 2023, the visitor sector contributed \$193m to GDP in Taranaki and accounted for more than 3,800 jobs. This amounts to 1.9% of the regional economy, compared to just 0.6% of the regional economy in 2000. We remain on track to meet the annual cumulative growth target of 7.5% set in TR 2017, despite a global pandemic and significantly less funding per capita compared to nearly all other regions around New Zealand.

The visitor sector in Taranaki is largely domestic, with only 17% of all visitors of international origin in 2023. This is significantly less than the national average of 27%. International visitors are arriving primarily from Australia, United States of America, and the United Kingdom, with some Asian market representation. Domestically, the large majority of visitors to Taranaki are from nearby regions, arriving from Auckland, Waikato, Wellington, and Manawatu-Whanganui.

Now the importance of visitor sector in Taranaki is greater than ever as the region continues to think practically, and pragmatically around some immediate solutions and support mechanisms to mitigate the potential decline of other key sectors. The visitor sector is one answer to this, presenting a relatively quick-to-respond solution to the near-term challenges we could endure as a region as gas supplies reduce and additional pressures are placed on rural communities, reducing disposable incomes. With an expected reduction in local people spending money on retail and hospitality, the question then becomes, how can we supplement or replace this spending?

Promoting the visitor sector is one way we can encourage additional spending and economic activity, attracting high-value visitors to region who will contribute economically to close the gap. Focusing on growth, and the additional attraction of domestic and international visitors, provides a pragmatic and achievable response to the challenges

we may face when in other sectors. Investing in visitor sector growth and product development helps to ensure a well-rounded, diversified economy that brings with it a wealth of positive benefits.

While the core visitor sector offering remains relatively similar, focused around Taranaki Maunga, the coast, other nature-based activities, and major events, opportunities exist to increase capability, smooth demand across peaks and troughs and to support the emergence of new visitor activities. These opportunities are not limited to just New Plymouth, with Stratford and South Taranaki also likely to play a key role in creating a diverse visitor offering. However, the growth of this sector needs to occur in a sustainable way to minimise over tourism and ensure the sector retains the social licence of the community.



Priorities

TARANAKI MAUNGA

DELIVERY LEAD: Te Tōpuni Kōkōurangi, PSGEs, District Councils and Venture Taranaki

Context

Taranaki Maunga remains the gem in the crown of the Taranaki visitor offering and significant changes have occurred since TR 2017 which will enhance this offering. Work is ongoing by several Post-settlement Governance Entities (PSGEs) to upgrade facilities on Taranaki Maunga, including:

- The Stratford Mountain House, Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Ruanui Trust.
- Ngā Rere Lodge (formally Dawson Falls Mountain Lodge), Te Korowai o Ngāruahine Trust.
- The North Taranaki Visitors' Centre, including the addition of car parking at the base of the Te Papakura o Taranaki (the National Park), Te Kotahitanga o Te Ātiawa Trust.
- Pouakai Hut, Te Kāhui o Taranaki.

Additionally, various connecting and enabling infrastructure has also been upgraded, such as the Taranaki Crossing and the sealing of SH43, one of the gateways to Taranaki Maunga

Collectively, the eight iwi of Taranaki recently signed a deed of redress with the Government, giving Taranaki Maunga the rights of a legal person and establishing a co-governance group (Te Tōpuni Kōkōurangi) to manage Te Papakura o Taranaki. A coordinated approach is required to effectively manage and promote sustainable tourism opportunities for people visiting the region and Taranaki Maunga.

Actions

- Complete a study to understand current Taranaki Maunga visitor numbers and ongoing capacity.
- Consider options to better connect Taranaki Maunga with the moana, such as the development of a biking and walking trails or connections through green corridors alongside awa.
- Provide additional support to iwi and Hapū to develop commissionable visitor products related to Taranaki Maunga.
- Assess existing road access to Taranaki Maunga, considering ongoing maintenance costs and upgrades to improve management and safety for visitors on roads within the park boundary, in line with the capacity study and visitor growth aspirations.
- Engage with key stakeholders about further promotion of updated Taranaki Maunga offering.
- Complete redevelopment of North Taranaki Visitors' Centre.
- Build Egmont Road carpark near the park boundary and introduce shuttle access to visitor centre.



REGIONAL EVENTS

► **DELIVERY LEAD:** Venture Taranaki and District Councils

Context

Major events directly contribute to jobs, GDP, and investment in region. They bring significant direct economic impacts, with many top performing events achieving a multiplier of 10x return on investment.

However, dedicated funding to actively promote these activities is limited and well over-subscribed. The New Plymouth District Major Event Fund, valued at approx. \$840,000 (and increasing year-on-year in line with the consumer price index) funded 23 events in 2024/25 but is regularly oversubscribed. Additionally, work in the wider events space is ad-hoc, lacking both resource and a coordinated, aligned approach.

MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions) also play a role in supporting the regional visitor sector, support seasonal peaks, smoothing visitor troughs (Winter/Autumn), and encouraging repeat visitation opportunities. However, limited resource is allocated to driving the growth of this sub-sector, and no coordinated strategy exists to ensure greater outcomes.

Actions

- Develop a Taranaki Business Events Strategy and Action plan, with consideration given to the need for a Regional Event Business Development Manager and the feasibility of a facility to attract and host large conferences and events (1,000+ pax).
- Update and formally adopt the Taranaki regional events strategy, considering the size and scope of the New Plymouth District Major Event Fund.
- Work with the MBIE Major Events team to leverage support and assistance for the region where available.
- Investigate a Major Events accelerator programme to actively grow and develop emerging events in region.

VISITOR PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

► DELIVERY LEAD: Venture Taranaki and District Councils

Context

The Taranaki visitor economy is centred around the region's natural attractions - Taranaki Maunga (noting the recently signed deed of redress), the coastline, and various other outdoor experiences including hiking and gardens.

One of the challenges with this offering is the lack of commissionable (paid) visitor product, meaning the economic impact of visitors to region is not being maximised. Visitor product development is crucial across a number of key areas, including agritourism, health and wellness, trail development, and cultural experiences embedded with Māori customs, values, and beliefs to ensure the full economic potential of the visitor sector in Taranaki is realised.

Actions

- Provide tourism product development workshops and accelerators.
- Work with existing tourism providers to meet growing demand for sustainable visitor experiences.
- Engage with hapū and whānau and support the exploration and development of immersive cultural experiences.
- Support the Ngāmotu Marae development to engage and respond to opportunities in the tourism sector.
- Support the development and delivery of the Pukerangiora Pa Cultural experience.
- Develop more trail and cycle networks across the region.
- Support the exploration of visitor sector feasibility for the Lake Mangamahoe Mountain Bike Park.
- Create a food tourism cluster to leverage regional food sector strengths and develop food experiences.
- Work with the network of tourism product providers to actively promote the region internationally, through marketing campaigns and travel exchanges, and to package experiences for visitors coming to the region.





CRUISE SECTOR EXTENSION

► DELIVERY LEAD: Port Taranaki, Venture Taranaki, and District Councils

Context

Cruise is a fast-growing sector for New Zealand, already representing \$500m to the economy each year.

Taranaki is actively engaging with the cruise sector and in 2023 Venture Taranaki produced a coordinated, region-wide Cruise Strategy in partnership with iwi, hapū and key stakeholders. The strategy acts as a guide in support of the development of new and unique products and experiences that will have a positive benefit for the wider visitor sector.

Internationally there are some challenges facing the cruise industry, with cost increasing due to fuel prices and various visitor-based levies, with geopolitical issues placing additional pressure on northern and southern hemisphere travel. Regardless, this is still a priority area for the region with an ambitious long-term vision of 28 cruise vessels to visit Taranaki during the 2028 season. To achieve this goal, further investment and resources will be required.

Actions

- Attend offshore business development opportunities (i.e, Sea Trade) to connect with cruise operators and promote Taranaki proposition.
- Bid for and host the National Cruise conference - *Connected with Regional events (Visitor Futures)*.
- Host cruise liners on families in region to build relationships and showcase the potential for further cruise in Taranaki.
- Investigate the creation of an expedition cruise journey with other regions based along the West Coast of New Zealand.
- Undertake market research and gap analysis focused on visitor product and experience in region - *Connected with Visitor product development (Visitor Futures)*.





**NEW INDUSTRY
AND INVESTMENT
FUTURE**

Vision

Taranaki has a diverse, innovative economy that is driven by investment into the region and enabled by accessible information and suitable regulatory settings.

Overview

Taranaki is at a pivotal moment in its economic evolution, moving beyond its traditional reliance on industries like energy and agriculture to embrace new and innovative sectors. The region's rich natural environment, combined with its established expertise in food and fibre, provides a unique opportunity to explore and develop non-extractive industries that can offer sustainable growth and resilience in the face of global economic shifts.

As the challenges facing the regions core industries become more pronounced, the need to diversify the economic base has never been more critical. Taranaki is positioning itself to lead in emerging sectors that align with global trends towards sustainability, innovation, and technological advancement. By fostering new industries, Taranaki aims to not only preserve its economic vitality but also to create high-value jobs, attract investment, and ensure long-term prosperity for its communities.

The focus on New Industry and Investment Futures is about leveraging the existing strengths of Taranaki while actively pursuing opportunities in areas like biotechnology and other innovative fields, high growth niche sectors and industry collaborations utilising progressive practices e.g. circularity and renewable energy generation. The importance of this opportunity, and the need for ongoing investment to underpin the transformation of the regional economy, is recognised by lifting up and adapting the Investment Foundation to become the New Industry and Investment Future. By cultivating a supportive environment for new and emerging sectors and enabling an environment, where external investment is welcome and investors are well informed about the opportunities in the region, Taranaki can build a more diversified and resilient economy, capable of thriving in a rapidly changing world.



Priorities

APPLIED INNOVATION CENTRE

► DELIVERY LEAD: **Venture Taranaki**

Context

The Taranaki economy is centred around two core industries that have already shown signs of being vulnerable to major disruptions.

At the same time, the regional expertise and infrastructure they have built provide the region with the means to translate our grassroots innovation and natural environment into an economy based on high-tech, non-extractive biotechnologies.

The opportunity exists to establish a regional hub that accelerates the regions capacity for scientific excellence. It will serve two core functions. The first is to position Taranaki as New Zealand's biotechnology centre, engaging with industry and research entities to create a highly desirable environment in which to do business. The second is to elevate the regions already world-leading approach to community-led science through the provision of facilities, services, and education programmes.

Guided by the needs and aspirations of the people of Taranaki, the centre will foster relationships between experts, students, rangatahi Māori, and the wider Taranaki community to develop skills and knowledge that underpin the future of work and drive the region forward as an innovation leader.

Actions

- Establish wide-ranging community support for the Centre in region.
- Complete costed business case for ongoing operational costs.
- Establish the Centre Advisory Group and create terms of reference.
- Secure funding beyond year zero.
- Consider potential implications of changes to genetic modification legislation and stance of the Centre towards this.

CENTRALISED REGIONAL DATA DEPOSITORY

► **DELIVERY LEAD:** Venture Taranaki, District Councils and Regional Council

Context

Data provides key insights about our people, the economy and the environment, and is crucial to support decision making.

It enables us to understand our challenges, identify our opportunities, and take action to achieve positive outcomes. In Taranaki there are a number of organisations and agencies collecting data about our region. However, data can often be hard to access or interpret and isn't easily able to be used to inform policy or investment decisions.

There is value in taking a regionally coordinated approach to collating and presenting key data sets. Additionally, data from within the repository should be accessed through an open-source tool that encourages inward investment - *Connected with Land availability and diversification assessment tool (Food and Fibre Future).*

Actions

- Engage with Great South (Southland Economic Development Agency) to understand the process, benefits and challenges of a new data repository created in Southland.
- Engage with key stakeholders to understand what information and features should be included in the data repository.
- Identify existing data sets and establish data sharing agreements with data owners.
- Develop a tool to enable data in the repository to be easily accessed and viewed.
- Promote the tool as part of the regional investment prospectus.



'OPEN FOR BUSINESS' REGIONAL INVESTMENT PROSPECTUS

▶ **DELIVERY LEAD:** Venture Taranaki and District Councils

Context

In an increasingly competitive global marketplace, regions that can effectively market their strengths and provide clear, accessible information to potential investors have a significant advantage.

However, to appeal to a wider audience and fully capitalise on inward investment opportunities, steps need to be taken to provide favourable conditions for business, such as discounted rates, streamlined consenting processes or adaptable district plans.

A comprehensive investment prospectus is essential to clearly communicate the value proposition of Taranaki, showcasing the region's opportunities, infrastructure, and strategic advantages to a global audience. These tools will not only enhance the regions visibility but also provide businesses with the confidence and clarity needed to invest in the region.

Actions

- Work with councils to understand conditions on offer that may appeal to businesses.
- Engage with key stakeholders (including potential investors) to understand what incentives and conditions are appealing and can attract investment and new business into region.
- Create an investment prospectus, highlighting regional strengths.
- Alongside the Data Repository, proactively promote the regional investment prospectus to domestic and international markets.

ECONOMIC INNOVATION ZONE (EIZ)

▶ **DELIVERY LEAD:** Regional Leadership and Venture Taranaki

Context

An Economic Innovation Zone (EIZ) is a designated area or region that encourages innovation, entrepreneurship, and high-tech development by offering specific incentives, infrastructure, and support services.

These zones are designed to stimulate economic growth, attract investment, and foster collaboration between businesses, research institutions, and governments. The impact of an Innovation Economic Zone can be profound and wide-ranging, affecting various aspects of the economy and society.

By establishing an EIZ in Taranaki, focused on enabling and incentivising new energy opportunities, New Zealand could create a unique environment that attracts cutting-edge energy projects, from offshore wind farms to green hydrogen production facilities. This could help the region transition to a sustainable energy future, while also driving economic growth and creating jobs.

Actions

- Complete a research and feasibility study assessing the potential benefits of establishing an EIZ (or various models aligned to this concept) in Taranaki, including details about how it could be employed and what impacts would be expected for the regional and national economy.
- Engage with local stakeholders to gather input and generate support for EIZ proposition.
- Ensure alignment of EIZ proposal with Government policies.
- Present findings and recommendations to Government for the establishment of an EIZ in Taranaki.





**EDUCATION,
PEOPLE,
AND INNOVATION
FOUNDATION**

Vision

Taranaki has a thriving network of ecosystems that fosters innovation and connects community, education and jobs.

Overview

People are the lifeblood of any region's economic and social development, and this is particularly true for Taranaki. As the region undergoes significant transitions, especially in industries like energy, the presence of a skilled and adaptable workforce becomes paramount. Talent drives innovation, supports local businesses, and attracts investment, all of which are crucial for sustaining economic growth and ensuring that Taranaki remains competitive on a national and global scale.

A strong and diverse workforce enables a region to respond to changing market demands and economic conditions. In Taranaki, where traditional industries like oil and gas are evolving, a workforce capable of upskilling, retraining, and transitioning into new sectors is vital. This not only helps to mitigate the economic impact of industry shifts but also ensures that the region can capitalise on emerging opportunities, such as in renewable energy or technology. Moreover, people are the cornerstone of community resilience and well-being. A region that invests in its workforce is also investing in the overall quality of life for its residents. By providing pathways for career development, fostering inclusivity, and creating opportunities for all, Taranaki can build a more equitable and prosperous future. In essence, the success of any strategic initiative in Taranaki hinges on the strength and adaptability of its people.

There remains a lot of uncertainty across the nation and around the world with geopolitical tensions causing trade and other issues, global recessions, unstable costs of living, tight local and central budgets, instability in the energy sector having roll on impacts into other industries, and rapid advancements in technologies causing concerns for the worker of today. This requires people to be looking to the near future to keep up with these trends and be looking at the need to upskill and/or retrain to keep their livelihoods protected.

Central to this effort is the need for stability in our vocational education sector. As Taranaki navigates these transitions, a robust and reliable vocational training system is essential to equip our workforce with the skills needed for tomorrow's jobs. Ensuring continuity and quality in vocational education will not only support the immediate needs of the region's industries but also provide long-term security and growth for our community. Stability in this sector is critical for fostering a skilled workforce capable of driving the region's economic transformation and maintaining the regions leadership in the energy sector and beyond.

We are setting the goal of creating a people-centric and collaborative workforce development ecosystem that fosters innovation and connects communities with education and jobs. Not only will this aspiration lift up the people of our region, but it will also catalyse a future-focused outlook, thereby presenting the region as an attractive place for people to come work, live and learn, and for organisations to base themselves here.

Priorities

TERTIARY EDUCATION REFRESH

► DELIVERY LEAD: Taranaki Skills Group

Context

The vocational and tertiary education system has experienced significant legislative change in recent times, with the disestablishment of Te Pūkenga having a major ongoing impact on the wider vocational education and training sector.

With the Taranaki Regional Skills Leadership Group already being disestablished, and now the redesign of the vocational education and training system occurring, it has continued to impact on kaimahi in this sector and those receiving vocational education and training. Additionally, ongoing change has impacted the reputation of key regional institutions, such as WITT.

However, with change comes opportunity, and the time is now right to consider new ways of delivering education in Taranaki. In doing this, it will remain important for regional leadership and the Taranaki Skills Group to understand what the future of learning may look like and how a new and improved operating model can be created to ensure it remains fit-for-purpose for all regional educational providers and their students for years to come.

Actions

- Maintain a regional skills group to provide coordinated input and feedback to WITT and the wider sector as it transitions through the disestablishment of Te Pūkenga, and a new operating model is stood up.
- Investigate solutions to target a sustainable reduction of regional NEET rates.
- Understand connections across the tertiary education system in Taranaki and whether further collaboration, such as a Taranaki Education Precinct, would add value to the sector.
- Engage with universities and other education providers to explore interest in establishing a presence in Taranaki and offering courses in the region.



INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION AND ATTRACTION

► DELIVERY LEAD: Venture Taranaki

Context

International students and workers are vital to regional economies, contributing directly through spending, tuition fees and addressing skills shortages, while also enriching communities with cultural diversity.

They bring essential skills and global perspectives, addressing workforce shortages and driving innovation, and often they support long-term growth if they choose to stay in region and contribute to the talent pool.

Prior to covid, Taranaki was home to over 1,000 international students, with the sector contributing 330 jobs and \$50 million per annum to the Taranaki economy. The region has recovered well, however, there is still an opportunity to continue to grow this sector in Taranaki. As competition continues amongst countries and regions for students and skilled workers, it's vital we continue to place Taranaki on the international map, so people are aware of the opportunities our region presents for them to live, work and learn.

Actions

- Strengthen the network by engaging with education providers in region currently not part of the Study Taranaki Network.
- Explore developing a Taranaki International Education Strategy with consideration given to securing resourcing to extend the groups international reach and exploring the sister city relationships to leverage connection into markets.
- Facilitate promotion of the group and student opportunities through marketing materials, in-bound famils and outbound international delegations.
- Maintain, refresh, and promote the Venture Taranaki lifestyle campaigns, case studies and toolkits to provide an insight into what it is like to live, work and learn in Taranaki.



TARANAKI WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

► DELIVERY LEAD: Venture Taranaki

Context

There are a huge number of organisations that make up the workforce development ecosystem in Taranaki including 5,500+ employers, 126+ educational establishments, 65+ support services, and 16+ funders.

However, the system lacks coordination and is not working well together to achieve optimal outcomes for the region. The results of this can be seen in current NEET rates, youth aged between 15 - 24 not in employment, education, or training. All three districts across Taranaki are consistently above the national rate, as described in the Economic Update section. This is a huge risk to the region as youth are our future and it is crucial that they are engaging in some form of education or employment.

A recent study commissioned by Venture Taranaki provided a number of options to help address the challenges in this space. Further investigation is required to understand the best approach to improve the functionality across the workforce development sector. However, alignment of key players and aspirations for this sector is key to ensuring good outcomes for learners, employers, and funders across Taranaki.

Actions

- Understand how other regions coordinate youth development and whether similar models could work in Taranaki (e.g, Southland Youth Futures).
- Formalise the workforce development network by creating a clear governance structure and purpose.
- Secure funding for a coordinator to support and enable the work of the network, and to create a network of networks.
- Understand how other regions coordinate youth development and whether similar models could work in Taranaki (e.g, Southland Youth Futures).
- Work with regional funders to consolidate and focus the current funding system.



Photo Credit: Rob Tucker

ADVANCEMENT OF INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM

► DELIVERY LEAD: Venture Taranaki and Innovation Ecosystem Collective

Context

Innovation is a cornerstone of economic growth, driving productivity, competitiveness, and long-term prosperity.

It is also crucial in times of change, to provide support and enable new ideas to emerge. By fostering an environment where new ideas can flourish, regions can create high-value industries, attract investment, and generate new employment opportunities.

Innovation and entrepreneurship was identified as a focus area in TR2017 and a key driver of the region's future economic success, with one of the actions to 'develop innovation, entrepreneurship and business development activity'. This led to the creation of PowerUp, an entrepreneurship support initiative managed by Venture Taranaki to help build capability and foster connections within the Taranaki entrepreneurship ecosystem by offering a cohesive range of support services and activities.

Combined with the work of other organisations within this ecosystem the region is well serviced in the business startup and innovation space. However, further investment should be provided to the innovation ecosystem support network to ensure that its activities stay relevant and continue to positively impact the regional economy, and that it is well positioned to thrive as we approach a time of significant change.

Actions

- Assess and benchmark the current existing initiatives and ecosystem to understand current gaps, challenges, and opportunities.
- Enhance and extend existing initiatives to enable greater participation in the innovation ecosystem across the region.
- Engage key stakeholders to create connections and collaborations with government, organisations, and institutions, locally, nationally, and internationally.
- Support high growth startups to scale by developing relationships and creating opportunities and connections with investment communities.



INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY FOUNDATION

Vision

Taranaki has resilient and fit-for-purpose infrastructure that enables regional economic growth.

Overview

Infrastructure and connectivity are fundamental to the sustained economic growth and development of any region. Well-maintained and strategically developed infrastructure, including roads, ports, water systems, and digital networks, ensures that the region can effectively support its current industries while also enabling the growth of new sectors. Connectivity, both within the region and with the wider world, is crucial for facilitating trade, attracting investment, and enhancing the overall quality of life for residents.

Since TR 2017, some gains have been made in this area in Taranaki, however, many challenges still remain. Rooding infrastructure connecting the region has improved, with ongoing projects improving access North via SH3 and East via SH43 and committed maintenance aiming to improve overall rooding conditions. Conversely, rail network funding has been reduced and work is ongoing to ensure the connection through Taranaki remains operational. The key to ensuring economic growth is an appropriate and unified planning approach, combined with resilient water infrastructure.

The focus of this foundation and the priorities within it are on ensuring Taranaki infrastructure is resilient, sustainable, and aligned with future industry needs. Key initiatives include upgrading and diversifying Port infrastructure to capitalize on new opportunities, maintaining and enhancing water systems to support ongoing development and environmental sustainability, and accelerating the adoption of low-emissions transport options, including public transport, walking, and cycling. Additionally, a review of the councils consenting, and regulatory processes is intended to align District Plans, ensuring consistency, and enabling streamlined investment and growth across the region. These efforts collectively aim to position Taranaki for long-term economic resilience and sustainability.



Priorities

FUTURE FOCUSED PORT TARANAKI UPGRADES

► DELIVERY LEAD: Port Taranaki, New Plymouth District Council, and Venture Taranaki

Context

Often described as the 'Jewel in the Crown' of the Taranaki region, Port Taranaki is a key enabler of our regional energy sector. However, the Port is also highly reliant on this sector, with a significant portion of through trade connected to this sector.

With gas production declining at rates faster than expected and the foundation of the energy sector shifting, consideration should be given to the role the Port can play in any future system to enable development, economic growth, and security of supply in our regional and national energy system. The port facilities which the region could offer to realise such opportunities should be leveraged. A key strategic pillar of the Port Taranaki development programme is to facilitate regional and national growth by creating flexible, multi-use options for Port infrastructure with minimal early-stage investment, attracting private capital and driving economic outcomes.

Actions

- Undertake scanning and prioritisation of diversification options and growth opportunities.
- Initiate evidence gathering and business cases development.
- Pitch completed business case to target audience and investors, and progress as appropriate.
- Investigate the requirements of an inland port and the retention of a rail line between Port Taranaki and the Bell Block industrial area - *Connection with Link Taranaki - transport and logistical solutions (Food and Fibre Future)*.

INFRASTRUCTURE RESILIENCE

► DELIVERY LEAD: District Councils and Regional Council

Context

Water and roading infrastructure across New Zealand face significant challenges and has recently been the centre of much political debate at both a regional and national level.

Many of the country's water networks, covering drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater systems, need substantial upgrades to meet modern standards, provide long-term sustainability and to ensure resilience to climate change and the increasing frequency and severity of weather events. Additionally, the management of water resources is becoming increasingly complex, requiring careful balancing of environmental, economic, and community needs. Roding infrastructure remains a constant point of discussion with visibly deteriorating roads impacting accessibility and threatening regional resilience.

Taranaki is not exempt from these challenges and a focus on upgrading infrastructure comes through strongly in district council long term asset management and infrastructure planning documents. Additionally, these plans emphasise the importance of sustainable water management practices to comply with national freshwater standards and to protect the region's water sources for future generations. Overall, the described approach aims to ensure that infrastructure in Taranaki remains robust, resilient, and capable of supporting the region's economic growth while safeguarding public health and the environment.

Actions

- Improve knowledge of existing regional infrastructure assets through inspection and collection of data (including risk data).
- Understand risks and implications of natural disasters on existing infrastructure assets.
- Prioritise funding and projects to the renewal of existing infrastructure assets.
- Develop proactive maintenance schedules for all infrastructure assets.



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PLANNING ALIGNMENT AND FIT FOR PURPOSE REGULATIONS

▶ DELIVERY LEAD: Regional Leadership and District Councils

Context

Policy and regulations play a significant role in the enablement of investment and development.

At a national level, the coalition government has indicated that burdensome regulation and red tape is one of the key barriers preventing economic growth.

At a local and regional level, similar issues are present, and time should be taken to ensure that relevant council processes, plans and regulations enable economic growth in the region.

Action

- District and Regional Councils to review consenting and regulatory processes to enable investment and growth.
- Creation of a coordinated Regional Spatial Plan across all three Taranaki districts.
- District and Regional Councils to work together to ensure alignment and unity across District and Regional plans to simplify consenting and development processes.

ACCELERATION OF LOW EMISSIONS AND TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

▶ DELIVERY LEAD: District Councils and Venture Taranaki

Context

Accelerating the development of low emissions and transport infrastructure presents Taranaki with a significant opportunity to shape a sustainable and prosperous future.

By focusing on reducing emissions across all sectors and enhancing transport infrastructure, Taranaki can position itself as a leader in environmental innovation and economic resilience.

This approach supports a transition to greener energy sources, reduces carbon footprints, and promotes efficient, modern transport networks that connect communities and businesses. Investing in both low emissions solutions and robust transport infrastructure will attract investment, improve quality of life, and drive economic growth, ensuring Taranaki remains competitive and vibrant in a rapidly changing world. This combined strategy will help the region build a cleaner, more resilient future that benefits all residents and enhances the regions reputation as a forward-thinking, sustainable destination.

Actions

- Identify gaps and ideal placement of EV charging infrastructure across the regional network, considering key regional connections (SH3 North and South, SH43 and SH45), tourism sites and high-demand areas.
- Work with Kiwirail and key stakeholders to maintain rail infrastructure to Port Taranaki and promote continued use - *Connection with Link Taranaki - transport and logistic solutions (Food and Fibre Future)*.
- Consider changes to medium density living regulations to make the most of existing infrastructure and limit demand for productive rural land.
- Utilise the Junction and Regional Organics facility to create an opportunity for businesses to develop new circular economy approaches.



**VIBRANCY
AND LIVEABILITY
FOUNDATION**

Vision

Taranaki is a dynamic and vibrant place to live that attracts and retains a talented workforce.

Overview

Taranaki is a vibrant and welcoming region, renowned for its stunning natural landscape, strong sense of community and ability for our people to balance career, family and lifestyle. New Plymouth District was even awarded the Most Liveable City in the world (75,000 - 150,000 residents) in 2021 for the second time. The regions vibrancy and liveability are anchored in well-designed facilities, quality housing, and a commitment to environmental stewardship.

Thriving communities drive economic growth by creating an environment where businesses can flourish, innovation can thrive, and residents can enjoy a high quality of life. By providing essential social infrastructure Taranaki becomes an attractive destination for individuals and families to live, work, and invest, fostering creativity, entrepreneurship, and talent retention.

Caring for the environment is integral to the prosperity of Taranaki. Protecting and enhancing natural spaces, along with developing sustainable community facilities, contributes to the region's appeal and long-term economic growth. A healthy environment not only preserves the natural beauty that attracts tourists and outdoor enthusiasts but also supports local industries by promoting sustainable practices, reducing costs, and fostering innovation in agriculture, energy, and tourism. This approach strengthens the economy by ensuring that both the environment and local businesses thrive.

To sustain its momentum as a vibrant and inclusive region, Taranaki must continue to focus on enhancing liveability, fostering community connections, and caring for its natural assets and biodiversity. As the region evolves and new industries emerge, it is crucial to ensure that all residents benefit from and contribute to this growth. By prioritising community well-being and environmental health, Taranaki can build a resilient and diversified economy where social and economic progress go hand in hand, empowering people to fully participate in and shape the region's future.

Priorities

HOUSING STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

► DELIVERY LEAD: Taranaki Housing Initiative Trust and District Councils

Context

There is increasing demand on the regions housing system. Together we need to facilitate and invest in urgent, practical, and action-orientated solutions to increase public housing, tackle fundamental affordability issues and improve quality across the rohe for Taranaki people.

Affordable housing is vital for community well-being. It promotes social inclusion, reduces financial stress, and ensures that people from all income levels can live and work in the region, contributing to a resilient and prosperous future. It also enables attracting and retaining a skilled workforce in Taranaki and supports economic growth.

The Taranaki Housing Strategy, developed in 2021, recognises the importance of housing for the sustained well-being of the Taranaki region. The Taranaki Housing Initiative Trust was established in 2023 (resourced until October 2025) to raise awareness of the strategy, develop regional housing data and information dashboards, and advocate for increased community housing provision within the Taranaki region. While a delivery lead has yet to be confirmed, the Trust could play this role effectively, provided alternative resourcing and governance is secured.

Actions

- Advocate and promote the Taranaki Housing Strategy, report and socialise data sets and information with cross sector stakeholders.
- Support the Taranaki Housing Initiative Trust in securing the resources and governance needed to take on a formal delivery role.
- Support capability and capacity building of the land and housing development community in Taranaki, through the Ngāmotu Growth Advisory Panel.
- Engage with Kāinga Ora to understand plans for housing development in Taranaki and work together to achieve shared outcomes.





KEY COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

► **DELIVERY LEAD: District Councils and Taranaki Foundation**

Context

Well-maintained and strategically planned community infrastructure, such as recreational spaces, healthcare facilities and community hubs, ensure that residents have access to services and opportunities that make the region a more attractive place to live, work, visit and invest.

A number of projects have been started or are planned in Taranaki, but further work and funding is required to complete them. Investing in key community infrastructure remains a critical tool to support a sustainable, inclusive and prosperous community which will have flow on effects for the regional economy.

Actions

- Complete the construction of the key regional projects already underway including:
 - Destination Play
 - Yarrow Stadium
 - Project Maunga
 - Tūparikino Active Community Hub
 - Te Pae o te Rangi (Coastal Walkway extensions to Waitara)
 - Stratford Park.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CREATIVE SECTOR

► **DELIVERY LEAD: Creative Taranaki and District Councils**

Context

The creative sector is essential to the vitality and diversity of any economy, serving as a catalyst for innovation, cultural expression, and economic growth.

It not only enriches communities by fostering creativity and culture but also drives tourism, attracts investment, and creates jobs across a wide range of industries. The creative sector can also stimulate learning and new ideas, promote social cohesion, and enhance the overall quality of life, making regions more attractive places to live, work, and visit.

In Taranaki, the sector is broadly represented by Creative Taranaki that was established as part of actions resulting from T2050. However, the sector still requires sufficient resourcing to enable cross region collaboration and capability building, and to develop a Creativity, Arts and Culture strategy. By investing in the creative sector, Taranaki has the opportunity to enhance its cultural vibrancy, generate jobs and build a strong creative economy that supports the arts and creative industries to thrive.

Actions

- Position Taranaki as a Premier Arts & Culture Destination by growing key events, projects and initiatives such as WOMAD, Coastal Arts Trail and the literary arts/a Writers' and Readers' festival, as well as leveraging flagship venues such as the Govett Brewster Art Gallery/Len Lye Centre, Puke Ariki, and the Percy Thomson Gallery, to attract visitors and elevate the region's profile.
- Support the development of smaller regular event offerings that create a vibrant arts and cultural scene.
- Strengthen Creative Taranaki as the central agency for regional arts development. This includes securing additional funding and unlocking further capability to lead across the sector.
- Improve collaboration, communication and coordination across the wider creative sector.
- Develop a coordinated Regional Creative Strategy, with consideration given to growing economic opportunities within the sector.



ENVIRONMENT

► DELIVERY LEAD: Wild for Taranaki members

Context

The environment is at the heart of the region's vibrancy and liveability, underpinning our economic, social, and cultural well-being.

Taranaki is committed to protecting and enhancing its natural landscapes, from the iconic Taranaki Maunga to the coastlines and forests, ensuring a high quality of life for its residents and strengthening the region's appeal as a destination to visit and settle.

By prioritising sustainable environmental practices, Taranaki fosters biodiversity, promotes outdoor recreation, and supports key industries such as tourism, agriculture, and renewable energy. A thriving natural environment contributes to community health, attracts investment, and ensures the region remains resilient in the face of climate change, ultimately creating a dynamic and sustainable future for all who call Taranaki home.

Actions

- Collaborative review and delivery of the Taranaki Biodiversity Strategy.
- Continued investment in restoration activities on Taranaki Maunga.
- Scoping and kick-off of catchment scale restoration projects and creation of biodiversity corridors.
- Plugging data gaps in the coastal and offshore environment to inform decision making.
- Targeted action to protect and restore rare species and ecosystems.
- Create a sustainable business network, providing a forum for sustainability representatives from businesses around Taranaki to network and share ideas about business improvement.
- Support the activity and priorities of existing regional environmental organisations.



Making it happen

Management

Activating and progressing this 2025/26 Action Plan will be a significant undertaking requiring coordination and collaboration across the region.

However, the majority of the priorities and actions within this plan are already funded, resourced, or included in business plans already prepared by councils, Venture Taranaki and Iwi. Additionally, key organisations or agency primarily responsible for delivery of a priority and actions has been noted to create a higher level of ownership, delivery and accountability.

The day-to-day coordination and maintenance of the 2025/26 Action Plan will be led by Venture Taranaki.

Ongoing review

The intention is for this 2025/26 Action Plan to be a living document. This means that annual audits and reviews will be completed, taking stock of progress that has been made against listed actions. This process will also provide an opportunity for priorities or actions to be adjusted or refined based on new or emerging information, with input provided by key regional leaders.

Additionally, a more substantial action plan updated is planned for mid-2026, to align with the Council Long-Term Planning process. Future substantial updates should be completed every three years to align with this cycle.

Governance

It is not considered that a stand-alone steering or governance group is required to provide ongoing oversight of this work. However, the document itself and various reporting commitments provide an opportunity for continued engagement between regional leaders to ensure that the plan reflects the needs and interests of the entire region.

