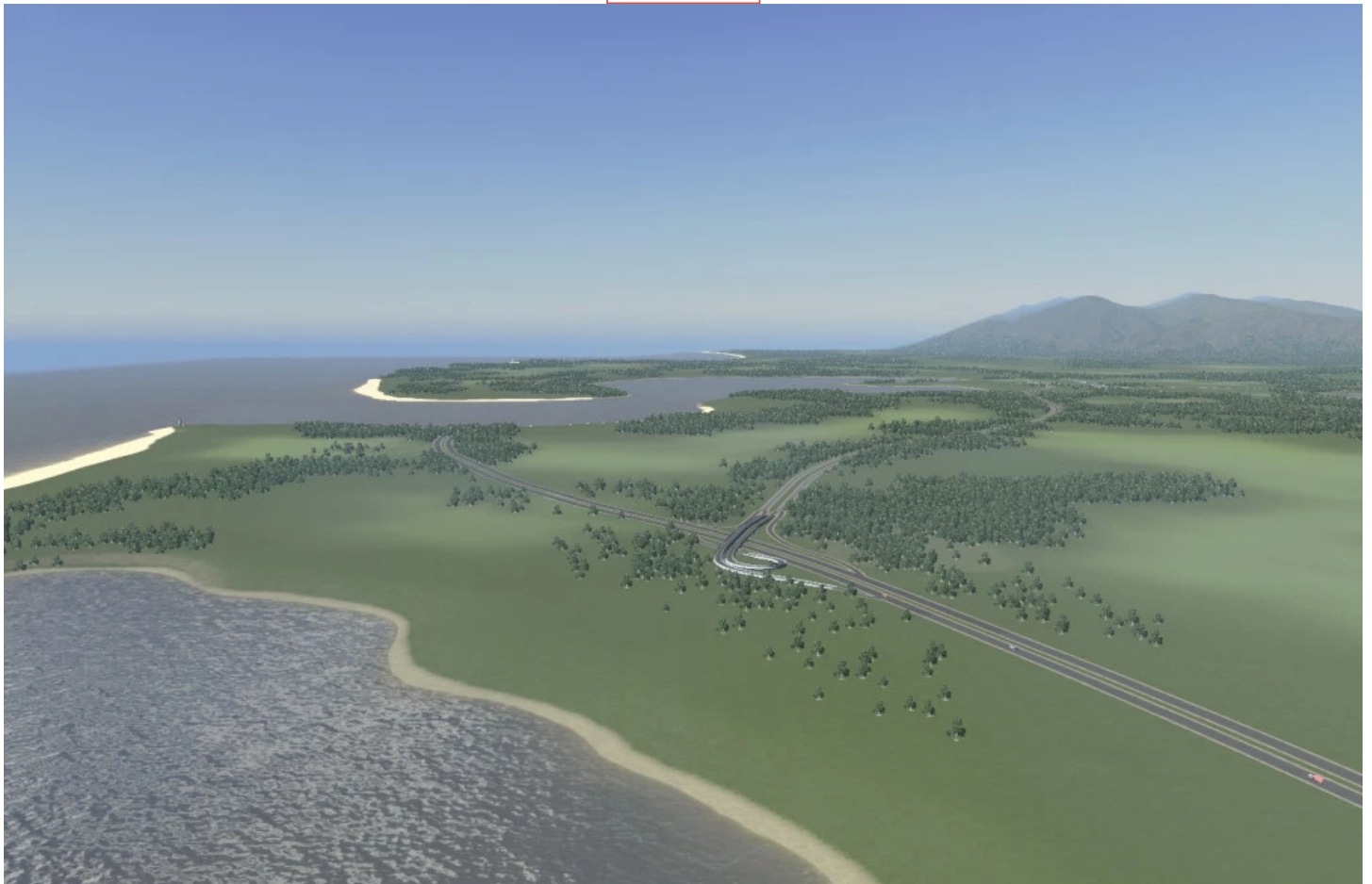


# Talking Southern Auckland

## Conversations and Collaboration with You on The South

☐  
Menu



## Urban Geography: The Ultimate Expression in Inter Regional Spatial Planning, Developments and Behaviours

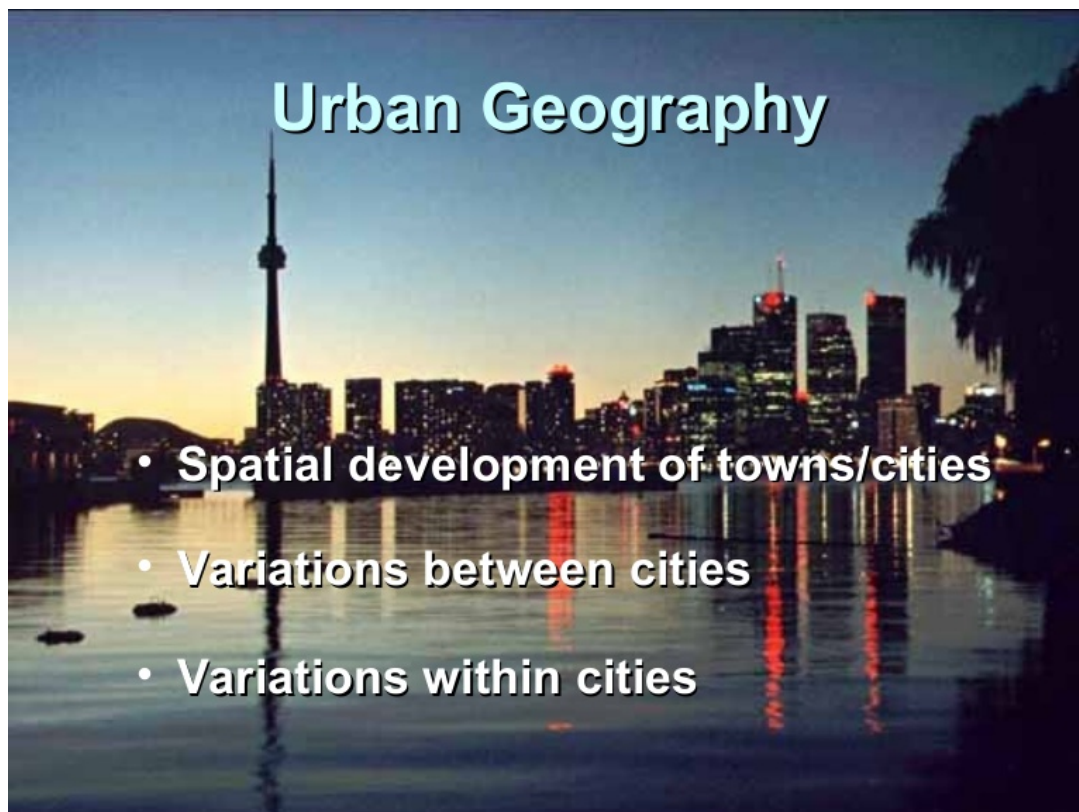
Written by *Ben Ross - Talking Auckland*

### Looking at inter-regional spatial planning

Somewhat interestingly a job advertisement from a Government agency (okay it was NZTA) had me revisiting a previous post I wrote last year on inter-regional spatial planning. The original post can be read here and was used as a guest lecture to the University of Waikato at the time (see: [Guest Lecture: Inter-Regional Planning and Sustainability](https://voakl.net/2017/08/30/guest-lecture-inter-regional-planning-and-sustainability/) (<https://voakl.net/2017/08/30/guest-lecture-inter-regional-planning-and-sustainability/>)).

The post was written in the election campaign and the dying days of the National Government. Since then the Government has changed and the Transport, Housing and Urban Development Minister (THUD) Phil Twyford has changed the course on what is effectively spatial development in an entirely new direction. As a consequence of the change of direction reviewing my Inter-Regional Planning post was always going to be on the cards. However, as I stated in my opening lines a job advertisement from NZTA (was for Behaviour Insights) has me looking at spatial planning from another lens.

The advert was looking for those with skill sets who can find, analyse, build capacity (for the agency) and deliver ideas on both behaviour and how behaviour can be influenced when decisions are being made – in this case transport. My [Urban Geography, Urban Planning, Urban Design and Engineering: We are in a Mess Folks](https://voakl.net/2018/04/23/urban-geography-urban-planning-urban-design-and-engineering-we-are-in-a-mess-folks/) (<https://voakl.net/2018/04/23/urban-geography-urban-planning-urban-design-and-engineering-we-are-in-a-mess-folks/>) critiqued how we approach behaviours within an urban environment and its spatial development. So if we draw the two strands together how we approach Inter-Regional Planning or spatial planning is able to be refined down in what we need to do.



(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2017/02/urban-geography.jpg>).

<https://www.slideshare.net/lwolberg/cities-11-urban-geography-111>  
(<https://www.slideshare.net/lwolberg/cities-11-urban-geography-111>).

## Urban Geography as the ultimate expression in behaviour

I am going to do a brief recap from my [Urban Geography, Urban Planning, Urban Design and Engineering: We are in a Mess Folks](https://voakl.net/2018/04/23/urban-geography-urban-planning-urban-design-and-engineering-we-are-in-a-mess-folks/) (<https://voakl.net/2018/04/23/urban-geography-urban-planning-urban-design-and-engineering-we-are-in-a-mess-folks/>), post on the hierarchy that exists with planning the urban form:



We wouldn't ask a Urban Planner to produce structural engineering on a building, so why is it that we allow Engineering to dictate so many aspects of building our communities? Building places requires a more deft touch than a standards manual may "allow". [#plannersshouldplan](#)

1:52 PM - Apr 20, 2018

16 See flyt's other Tweets

**Thus if we adopt what Flyt and I would approach a City matrix it would go something a bit like this:**

1. **Urban Geography** at the top: First up would be your spatial development, its variations and how we would want the City to be. By its very nature Urban Geography (or Geography as a whole) puts the physical and human geographies (also the main two sub disciplines of Geography) first thus when it comes to spatial developments itself those previous geographies come to the fore. Effectively using the limitations and opportunities presented by the physical and human geographies in a set area how do I want my urban place and environment to evolve. Note I said evolve not build. Build is something as an Urban Geographer I am not overly "fussed with" as I have urban planners and designers who are more nuanced for this kind of stuff.
  1. If this was done in Cities Skylines I take my map and go this is how I want my City to evolve and these are the parameters the physical and human geographies present me. Thus I take broad brush strokes on where I want things roughly taking into account the evolution of the City.
  2. At this level it is the only time I would be dabbling with engineering matters – that is my inter-regional road, road, shipping and air connections. What are my inter-regional transport connections and how will they influence the spatial development and evolution of my City. This is bearing in mind Form rather than Function takes priority so those connections will need to be conscious of place making. Manukau City Centre is a classic example of this with its rich inter-regional connections and its surrounding industrial complexes influencing its Form.
2. **Next up is Urban Planning and macro-level Urban Design.**
  1. With the spatial development road map laid out it now comes to the **Planners** to begin stage 1 of the execution – the placement of the zones and with urban designers mapping out the placement of the civic infrastructure (parks). Typically for a City to get going and capitalise on the inter-regional transport connections you start with industry zoning then residential and finally commercial. As a side note this is why South Auckland is functioning well in its continued urban evolution and West Auckland is not. This is because the South built itself around industry (that includes farming) followed by residential to service that industry then the commercial to service both. West Auckland seems to be doing the reverse by doing the commercial first (Westgate) then the residential (Hobsonville Point) and then industry as an afterthought – and subsequently I wonder why State Highway 16 is bunged each day.... Planners along with the Engineers will also need to map out the bulk infrastructure (water, waste-water) and storm water. Planners will also need to prepare the intra-city transport routes and hubs for the engineers to build as well. In Auckland and Cities Skylines this would be the Unitary Plan.
  2. **Urban Design:** Urban Design comes in at this stage of the game as place making starts right away once the zones and the infrastructure mapped out. You are thinking why urban design now when the roads and pipes are not down yet. Remember how I said form over function? I am looking at place making over just movement and yes this also includes place making with industry. This is because if you don't start your place making straight away even your industrial complexes end up in a mess making it harder for transport to serve them well. Also given developments do tend to cluster around transport routes and hubs (passenger and freight) urban design also becomes paramount if we are to support the spatial development and urban evolution of the City. In Cities Skylines this is parks and transport hub placements (note: give game mechanics I will need basic (main) intra



city road and rail down first to allow placements of parks and transport hubs, a city would be similar to this aspect).

3. **Engineering:** I have the maps, I have the zones, I have some basic road and rail, I have parks and I have transport hubs. Now to back this all up and this is where **engineering** comes in. To build the arteries and veins that will support the spatial development of the City and its constant evolution. Please note: Engineers will always be involved with geo-technical matters right through the process as things like peat soils and hills will (in this instance) give physical geography limitations to what we can develop there. Notice how I said build and not design the City and its support mechanisms – this is constant with what Flyt said and I strongly believe in. In Cities Skylines this is the pipe and plant build and wider road placements (the stuff that frustrates me and is time-consuming the most).

And that is the matrix I would use when it comes to the spatial development and evolution of our urban areas

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This is how as an Urban Geographer I see the discipline of Urban Geography forming the ultimate expression on behaviour and influencing behaviour of both the urban form AND those who reside, work or visit it.



([https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2018/04/20180401155601\\_1.jpg](https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2018/04/20180401155601_1.jpg)).

Urban Geography, Urban Planning, Urban Design and Engineering – all in action in Cities Skylines

Looking at Urban Geography and Inter Regional Spatial Planning bearing in mind the changed Environment owing to the Labour-led Government in power instead of National

## Urban Geography at Work: Inter-Regional Planning and Sustainability



## Relief value for Auckland, Lifeline for the Provinces

Since the coming to power of the Labour, New Zealand First and Greens Government the direction in which transport, housing and urban development is to take will change significantly to the hands-off, roads first and anti urban National Government that preceded it. For starters we have a Transport, Housing and Urban Development Minister – Phil Twyford. Second, the Minister of THUD – Phil Twyford has issued very clear directions on where transport, housing and urban development is to head.

While we await the first half of the Urban Geography ledger – the Housing Commission Urban Development Authority (some 17 months away) Minister Twyford is cracking on with the second half of that ledger – the Government Policy Statement on transport (the Auckland Transport Alignment Program is out today). You can read up on the GPS here: [Government Releases Draft Government Policy Statement for Consultation \(Due May 2\)](https://voakl.net/2018/04/04/government-releases-draft-government-policy-statement-for-consultation-due-may-2/).  
(<https://voakl.net/2018/04/04/government-releases-draft-government-policy-statement-for-consultation-due-may-2/>). The GPS makes a massive play on using the transport system to build communities thus influence behaviours of both us and the urban form as highlighted below:



(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2018/04/2018-gps-labour-strategic-priorities.jpg>)

The 2018-2021 Government Policy Statement. Source: NZ Government via Greater Auckland

## Section 2.6

## Transitional rail funding

<sup>160</sup> As described in the discussion of the GPS priorities and objectives, GPS 2018 supports an increased focus on public transport and reducing the reliance on single occupant vehicles. Rail has an important role to play in this. The second stage GPS will consider the funding of rail further, and will be informed by the current review of rail.

<sup>161</sup> In the meantime, GPS 2018 can enable some beneficial passenger rail projects to progress. GPS 2018 includes a transitional rail activity class to provide scope for funding key rail projects that cannot wait for the rail review and second stage GPS.

<sup>162</sup> While GPS 2018 makes provision for rail funding, the scope of this funding is very tight. GPS 2018 supports investment in:

- improving urban rail services for passengers accessing housing, major employment areas and major metropolitan areas, where demand is outstripping capacity, to improve reliability or to reduce conflict between freight and passenger trains
- existing and new interregional commuter rail services, including the implementation of trial interregional rail commuter services to support housing and employment opportunities.

(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2018/04/gps-2018-mk2-1.png>)

Transitional Rail Plan Source: New Zealand Government

**The second-stage GPS** will move us further towards transport creating a New Zealand where people and businesses can thrive by:

- reflecting transport's role in the urban development agenda
- developing local and central government agreements on transport's role in the future development of metro areas such as Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch including consideration of transport's role as a place-maker and on future rapid transit options
- considering all modes when providing the best access solution, which will include investigating funding for alternative transport modes, such as rail and coastal shipping.

(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2018/04/gps-2018-mk2.png>)

Second Stage GPS that includes more on rail and also Coastal Shipping Source: New Zealand Government

*Theme: Integrating land use and transport planning and delivery*

162. Integrating land use and transport planning and delivery is an important element in creating a transport network that benefits the wider community.

Transport is an enabler, connector and shaper of urban areas.

163. Land use planning (including planning new and increased residential or commercial development, improved health or education infrastructure or regional development) has a significant impact on transport policy, infrastructure and services provision, and vice versa. Once development has happened, its impacts on transport are long term. Changes in land use can affect the demand for travel, creating both pressures and opportunities for investment in transport infrastructure and services, or for demand management. Likewise, changes in transport can affect land use.

164. It is essential that land use and transport planning and delivery are coordinated and integrated. This is largely a role for local and central government, supported by funding under GPS 2018.

165. Central government has a role in improving the visibility of planning and infrastructure intentions, facilitating engagement and enabling joint funding and decision-making.

(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2018/04/gps-2018-integrated-planning.png>)

integrated-planning.png)

Integrated Land use/Transport Planning in the GPS. Source: NZ Government

### Inviting public spaces

71. Creating spaces within the streetscape that are attractive and safe for people to sit, gather and walk and cycle supports the objectives of creating a safer and more accessible network, as well as key outcomes around improving health and well-being.

72. Well designed, attractive public spaces provide residents with places to gather, and attract people to frequent local businesses, connect with their neighbours and partake in recreational and cultural activities.

73. GPS 2018 will support investments that make streets more inviting places for people. This should encourage more housing development in these areas and more city living.

Source: **Draft-GPS**

(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2018/04/gps-2018-public-spaces.png>)

Using Transport to create public spaces. Source: GPS via NZ Government

NZTA are going to have their work cut out for them with integrated land use/transport planning, and using transport to create public spaces but I have faith our national transport agency is more than up to the task in starting this work and then partnering up with the eventual UDA and its satellites in 17 months time. I also wrote on how the GPS is in fact more than just transport it is a community builder: The Government Policy Statement: More Than Transport It Is Also a Community Builder (<https://voakl.net/2018/04/05/the-government-policy-statement-more-than-transport-it-is-also-a-community-builder/>). As soon as we start using transport as a community builder we are focusing on the form (place making) rather than function (all about the flow) thus we are beginning to dabble in Urban Geography. Urban Geography being that of spatial development of towns and cities, their variation between those cities and within those cities. You are effectively now using Urban Geography to influence behaviour.

Going out to inter-regional spatial planning levels we look at how inter-regional transport links become the key expression in influencing spatial development behaviours (all are still considered under the parent of Urban Geography). Again:

**Urban Geography** at the top: First up would be your spatial development, its variations and how we would want the City to be. By its very nature Urban Geography (or Geography as a whole) puts the physical and human geographies (also the main two sub disciplines of Geography) first thus when it comes to spatial developments itself those previous geographies come to the fore. Effectively using the limitations and opportunities presented by the physical and human geographies in a set area how do I want my urban place and environment to evolve. Note I said evolve not build. Build is something as an Urban Geographer I am not overly "fussed with" as I have urban planners and designers who are more nuanced for this kind of stuff.

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This slideshow requires JavaScript.



Remember we are trying to influence:

Access is all about: provides increased access to economic and social opportunities, enables transport choice and is resilient.

Primarily:

- *addressing projected declines in access to jobs and education, particularly for people living in the west and the south*
- *accelerating the development of Auckland's rapid transit network, with a particular focus on routes between the city and the airport, to unlock housing and urban development opportunities*
- *developing transport connections that are crucial for linking production points with key distribution points (including routes important for exports, and those intra-regional routes critical for getting local goods to market)*

.....

Source: GPS 2018-2021

I am going to recap on the lecture I gave last year on inter-regional planning. Y

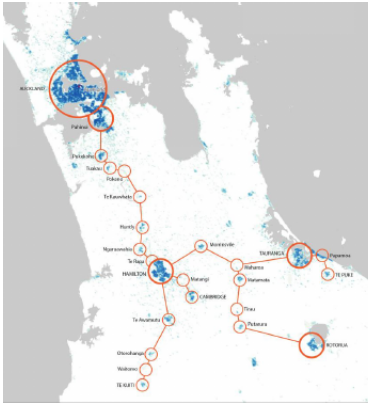
The main points of the lecture (data given is as of August 2017):

- Cities and provinces since the 1990's have been in competition
- Rapid urbanisation and globalisation has seen the provinces hollowed out when industry has moved to Auckland
- Auckland houses 37% of GDP and 34% of the population while growing at 800 new residents a week, this is unsustainable
- Infrastructure both in terms of transport and water are not coping
- Record suicide rate of 606 for the year in part will have come from Provincial centres being hollowed out and no real chances of employment available
- Inter-Regional Planning connects up the smaller Centres with the bigger Centres spreading the population and employment load. Acts as control rods for Auckland
- Tourism potential

The lecture slides can be seen below:

## Inter-Regional Planning Uniting both Urban and Provincial Centres

Looking at how to solve pressures and problems in  
Urban and Provincial Centres while linking to  
Sustainability and Planning



Source: Greater Auckland

Ben Ross. 2017. Transport Pressures and  
Problems in Auckland

1

Ben Ross. 2017  
<http://voakl.net>  
Twitter: [@BenRoss\\_AKL](https://twitter.com/BenRoss_AKL)  
Facebook: [@BenRossAKL](https://www.facebook.com/TalkingAuckland)

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1 of 25

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[Uni lecture presentation mk3 \(https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2017/08/uni-lecture-presentation-mk3.pdf\)](https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2017/08/uni-lecture-presentation-mk3.pdf)

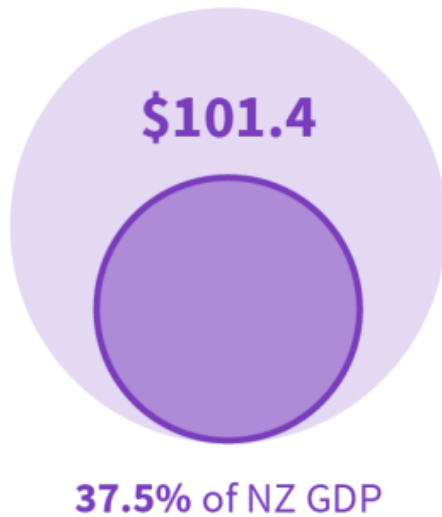
Updated data:

- Suicides for 2017: unknown as full year figures not out
- Road Death Toll 2017: 380 or similar levels to 2008 after a steadily increasing toll since 2013
- Cost to NZ Economy from road death and injuries: \$4 billion/year
- Auckland Economy now worth over \$100 billion/year with the nearest region after that pulling in \$36b/year (Source: Stats NZ)

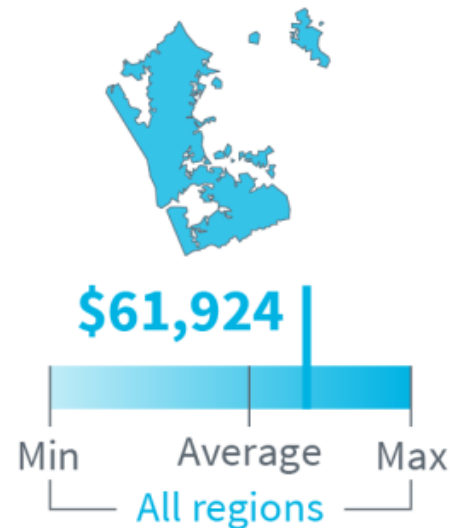
# Auckland

## Regional GDP, 2017

### GDP value, (billion)



### GDP per capita



### Change in GDP, 2012–17



[www.stats.govt.nz/regionalgdp](http://www.stats.govt.nz/regionalgdp)

**Note:** Figures may not sum to totals due to rounding. **Source:** Stats NZ

**Stats** **NZ**  
Tatauranga Aotearoa

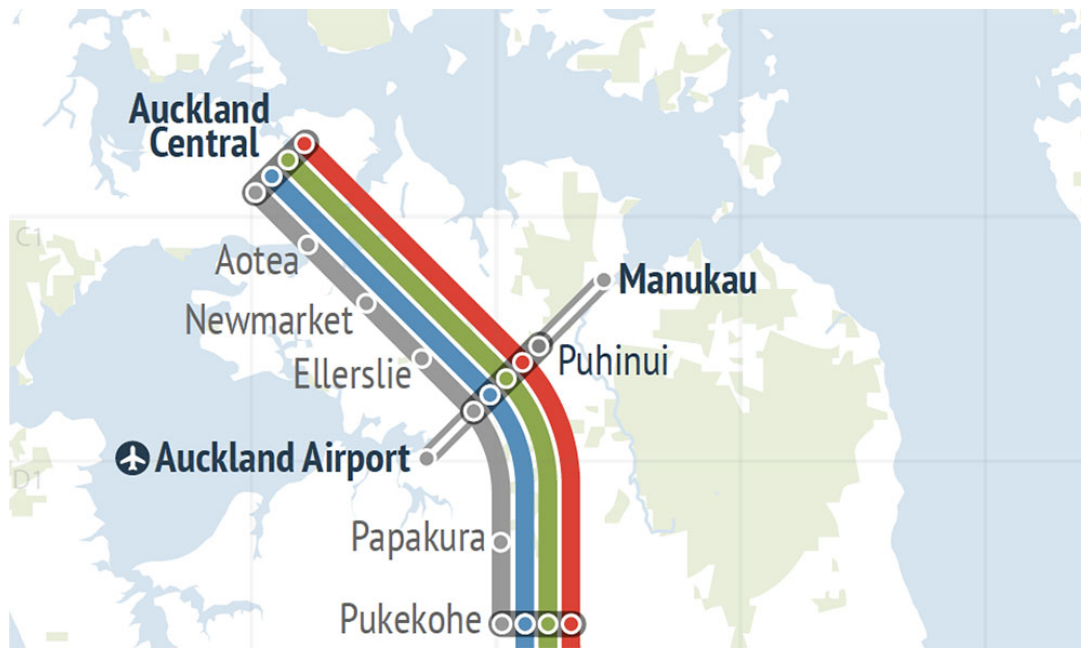
(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2018/03/regional-gross-domestic-product-year-ended-march-2017-auckland.png>).

Auckland's regional economy as of 2017.  
Source: Stats NZ

Using Urban Geography, inter-regional spatial planning and inter-regional transport planning to influence behaviours”



On March 31 Minister Twyford announced that Regional Rapid Rail, and the Southern Airport Line will start their builds this year (see: [Regional Rapid Rail and The Southern Airport Line a \(virtual\) GO!](https://voakl.net/2018/04/01/regional-rapid-rail-and-the-southern-airport-line-a-virtual-go/) (<https://voakl.net/2018/04/01/regional-rapid-rail-and-the-southern-airport-line-a-virtual-go/>)). Regional Rapid Rail and the Southern Airport Line would be the two biggest influences in spatial development and behaviour without resorting to blunt force legislation in the Parliament. Regional Rapid Rail links up Auckland, Hamilton and Tauranga with upper North Island provincial centres while the Southern Airport Line (Botany to Airport via Manukau and Puhinui Rapid Transit) links Auckland and the upper North Island to the Airport.



(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2018/04/regional-rapid-rail-puhinui.jpg>).

Regional Rapid Rail and the Southern Airport Line

Source: Greater Auckland

I go further into RRR below:

## Regional Rapid Rail, Inter-Regional Planning, and a Planning Ministry. Transforming and Unlocking Places

Written by *[Ben Ross – Talking Auckland](#)*

### Regional Rapid Rail opens up opportunities

Greater Auckland's Regional Rapid Rail has certainly opened the discussion on rebuilding the regional rail network across the upper North Island.

From Greater Auckland:

### Introducing Regional Rapid Rail

This post gives you a brief summary of our staged proposal to introduce higher speed inter-city rail to the Upper North Island. The full plan and the detail behind it can be seen in [Regional Rapid Rail Report \(https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B9EZXXyt8uaHhwTWVoRGxZM2c\)](https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B9EZXXyt8uaHhwTWVoRGxZM2c) (8mb). This document looks amazing thanks to the design genius of Cornelius from Frontier for the design – who is also behind our website and the CFN 2.0 Report. You can also see a more detailed version of the maps for [Stage 1 \(https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B9EZXXyt8uaGxxV3lTTkc2X28\)](https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B9EZXXyt8uaGxxV3lTTkc2X28), [Stage 2, \(https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B9EZXXyt8uQVhrWXRbclBDVGM\)](https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B9EZXXyt8uQVhrWXRbclBDVGM) and [Stage 3. \(https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B9EZXXyt8ucjlDQm1ha1lmTTA\)](https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B9EZXXyt8ucjlDQm1ha1lmTTA) Feel free to download, print, distribute, draw on, set alight, decorate your room, or re-blog, just remember to cite!

## Why Regional Rapid Rail?

The “Golden Triangle” of Auckland, Waikato and the Bay of Plenty now make up over 50% of New Zealand’s population and are expected to account for over 70% of New Zealand’s growth in the future. If we fail to provide the necessary infrastructure, we will miss out on many of the benefits from this coming growth.

We need to provide a step change in intercity transit to leverage this growth proactively, rather than reactively waiting for it to congest the Waikato Expressway and Auckland’s Southern Motorway. With the Waikato Expressway almost complete, what is missing is the maximisation of the complementary rail corridors.

We have the opportunity to create a well-planned, integrated Upper North Island transport system– one that is able to deliver strong economic and social outcomes, including regional development, not just for the area but for New Zealand as a whole.

Regional Rapid Rail will revitalise the existing rail network using modern technology tilting trains travelling up to 160km/h on upgraded tracks. This will allow for much faster trains, providing quick and reliable journeys that are faster than driving and skip the traffic completely. This revitalised network will stitch together the economy of Auckland, Hamilton and Tauranga, and extend the benefits of growth and development of the main centres to their nearby towns and villages. This will provide fast and reliable travel options to regular commuters, business travellers, shoppers, students, local visitors and international tourists alike.

However, Regional Rapid Rail isn’t just a scheme for commuter trains on the trunk line. It is an integrated regional economic development plan for the Upper North Island, based on fast and regular intercity train connections between the cities and towns of Auckland, the Waikato and the Bay of Plenty.

The proposal has four pillars for success:

- Using the right technology to achieve speed and performance affordably
- Leveraging existing infrastructure
- Providing a frequent, reliable and regular service for all trip types
- Integration with land use and development plans

## Strategic Goals

The specific objectives of Regional Rapid Rail are to:

1. **Connect major employment and population centres**, including central business districts, growing metropolitan areas, employment areas and satellite towns in the Upper North Island.

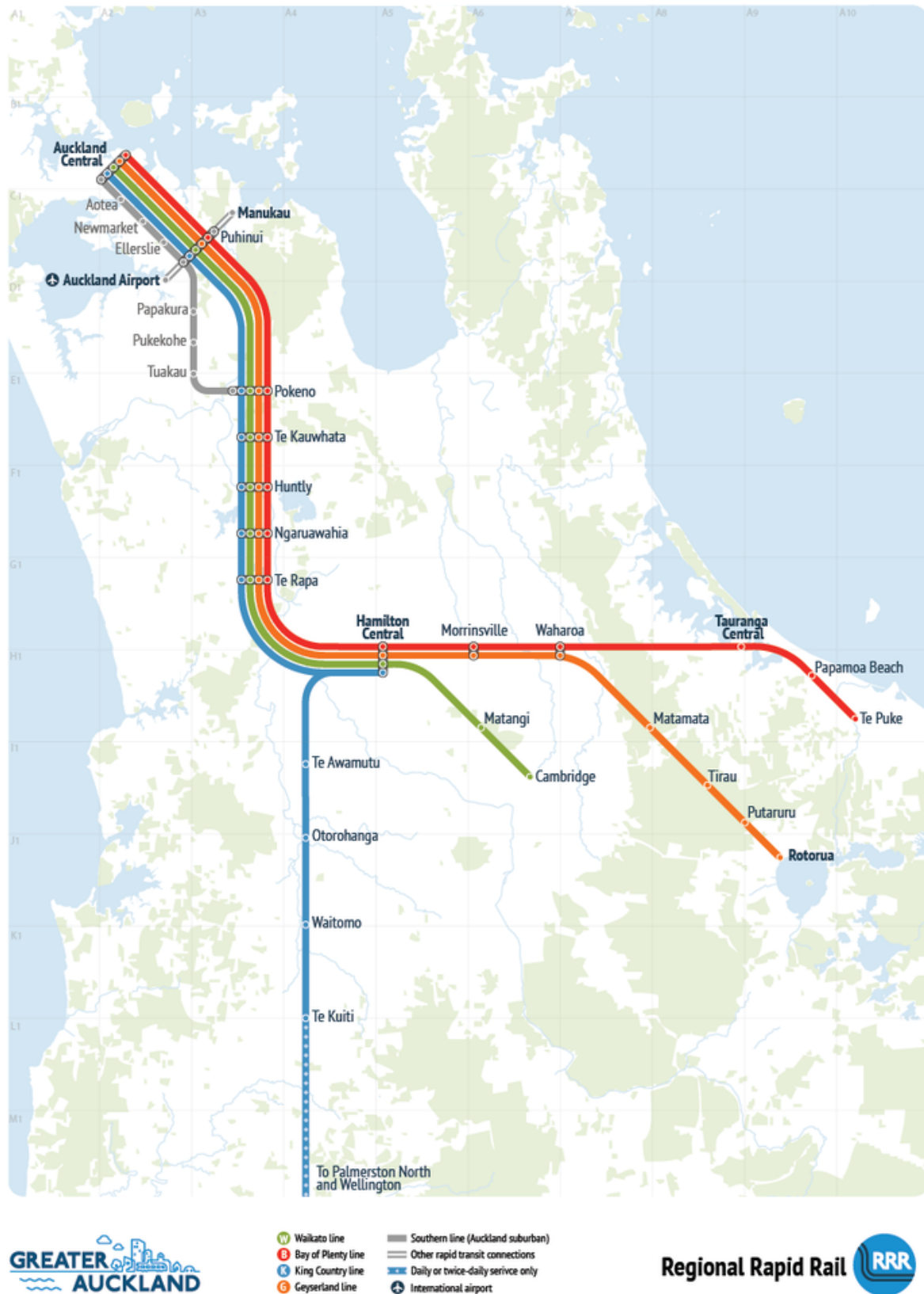
2. ***Deliver a fast and competitive rail service*** with a target travel time of 90 minutes from Hamilton to Auckland and under 2 ½ hours from Tauranga to Auckland. The emphasis is on quality of time and maintaining consistent and reliable speeds.
3. ***Provide a regular and frequent rail service***, scheduled to suit a range of travel times and trip purposes, serving commuters, tourists, students and residents alike.
4. ***Make complementary improvements to the rail freight network***. All upgrades should, at the least, not disturb KiwiRail's ability to move freight now or in the future. Passenger rail network upgrades should also seek complementary improvements that also enhance the efficiency and capacity of the Kiwirail rail freight network.
5. ***Assist the creation of affordable housing supply*** that is well connected by congestion-free transit. Use transit focused residential development to catalyse the local economies of northern Waikato towns, which face potential economic decline by being bypassed by the new Waikato Expressway.
6. ***Link regional transportation to well-planned communities with good urban outcomes***. This should not just be a rapid train network but the means to create vibrant, livable towns and cities that are economically and socially sustainable.
7. ***Integrate directly with local public transport, walking and cycling networks***, such as the Congestion Free Network 2.0, to maximise coverage and usefulness.
8. ***Deliver environmental benefits*** by limiting the growth of long range traffic and reducing pollution and CO2 emissions, assisting New Zealand to meet its commitments under the Paris Agreement.
9. ***Reduce road traffic injury and deaths***, to assist New Zealand in reaching Vision Zero.
10. ***Ensure value for money for taxpayer investment*** by optimising investment in infrastructure where it is most effective, regardless of mode.

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Source: <https://www.greaterauckland.org.nz/2017/08/17/introducing-regional-rapid-rail/>  
 (<https://www.greaterauckland.org.nz/2017/08/17/introducing-regional-rapid-rail/>).

Here is the diagram on where the Regional Rapid Rail would go:

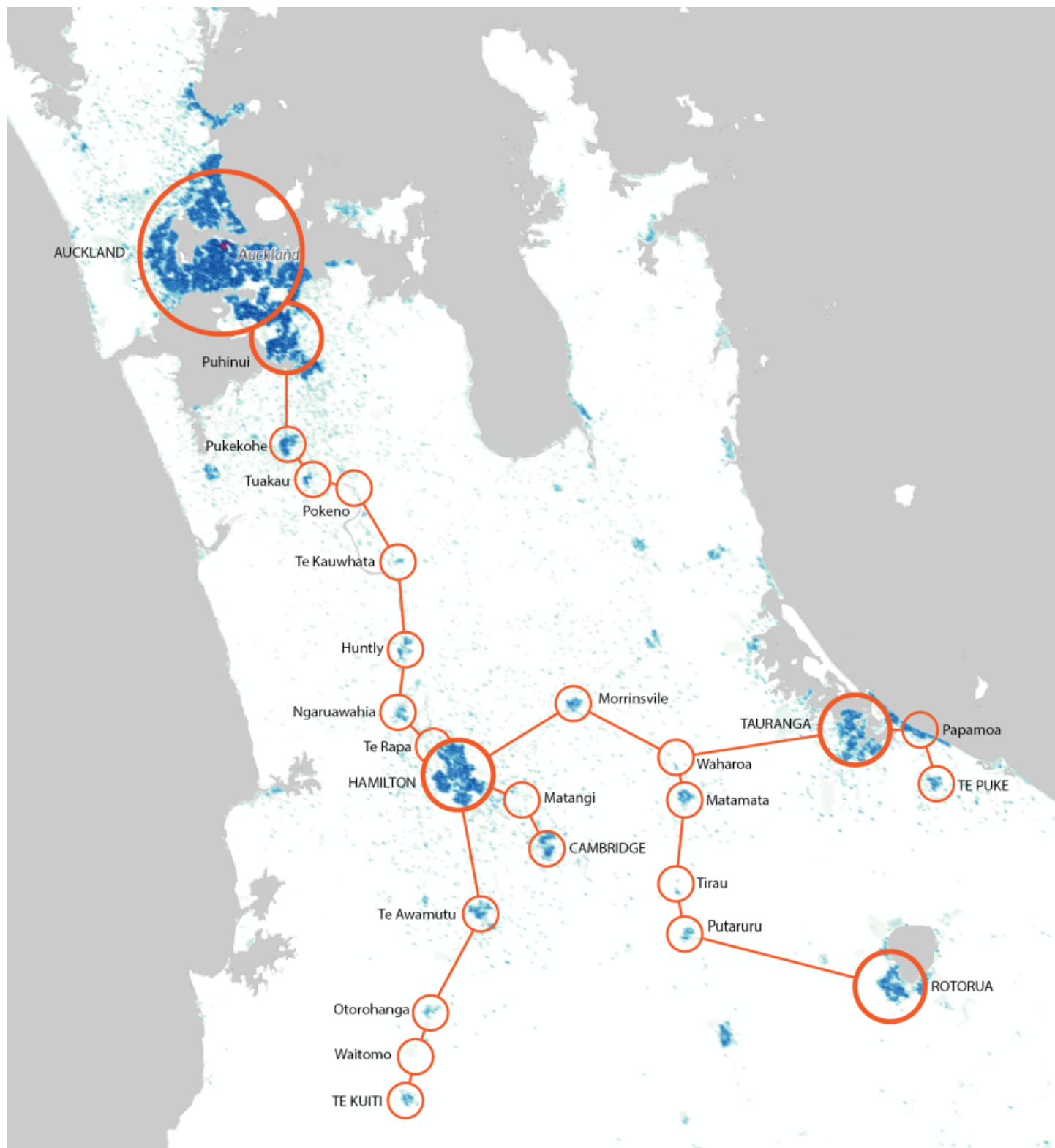




(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2017/08/rapid-regional-rail.png>)

Rapid Regional Rail Source: Greater Auckland

This is how it looks when population is taken into account:



(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2017/08/network-over-population-density-01.png>).

Regional Rail and population. Source: Greater Auckland

Travel times:

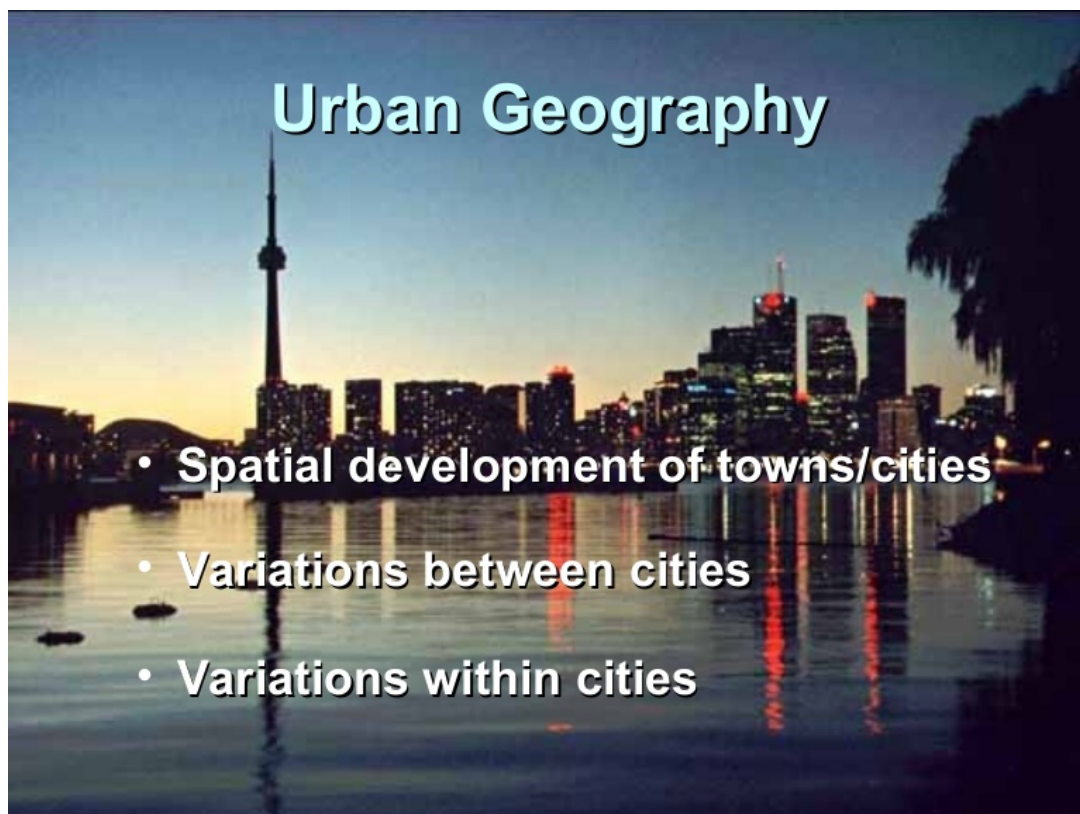
- **Auckland to Hamilton**
  - 90 minutes with stage two
  - 70 minutes with stage three
- **Auckland to Tauranga**
  - 2:30 hours with stage two
  - 2 hours with stage three
- **Auckland to Papakura with the EMUs**
  - 53 minutes pre City Rail Link

- 43 minutes post City Rail Line
- **Auckland to Hamilton by car**
  - 90 minutes
  - 60 minutes from Papakura
  - 70 minutes from Manukau

Note: Auckland = Britomart Station or Hobson Street On-ramp

It should also be noted the car travel times will get longer as population and traffic increases on the Southern Motorway and Waikato Expressway.

I am not here to go over Greater Auckland's time and dollar figures as they have done that extensively over at their place. Here I am going to look at the Urban Geography of the Regional Rapid Rail and how it promotes connectivity across the upper North Island.



(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2017/02/urban-geography.jpg>).

<https://www.slideshare.net/lwolberg/cities-11-urban-geography-111> (<https://www.slideshare.net/lwolberg/cities-11-urban-geography-111>).

## The Urban Geography of the Regional Rapid Rail and how it promotes connectivity across the upper North Island

Over the years I have blogged and presented materials on inter-regional planning (and how authorities don't quite get it). The central themes around this inter-regional planning are the following:

1. Most urban growth both residential and industrial will be in Southern Auckland
2. Industry is decamping from the Southdown-Onehunga complex and moving into Southern Auckland as land use competition with residential and commercial heats up on the Auckland Isthmus



3. Heavy industry seeks out lower land values with good connections and little land-use competition as mentioned above
4. Population is spilling out of Southern Auckland and like industry will see provincial places in the northern Waikato
5. State Highways 1, 2 27 and 29 form the road spines while the North Island Main Trunk Line and the East Coast Main Trunk Line form the rail spines between Auckland, Hamilton and Tauranga
6. The Golden Triangle forms 50% of the national population and 50-60%% of national GDP
7. Role of Manukau City Centre into the future

As Auckland continues to boom satellite towns like Pokeno, Huntly and Morrinsville will reestablish themselves especially as the other major centres (Hamilton and Tauranga) continue to become major satellites to Auckland. The good thing is those places are on both established road and rail links making their connectivity back to Auckland rather straight forward. Cue the Regional Rapid Rail concept linking the smaller and larger satellites back up to Auckland.

## Population load spreading – saving the Provinces and Auckland at the same time

Rapid urbanisation has seen provincial centres without decent industry hollow out while the main urban centres continue boom and expand. This is not healthy for either and can create imbalances both economic and social that impair the economy. Whether industry moves to the provincial centres or not population load spreading (that is Auckland loses some of its population to its Satellites in the south) can act as a control rod to the reactors that are our major urban centres. As noted it above Auckland to Hamilton would be 70 minutes so being in a provincial satellite between Pokeno to Te Rapa connected to the Regional Rapid Rail allows for some Aucklanders to move while still having good connectivity with their employment back in the City. If Manukau City Centre and its big industrial complexes step up then a commute from Huntly to Puhinui or Manukau becomes even shorter.

If a smaller satellite is not for you then Hamilton or even Tauranga is always available for you to live while being connected back to Auckland via the rail system.

So yes Regional Rapid Rail connecting up both the main urban centres and the provincial satellites can give pressure relief to Auckland through population spreading.

## Employment and Industry spreading

Like with population rapid urbanisation consolidated heavy industry away from small towns and into the big urban centres gutting those smaller towns. Projects like the Waikato Expressway will bypass and further harm these towns (like Huntly) so enter rail to turn things around.

Remember:

- *Assist the creation of affordable housing supply* that is well-connected by congestion-free transit. Use transit focused residential development to catalyse the local economies of northern Waikato towns, which face potential economic decline by being bypassed by the new Waikato Expressway.

....

Source: Greater Auckland

Heavy industry as Auckland continues to expand will seek out places where land-use competition is not intense. Smaller provincial centres connected up by decent passenger and freight rail would be in the box seat to receive these industries as they move around. But it is not only big industry on the move. As the population load spread ramps up niche industries and commerce will follow and set themselves up in the provincial centres connected by Regional Rapid Rail. This has two positive consequences:

1. Smaller urban centres increase their local employment base
2. Diversified employment base better protects the smaller centres from the fluctuations of the economy

Niche industries can include tourism which is next up.

## Tourism

Two hours to Tauranga by train. I will certainly take that on a Friday evening returning to Auckland late Sunday or early Monday when taking a weekend away from Auckland compared to the two and a half hour drive by car I will have to do next month by car. **Play the cards right and you could have a premium service going down on Friday and returning Sunday that serves food and well booze for a slightly higher fare. This would tap into the large tourism potential Tauranga offers but the smaller Centres connected by Regional Rapid Rail need not miss out. Rotorua, Cambridge, Waitomo and even Huntly should be able to tap into niche tourism offerings of various sizes that the rail system would allow.**

Again diversifying your employment base gives you as a smaller centre better protections from the swings of the economy.

## Productivity and environmental impacts – transforming and unlocking places!

Heavy Rail is the most efficient form of moving people and goods over long distances compared to road travel. Whether it be lower emissions, able to do work on your laptop, relax on the trip or simply beat congestion on the Southern Motorway productivity and (lesser) environmental impacts are winners from Regional Rapid Rail. Of course lowering the road toll (which costs the economy dearly) is another outcome of providing rail alternatives whether freight or passenger.

A rail corridor also has less environmental severance than a four lane highway does as well as less scaring. So not only does rail promote productivity and encourage lower emissions while travelling, rail also is less visually destructive to the rural environment than a four lane highway.

But the impact that might not be realised as quickly is the transformation and unlocking of potential for the Centres connected to Regional Rapid Rail network.

Being able to connect up to the large residential, employment and industrial base in Southern Auckland (let alone the rest of Auckland) opens up both the larger and smaller urban centres connected to the Regional Rapid Rail Network to opportunities not currently available. No matter what niche a provincial Centre takes up being able to be connected to a large population, employment and/or industrial base would allow those Centres to unlock their full potential and transform themselves through:

- *Linking regional transportation to well-planned communities with good urban outcomes.* This should not just be a rapid train network but the means to create vibrant, livable towns and cities that are economically and socially sustainable.

....

Source: Greater Auckland

Vibrant places are productive and environmentally positive places.

[Remember the GPS]:

### *Inviting public spaces*

*71. Creating spaces within the streetscape that are attractive and safe for people to sit, gather and walk and cycle supports the objectives of creating a safer and more accessible network, as well as key outcomes around improving health and well-being.*

*72. Well designed, attractive public spaces provide residents with places to gather, and attract people to frequent local businesses, connect with their neighbours and partake in recreational and cultural activities.*

*73. GPS 2018 will support investments that make streets more inviting places for people. This should encourage more housing development in these areas and more city living.*

Source: **Draft-GPS**

(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2018/04/gps-2018-public-spaces.png>)

Using Transport to create public spaces. Source: GPS via NZ Government

### *Theme: Integrating land use and transport planning and delivery*

*162. Integrating land use and transport planning and delivery is an important element in creating a transport network that benefits the wider community.*

*Transport is an enabler, connector and shaper of urban areas.*

*163. Land use planning (including planning new and increased residential or commercial development, improved health or education infrastructure or regional development) has a significant impact on transport policy, infrastructure and services provision, and vice versa. Once development has happened, its impacts on transport are long term. Changes in land use can affect the demand for travel, creating both pressures and opportunities for investment in transport infrastructure and services, or for demand management. Likewise, changes in transport can affect land use.*

*164. It is essential that land use and transport planning and delivery are coordinated and integrated. This is largely a role for local and central government, supported by funding under GPS 2018.*

*165. Central government has a role in improving the visibility of planning and infrastructure intentions, facilitating engagement and enabling joint funding and decision-making.*

(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2018/04/gps-2018-integrated-land-use-transport-planning.png>)

integrated-land-use-transport-planning.png)

Integrated Land use/Transport Planning in the GPS. Source: NZ Government



(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2017/06/thid-main-in-action.jpg>).

Third Main in Action at Otahuhu-Middlemore Source: Kiwi Rail

## The Southern Airport Line, Puhinui Station and Auckland International Airport

Auckland International Airport is the gateway to the world in terms of air travel. Currently the only way to get there is to drive or catch a regional link flight which are not cheap at the best of days. Enter The Southern Airport Line and Puhinui Station.

The Southern Airport Line is a rapid transit link (most likely light rail) from Manukau to the Airport via Puhinui Station that connects up with both the commuter rail/bus services and the Regional Rapid Rail lines. This means you could catch a train from the Waikato or Tauranga up to Puhinui Station, transfer to the Southern Airport Line at Puhinui and continue on a second train to the Airport without the hassle of driving or arranging van shuttles (subsequently risking fouling of any of the State Highways on the way to the Airport). Like wise you or tourists can do the same in return by catching the Southern Airport Line to Puhinui then catching a regional rail service down to your destination without having to worry about shuttle vans and rentals (until you get to your destination if so inclined). A good option especially if coming off a long flight.

Of course this would mean Puhinui Station would need to double in size to four platforms while both the Third and Fourth Mains would also need to be built to facilitate the high volume of freight and passenger traffic in the area.





(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2017/05/puhinui-base-map-annotated-3.jpg>)

Puhinui Interchange and Manukau

The good news is The Southern Airport Line is already committed to and should be open by 2020. The Third Main from Westfield to Papakura is also committed to while the Fourth Main from Otahuhu to Wiri is being lobbied on to make it happen.

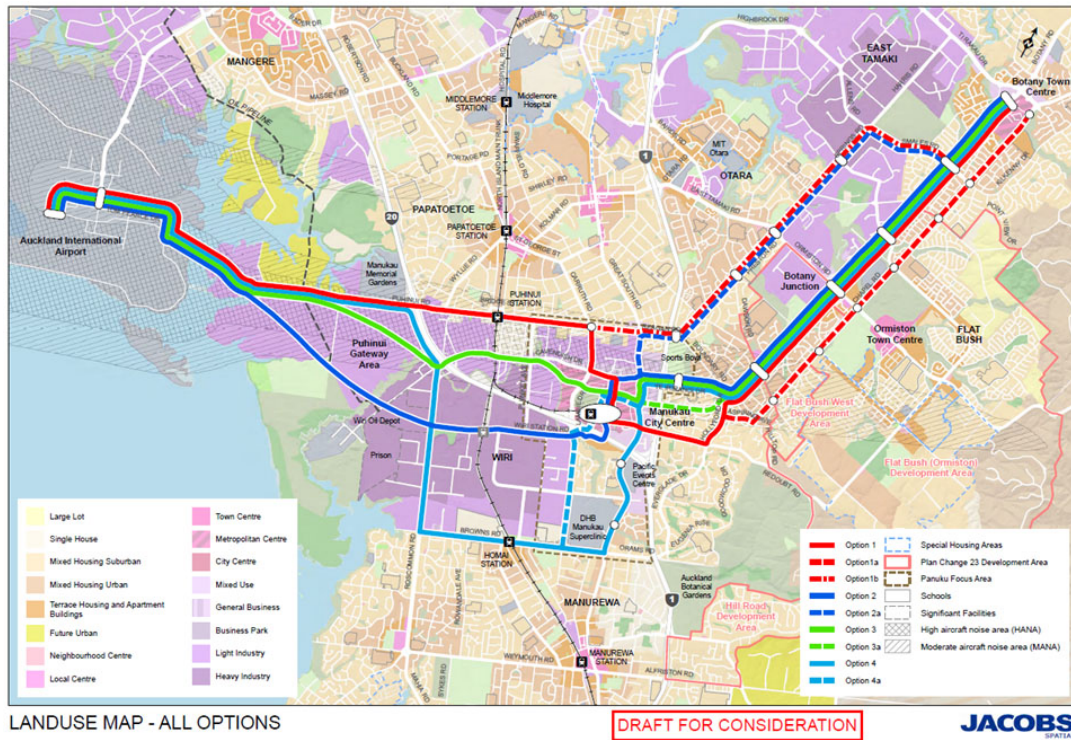


(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2017/05/puhinui-base-map-annotated-2.jpg>)

Puhinui Interchange with the tracks

Regional Rapid Rail and The Southern Airport Line: seamless travel to and from the Airport no matter where you are in the upper North Island.





(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2016/10/botany-line-at-version.jpg>)

AT's proposals for the Botany Line to the Airport Source: Auckland Transport

Speaking of The Southern Airport Line

## Regional Rail, The Southern Airport Line and Manukau City Centre

This next bit of urban geography doesn't immediately stand out but it is a crucial one. This one links to the RRR's first principle of:

- **Connect major employment and population centres**, including central business districts, growing metropolitan areas, employment areas and satellite towns in the Upper North Island.

.....

Source: Greater Auckland

Major employment centre: Manukau City Centre and its industrial complexes that generation 20% of Auckland's GDP or 7.4% of national GDP (the main City Centre also generates the same as a comparison)

Major population centre: All of Southern Auckland as it currently houses 38% of Auckland's population and due to hit 45% in 2040

Benefit: Both connected by the rail line and State Highway One into the Waikato and Bay of Plenty

## 2.0 CONTEXT

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Manukau is Auckland's main industrial hub, with a metropolitan centre catering to the south Auckland market of almost half a million residents. In 2015 Manukau contributed \$16 billion to the economy or about 20 per cent of Auckland's GDP.

Although declining in importance, manufacturing remains Manukau's largest industry sector, with transport, postal and warehousing; wholesale trade; and healthcare and social assistance sectors emerging in recent years. Its large metropolitan centre continues to serve these industries and the wider community.

Manukau's metropolitan centre has a large Westfield shopping centre, a large district court and police station, many Council facilities, and commercial and industrial businesses in and around the centre. Together they employ around 17,000 workers on a daily basis. Two major tertiary institutions, Manukau Institute of Technology (MIT) and Auckland University of Technology (AUT), have opened new campuses here, which will attract about 10,000 students when complete in 2017.

(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2017/04/scan0028.jpg>)

### Economic Activity in Manukau

Now let me get this perfectly clear: the main City Centre has its place and will be the nexus of commercial and civic activity for both Auckland and New Zealand. That said it does not dismiss the role of a smaller and secondary City Centre surrounded by industrial complexes in filling a need for the Waikato and Bay of Plenty.

Let's take a look at how Panuku Development Auckland sees Manukau and its relationship with the Waikato and Bay of Plenty:



### Majority of land in public ownership

The majority of land in and around Manukau Central, and the significant greenfield areas to the south, are held by Auckland Council (95 hectares) and the Crown (100 hectares). This creates major potential for comprehensive redevelopment and transformational change, without the constraints of fragmented ownership.

### Significant development opportunities

Under-development in Manukau Central leaves large areas relatively unencumbered and well-suited to comprehensive redevelopment. This is supported by a host of enabling planning provisions in the *Auckland Unitary Plan*. Together, these factors ensure there is no shortage of development opportunities in Manukau Central.

### Well connected to rest of the region

Manukau Central has always been well connected to the motorway network. The opening of the Manukau rail station in 2012 represented a step-change in public transport provision for the area (40 minutes to Britomart Transport Centre). The coming bus interchange (with inter-city bus terminal) will bring a similar transformational shift, building the frequency and access of public transport to and from Manukau Central. It will also drive new foot traffic and pedestrian circulation patterns within the centre itself. Proximity to the airport further strengthens connections beyond Auckland.

### Locational advantages

The location of Manukau Central, and its connections to the rest of the region, bring natural locational advantages. These include as a natural gateway to the Waikato region and the 'golden triangle' (economic zone of Tauranga, Hamilton and Auckland); through proximity and passing trade to the airport; proximity to a huge industrial and manufacturing employment base in surrounding areas; and as a sub-regional centre of choice for a vast residential catchment. This is reflected in Manukau's significant concentrations of retail, employment and educational activity.

(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2017/03/manukau-opportunities-1-of-2.jpg>).

Manukau Opportunities 1 of 2 Source: Panuku Development Auckland

Note the Golden Triangle mentioned with Manukau acting as the key gateway.



(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2017/03/step-4-and-5-of-manukau-framework-plan.jpg>).

Step 4 and 5 of Manukau Framework Plan Source: Panuku Development Auckland



As you can see Manukau does act as a gateway to the Waikato and Bay of Plenty. Regional Rapid Rail, and the Southern Airport Line (both to the Airport and Manukau) connect the Waikato and Bay of Plenty to both major employment and population centres. If the main City Centre is not for you or you need an industrial base Manukau and Southern Auckland has probably what you are looking for.

If Regional Rapid Rail gives you 1:10 hours from Hamilton to Britomart (City Centre) and 2:00 hours from Tauranga to Auckland then these are the estimate times to Manukau or the Airport via the Southern Airport Line including a maximum five-minute transfer window:

- Hamilton to Manukau or the Airport: 1 hour
- Tauranga to Manukau or the Airport: 1:40 hours

Effectively Manukau becomes the core to both Southern Auckland and the those in reach of the Regional Rapid Rail.

[My Ideal central Urban Development Authority \(https://voakl.net/2018/03/19/my-ideal-central-urban-development-authority/\)](https://voakl.net/2018/03/19/my-ideal-central-urban-development-authority/)

## My Ideal central Urban Development Authority

Written by *Ben Ross – Talking Auckland*

### Best we have towards a full-blown Planning Ministry

It has been known before and post-election that the (current) Minister of Transport, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) Phil Twyford wants urban development to move much faster than it has in the past. While urban development is accelerating in Auckland since the Unitary Plan in November 2016 there is still a role for the State to play in investment into public projects that “guide” other projects as well as provide projects that the market would not otherwise do (emergency housing being an example). However, our urban development coordination between Cities and even Regions lack despite inter-regional commuting becoming more often while freight will always move inter-regionally.

In New South Wales (and other Australian States) the State Governments will often have a Department of Environment and Planning (or some derivative) that coordinates Planning and even embark on building projects across all the Councils within the State. This Department is often known as a Planning Ministry (and over seen by a Planning Minister) and they can have quite wide ranging powers in what they can get up to. For more with NSW see: <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/> (<http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/>)

The question is can it be done in New Zealand?

This from my earlier piece on a full-blown Planning Ministry in New Zealand:

### The Planning (Super) Ministry and the NZIA. What Are They?

.....

## Cue the Planning Ministry and the New Zealand Infrastructure Agency

### First the Planning Ministry

Formally it would be known as the Ministry of Planning and the Environment and it would have four major departments.

- The **Geography Department** as the overall watchdog, enforcer and coordinator when two or more of the departments are involved
- The **Department of the Environment** to handle the Resource Management Act (which is meant to manage the effects on the Natural Environment)
- The **Department of the Urban/Built Environment and Building** to handle a new Urban/Building and Building Environment Act (managing the urban environment and also absorbing the Building Act)
- **New Zealand Infrastructure Agency** (chief agency overseeing and investor of roads, rail tracks and sea ports)

Transport functions like licensing, Road User Charges and registrations remain with NZTA and the Ministry of Transport.

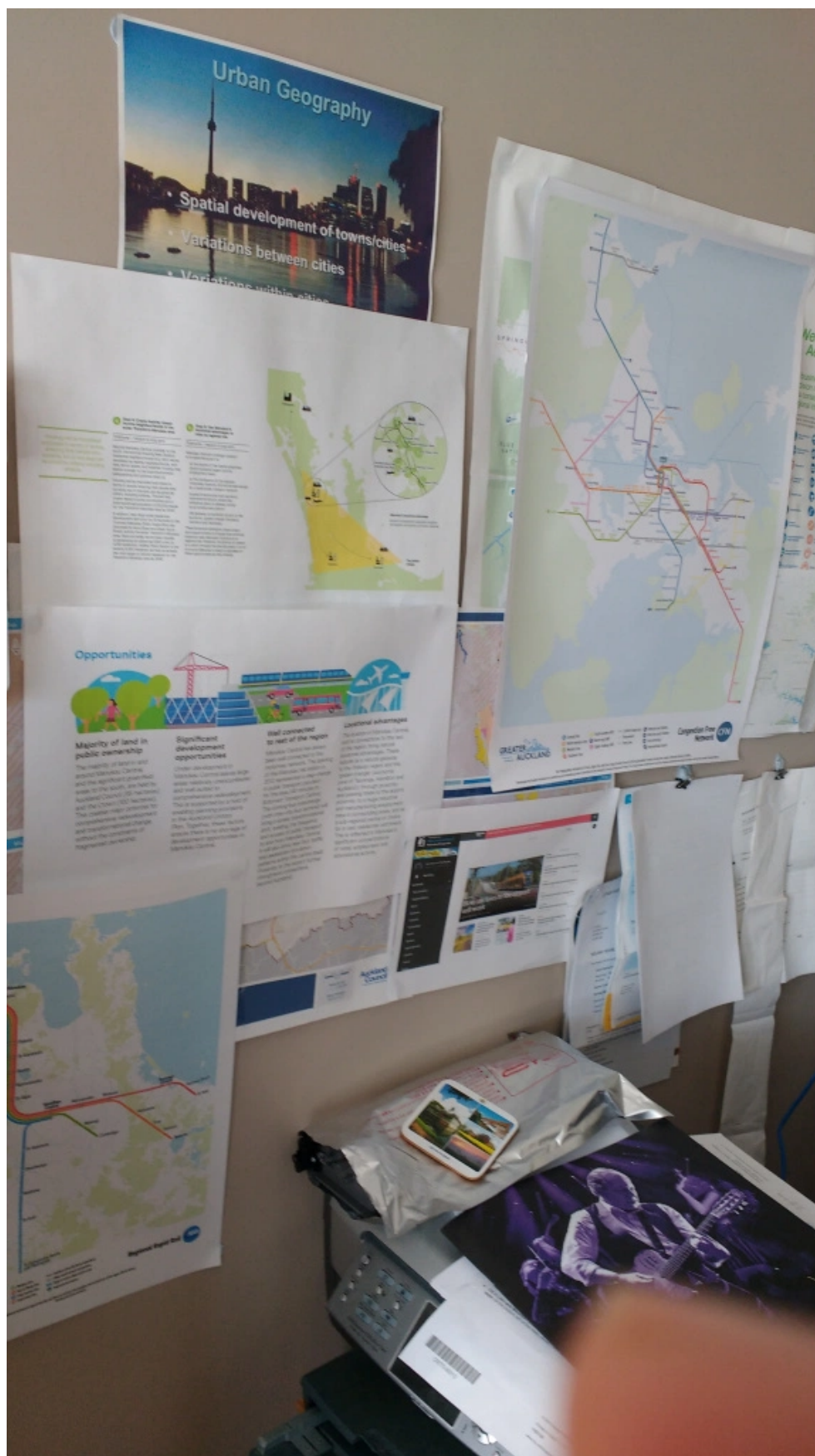
Existing functions on handling the effects of the natural environment outside of an urban centre/limits would remain with the Resource Management Act and the new Department of the Environment. All urban matters including water and air inside an urban area would shift to the new Department of Urban/Built Environment and Building division including the Auckland Unitary Plan and the Auckland (Spatial) Plan. The NZIA handles the investment and maintenance of the State Highways and the heavy rail network while also sharing costs on intra-regional schemes like bus-ways and light rail. NZTA would continue providing OPEX subsidies to things like the busses and passenger trains.

The Geography Department is the overall watchdog, enforcer and coordinator of the entire Ministry:

- Watchdog: To oversee the other Departments making sure they are delivering per policy requirements
- Enforcer: Pretty much the butt kicker if the Departments are slacking off from policy requirements. They can also bring about prosecutions if other entities or persons break the laws set about for or by the respective Departments
- Coordinator: when a major inter-regional planning and development exercise is undertaken spanning multiple entities across multiple jurisdictions and agencies the Geography Department is the one that sits on top of everything making sure the planning and delivery of the projects occur. Its watchdog and enforcer functions can apply if things go sideways

The New Zealand Infrastructure Agency oversees the roads, tracks and governance of the ports. It has full access to the National Land Transport Fund which can be used to build said roads and tracks (note: track access fees would contribute to the NLTF just as road user charges and fuel taxes do from roads).





(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2017/08/038.jpg>).

### Urban Geography Wall

Examples of the agencies working

Auckland Plan or the Unitary Plan

Given both are planning exercises handling both rural and urban areas the Department of Urban/Built Environment and Building has the main call with collaboration from the Department of the Environment for issues outside the Rural Urban Boundary.

Southern Motorway upgrades or building of the Third and Fourth Mains

NZIA would handle this these projects after the request had been peer-reviewed from the Geography Department (making sure the projects complied with sound economic, social and environmental analysis) acting in its Watchdog role.



(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2017/06/thid-main-in-action.jpg>).

Third Main in Action at Otahuhu-Middlemore  
Source: Kiwi Rail

City Rail Link, Congestion Free Network 2.0 (including The Southern Airport Line), and/or Regional Rapid Rail

This is where the full power of the Planning Ministry is invoked. As I said above the Ministry of Transport would normally handle this but given the place and plan making opportunities from each of these mega projects we are going to need more than MoT. Enter the Planning Ministry and its four departments.

While the NZIA would be the main executor of building these critical infrastructure links both the Departments of the Environment and Urban/Built Environment and Building also come into play as well?

Why?

Because if we followed proper integrated land use/transport goals place making (both urban and natural) present themselves as opportunities. On the natural environment side even rail lines disrupt the environment (although not as much as roads). Storm water and run off catchments are still needed in the rural areas with rail especially if wetlands

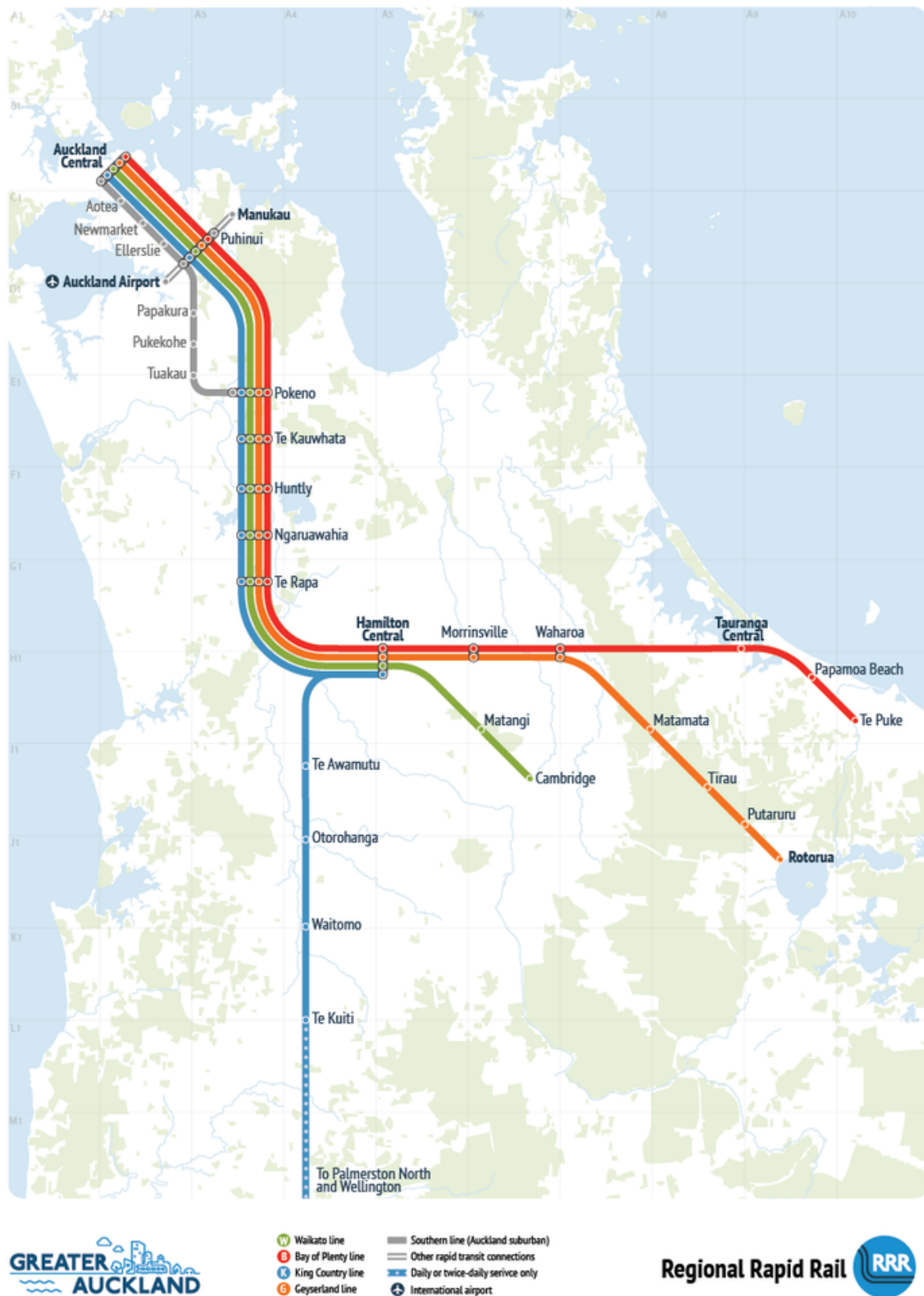
are crossed or depots are built outside the urban areas. On the urban environment side is where things get very interesting very fast.

All three mega transport projects will have stations and depots (including the provincial towns in regards to Regional Rapid Rail) and this means Transit Orientated Developments.

With TODs you draw two circles using the station as the centre point. The first circle has a radius of 800 metres and this is where the highest density developments (including civic spaces) would go. Your next circle is drawn with a two kilometre radius from the station and between the 800m and 2km circles is where your medium density (relative to the town) developments (including civic) spaces would go. 800 metres is your walk up catchment to a station while two kilometres is your e-bike catchment. Both catchments would be mixed use residential and commercial developments although the 2km radius does work for industry when a freight depot is concerned (saving truck shuttling between factory/warehouse to freight station). As this is all plan and place making this is where the Department of the Urban/Built Environment and Building comes in as it can reach over boundaries Councils can not.

As multiple Councils, Ministries and Departments involved in a project as extensive as Regional Rapid Rail the Geography Department of the Planning Ministry comes into the play as the main overseer and coordinator. The Geography Department would draw up a an Inter-Regional Spatial Plan as the main overarching document guiding the infrastructure and urban developments as well as natural environment stewardship much like the Auckland (Spatial) Plan does. With that spatial plan in place the respective Planning Authorities can undertake their local developments with help and coordination from the Planning Ministry (as a whole). The ultimate goal being planning, development and management is done at a coordinated whole-scale approach across multiple regions rather than the piece-meal approach that we have now (and has bogged down Hamilton to Auckland inter city rail).





(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2017/08/rapid-regional-rail.png>)

Rapid Regional Rail  
Source: Auckland Transport

In conclusion a Planning Ministry with its four departments including a New Zealand Infrastructure Agency would go some way to coordinate and enforce inter-regional planning that New Zealand struggles with. Our different regions have not benefited from competing with each other and should collaborate with the help of the Government via this Ministry. Each of the four departments deals with specific intricacies of planning and the different environments with the Geography Department as the overarching authority and enforcer.

.....

Source: <https://voakl.net/2017/08/24/the-planning-super-ministry-and-the-nzia-what-are-they/>  
(<https://voakl.net/2017/08/24/the-planning-super-ministry-and-the-nzia-what-are-they/>).

We know there is no major reforms that would merge Environment with home and transport building – yet. However, the above four departments I recommended can be easily adapted to Twyford's Transport, Housing and Urban Development portfolio.

Already the draft Government Policy Statements 1.0 and 2.0 indicates the refocusing of the Ministry of Transport, NZTA and the National (Land) Transport Fund in supporting capital investment in rail, light rail and eventually coastal shipping. The draft GPS has these four outlines:

1. Safety
2. Value for Money
3. Low Carbon (now Environment)
4. Access

With this in mind from the Government Policy Statement and the upcoming GPS on coastal shipping we essentially get an Infrastructure agency by default in all but name that delivers all modes of transport investment in New Zealand not just more and only more roads. Note: there will be overlap with Minister of Infrastructure Shane Jones's Ministry and Twyford's Transport portfolio.



(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2018/03/103.jpg>).

I believe the inter city busses load up on this side



Minister Twyford has made it publicly known that he wants a centralised Urban Development Authority that would be the one stop shop in planning, hearings/submissions and delivery of major urban projects not only in Auckland but right across the country. This centralised UDA would also have satellites that would be on the front line to where major urban developments were to happen. Manukau would be a good choice for a satellite UDA (that also has Council's own UDA – Panuku in the same office) given Southern Auckland's large scale urban development getting underway. The centralised Urban Development Authority and its satellites were first picked up here: **Briefing to Incoming Ministers: How to Deliver Kiwi Build** (<https://voakl.net/2017/12/15/briefing-to-incoming-ministers-how-to-deliver-kiwi-build/>)

The UDA would/should be incorporating:

- **Geography Department** as the overall watchdog, enforcer and coordinator when two or more of the departments are involved
- **Department of the Urban/Built Environment and Building** to handle a new Urban/Building and Building Environment Act (managing the urban environment and also absorbing the Building Act)

There are two changes in play owing to Housing being in the mix while Environment is still separated and handled by a different Minister (Parker). Housing – specifically the building of housing would fall under the Urban/Built Environment and Building department while the maintenance of housing, emergency housing, and tenants would still be handled as now as a separate entity. With Environment still separated District and Regional Plans (aka the Unitary Plan and the Resource Management Act for which the Unitary Plan sits under) can not be handled directly as I would like under a super Planning Ministry. While compulsion powers would be available to allow physical builds the powers to push through Public Plan Changes (e.g to change the Future Urban Zone to a live urban zone) would not be easily available potentially stalling stage 1 (**Urban Geography** (<https://voakl.net/2018/02/12/more-chit-chat-another-housing-taskforce-gathers-to-solve-aucklands-housing-crisis/>))) of any large-scale urban development project (Greenfield or Brownfield) and putting an already strained Council under further strain to get these PPC's through. If Stage 1 (also stages 2 and 3 – **Regulatory, Finance and Infrastructure** (<https://voakl.net/2018/02/12/more-chit-chat-another-housing-taskforce-gathers-to-solve-aucklands-housing-crisis/>))) falls over from go (and we are seeing this today: **Big plan for 23,300 new homes in Auckland making slow progress** ([http://www.nzherald.co.nz/business/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=3&objectid=12015249](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/business/news/article.cfm?c_id=3&objectid=12015249)))) then development stalls and we have a problem (yes I am rather polite here).

The fix the problems showing up in Stages 1-3 our Minister of THUD would need to allow the UDA to have the capacity to initiate and self-fund Public Plan Changes (that are still consistent with the Unitary Plan) if at least for nothing else relieve pressure on an already strained Council.



(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2018/02/nodes-map.png>).

The Nodes and Satellites

Auckland Plan 2050

Source: Auckland Council

### Urban Development Authority and Inter-Regional Spatial Planning

The theme of inter-regional spatial planning (an Auckland Plan on steroids) is a theme I have been running since the Unitary Plan first came out for feedback in 2013 and Manukau City Centre evolved in a Super Metropolitan Centre with an inter-regional catchment rather than sub regional catchment. The theme continues as Twyford (and others) look outside of Auckland and Wellington to both relieve pressure on both cities while also kick starting Provincial growth after the provinces have been hollowed out for so and too long.

The case of the **“City Rail Link, Congestion Free Network 2.0 (including The Southern Airport Line), and/or Regional Rapid Rail”** as mentioned in the Planning Ministry extract above would still continue through into the centralised Urban Development Authority given transport and land use are inter-connected (yes I know New Zealand often treats both as silos).

This is where a Geography Department would come in and be at it optimum utilisation within the UDA:

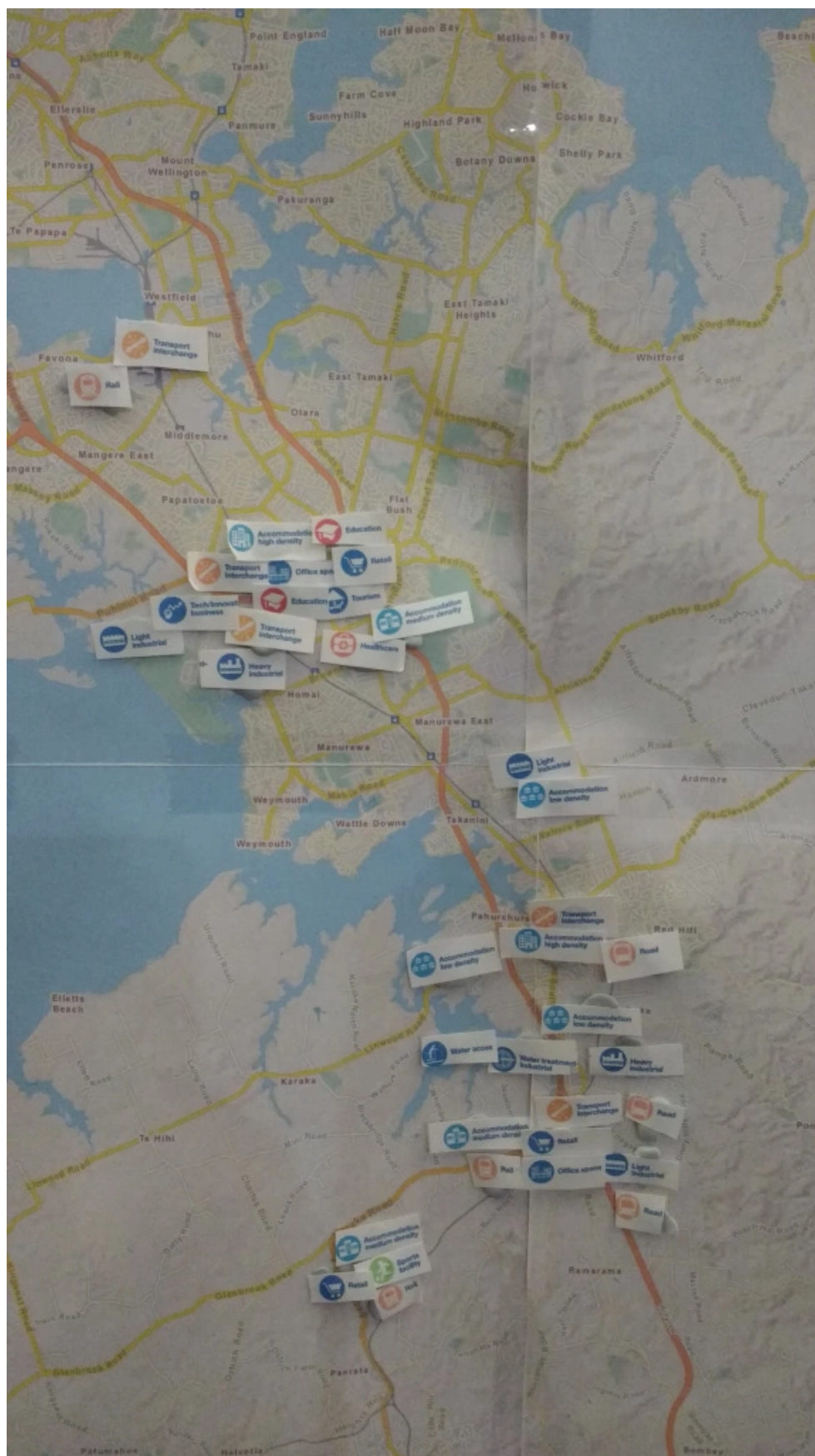
As multiple Councils, Ministries and Departments involved in a project as extensive as Regional Rapid Rail the Geography Department of the Planning Ministry comes into the play as the main overseer and coordinator. The Geography Department would draw up a an Inter-Regional Spatial Plan as the main overarching document guiding the infrastructure and urban developments as well as natural environment stewardship much like the Auckland (Spatial) Plan does. With that spatial plan in place the respective Planning Authorities can undertake their local developments with help and coordination from the Planning Ministry (as a whole). The ultimate goal being planning, development and management is done at a coordinated whole-scale approach across multiple regions rather than the piece-meal approach that we have now (and has bogged down Hamilton to Auckland inter city rail).

quote context: <http://pllqt.it/778mew> (<http://pllqt.it/778mew>).

Take out the term Planning Ministry and replace it with Urban Development Authority (that reports to the Minister of THUD anyway) and you get:

“As multiple Councils, Ministries and Departments involved in a project as extensive as Regional Rapid Rail the Geography Department of the **Urban Development Authority** comes into the play as the main overseer and coordinator. The Geography Department would draw up a an Inter-Regional Spatial Plan as the main overarching document guiding....”

If wider coordination is needed beyond the UDA and into the full THUD portfolios themselves then the Geography Department would also exist right up at the top at Ministry level (as well as UDA level).



(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2017/03/015.jpg>)

Some ideas from Otahuhu down to Pāremata

In conclusion – what would I like to see with this new centralised Urban Development Authority?



Transport is being handled through the new Government Policy Statements 1.0 and 2.0 so a tick there.

Environment unfortunately is still separated meaning the UDA could struggle with any changes needed to the Resource Management Act and the Unitary Plan (which sits under the RMA) meaning we could see trip ups at Stage 1 before a project even got off the ground.

Acquisition powers and physical development (so Built/Urban Environment, and Building) are touted to be allowed with the UDA while spatial planning especially inter-regional spatial planning (so a Geography Department) is an absolute must!

Reference: Upper North Island Needs its Version of an Auckland (Spatial) Plan (<https://voakl.net/2018/03/15/upper-north-island-needs-its-version-of-an-auckland-spatial-plan/>).

.....

Phew I think we have made through a large essay on what is ultimately Urban Geography – the discipline of spatial developments of towns and cities, the variations between and within in those cities. Urban Geography as I see it is the ultimate expression of spatial development, urban form and using both to either influence human behaviours OR human behaviours influencing the urban form.

How we handle urban geography in New Zealand is yet to be seen. But I am excited for its future – and not just because I am an Urban Geographer.....



(<https://voakl.files.wordpress.com/2017/08/tilt-train-1.jpg>).

Tilt Train  
Source: Greater Auckland

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Source: <https://voakl.net/2017/08/21/regional-rapid-rail-inter-regional-planning-and-a-planning-ministry-transforming-and-unlocking-places/> (<https://voakl.net/2017/08/21/regional-rapid-rail-inter-regional-planning-and-a-planning-ministry-transforming-and-unlocking-places/>).

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