

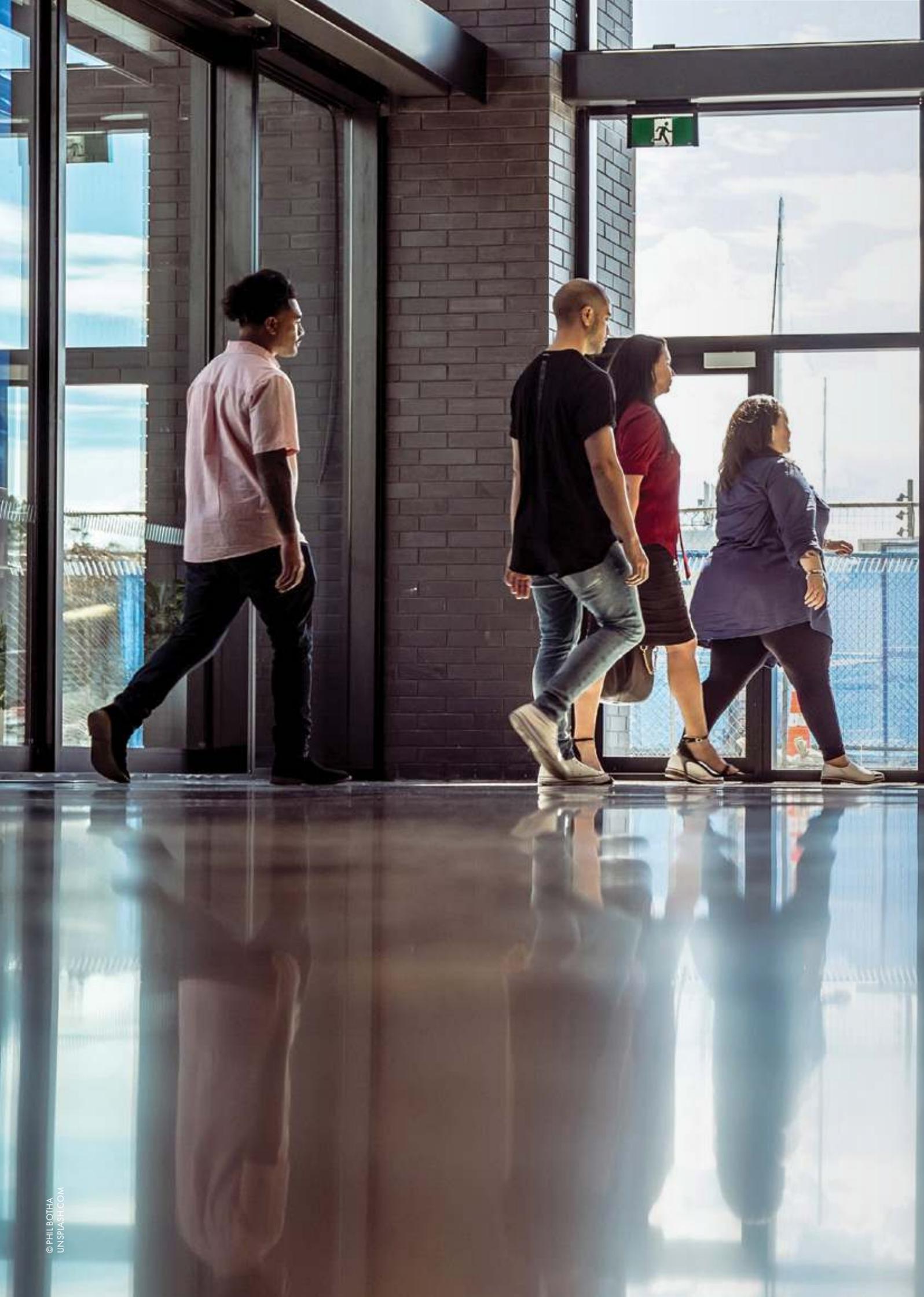
October 2020  
FINAL REPORT

STAGE 2

# SHORE UNITY

Creating a single, focused  
North Shore business  
development organisation

Business  
North  
Harbour



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# INTRODUCTION

How does Business North Harbour (BNH) create a compelling reason for Auckland Council and central government to be concerned with the views of our members?

Advocacy for our members has always been a cornerstone of our philosophy, and BNH is committed to ensuring this occurs. Unfortunately, as just one of 50 Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in Auckland, this is simply not achievable if we act alone.

BNH embarked on an ambitious project to change those dynamics, and just over a year ago we attempted to challenge what appeared to be the somewhat disjointed approach to the development of the North Shore. BNH felt that there was a need for a collaborative, co-ordinated approach to the development of the region as a whole and sought to verify their anecdotal evidence.

BNH's goal was to lead that initiative for members.

Our initial Stage 1 investigation confirmed BNH's perceptions, using a variety of evidence-based data. It also identified the immediate need for an advocacy group to take an active role in influencing the key decision makers from different sectors, particularly central and local government, something which, as a lone voice, BNH simply could not achieve.

Thus "*Bridge to the Future*" was born. This title, re-named "*Shore Unity*", reflects the approach that we believe needs to be taken to ensure that the North Shore further enhances its reputation as the destination of choice to live, learn, work and recreate.

The Stage 2 report confirms the need for a proactive, business-led working group to work alongside and bring together a number of different organisations, to ensure that the four major outcomes of the project, identified in the report, are achieved and carry influence with local and central government. BNH will initially lead that group, whose purpose is to ensure our members' voices are strong.

This will provide an integrated development plan, that serves to link business, education, employment and residential growth, at the same time producing sustainable economic growth, making the North Shore a much sought-after destination.

We trust you find the report both interesting and insightful, and in closing would like to acknowledge Tony Garnier for his outstanding work in producing both the Stage 1 discussion document and this final report.



Kevin O'Leary  
General Manager



Peter Lamberton  
Executive Committee Chair

# SUMMARY

*Shore Unity* outlines a vision and direction for a dynamic working group to advocate for and oversee the transformation of the wider North Shore (Devonport to Silverdale) into Auckland's leading destination to live, learn, work and recreate, while reducing the need for residents to look for employment opportunities outside the North Shore.

Additionally, "keeping it local" in turn supports the environmental targets set by both local and central government, which see Auckland aiming to halve emissions by 2030. Given that 35 per cent of emissions are transport-related, reducing the need for travel and reducing congestion by providing alternative and efficient transport options will make a significant, positive contribution to this outcome.

The working group will achieve the vision by advocacy, using an integrated plan and collaborative approach (particularly with local and central government) to help lift the performance of the Shore's frontier growth-led businesses, grow employment opportunities and ensure the residential, education and business communities are united and can thrive.

The Stage 1 *Bridge to the Future* report and stakeholder feedback confirmed that an overarching North Shore business-focused development organisation is required – and it is urgent.

There is no overarching policy or plan connecting where Shore-based people live with the innovative, growth-focused businesses and employment opportunities despite being home to a quarter of Auckland's population and some of New Zealand's highest achieving education facilities. *Shore Unity* will proactively address these issues.

There is a lack of sympathetic urban design and regulatory connection between residential, educational and business areas. Supportive transport and other infrastructure investment is needed to unlock easy, attractive, convenient and sociable lifestyles and movement across the Shore.

Plus, like the rest of NZ, the North Shore is facing the prospect of a significant economic shock from the impacts of COVID-19.

To improve access to jobs, study, and recreation, and create opportunities for businesses to grow, a more committed and purposeful partnering is needed between business, central government (and its agencies) and Auckland Council (and its CCOs (council-controlled organisations)).

A key success factor will be the passion and investment by the *Shore Unity* leadership group to engage the public and private sectors to work collaboratively to create a partnership with more innovation and drive to create the conditions for the market to respond to growth potential, improve housing affordability and support thriving communities.

A group will be sought with skills and passion to make things happen aligned with *Shore Unity's* four linked outcomes:

1. Nurture a connected and innovative residential, education and business community.
2. Promote the establishment of the *Shore Unity* area as a business centre of excellence.
3. Advocate for an integrated infrastructure plan.
4. Advocate for a seamless transport system.

*“An overarching North Shore business-focused development organisation is required – **and it is urgent.**”*

## 1. PURPOSE

To establish a dynamic group to advocate for and oversee the transformation of the wider North Shore (Devonport to Silverdale) into a great place to live, learn, work and recreate.

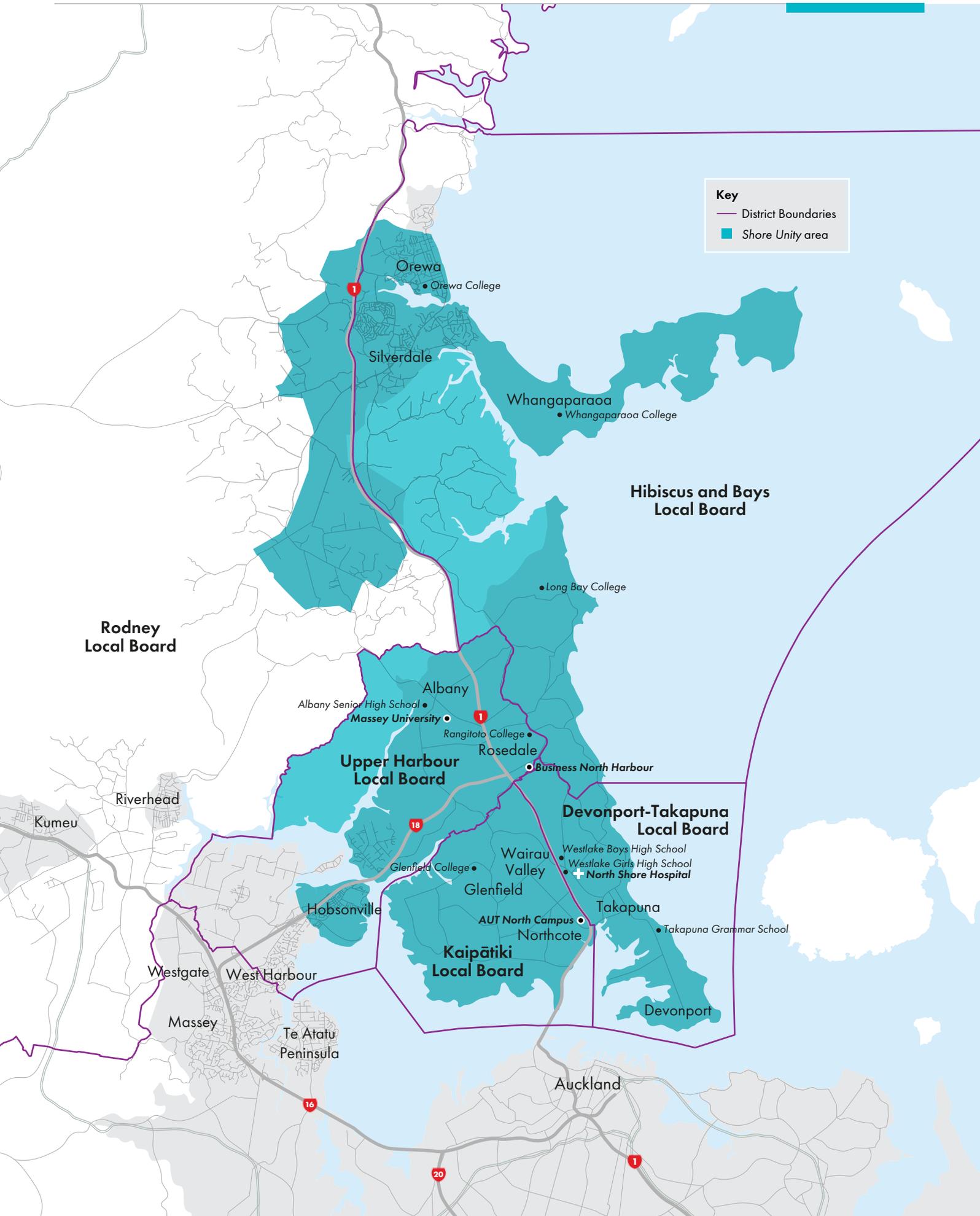
Achieved by using an integrated plan and collaborative approach to grow employment opportunities and business growth by ensuring the *Shore Unity* residential, education and business communities are united and can thrive, while reducing the need for residents to pursue a career outside the North Shore.

## 2. BACKGROUND

The Stage 1 *Bridge to the Future* report prepared in 2019 and stakeholder feedback confirmed that an overarching North Shore business-focused development organisation is required – **and it is urgent.**

- Has been made more urgent by the 2020 coronavirus pandemic.
- Why is there strong support for a single, evidence-based *Shore Unity* one-stop shop view and plan?
  - *Auckland Council’s silo planning system means information is spread far and wide. If the North Shore doesn’t know where it is or where it is going, how can it get there?*
  - *The North Shore has numerous strong and exciting self-made businesses in professional, scientific and technical services, but lacks deep linkages with education and research institutions and skills recruitment.*
  - *There are disconnects between residential, educational and business locations.*
  - *The North Shore is predicted to be one of the fastest growing areas in New Zealand in the next 20 years.<sup>1</sup>*
  - *Plus, like the rest of NZ, the North Shore is facing the prospect of a significant economic shock from the impacts of COVID-19.*





# 3. THE OPPORTUNITY

The long-term challenge/opportunity is therefore where and how to focus the development of practical recommendations to lift the performance of the Shore's frontier growth-led businesses.

**3.1 Vision:** North Shore's professional, scientific and technical services and wider business community lifts its contribution to a high-value, environmentally sustainable GDP.

- Delivery also starts to support the Productivity Commission's call for action to measurably improve our low productivity as a nation.

The Stage 1 project indicated the relative strength of the professional, scientific and technical service businesses but there were three risks enabling the action required to unlock this **vision**:

- **Urban design (and regulations)** are a constraint to growth; there is a lack of connection between residential, educational and business

areas and transport. In addition, other infrastructure investment is needed to unlock easy, attractive, convenient and sociable lifestyles and movement across the Shore.

- **Policy and Programme design** is silo-based, with no overarching plan aimed at connecting Shore-based people capability and capacity with the innovative, growth focused businesses and employment opportunities.

- **A more committed and purposeful partnering with government is needed** between business, Auckland Council (and its CCOs) and central government (and its agencies).

A key success factor will be the passion and investment by the *Shore Unity* leadership group to lock in the public and private sectors, to work together to create a partnership with more innovation and drive to make things happen.

## 3.2 Urban design (and regulations)

Moving quickly on the **urban design outcomes** will be testing, for the following reasons:

- Land use planning is under review, with central government looking at the Resource Management Act (RMA) and other relevant statutes, mainly infrastructure planning and funding within the Land Transport Management Act (LTMA) and Local Government Act (LGA).
- The government's Urban Growth Agenda (UGA) is designed to create the conditions for regions, corridors, metropolitan areas or towns that are experiencing significant growth pressures, to work alongside central government in helping address the challenges and opportunities from that growth. Each partnership has three core components:

- A strong growth management partnership, that enables
- Joint integrated spatial planning, which unlocks
- A "rolling" transformative programme of key initiatives that can only be realised through partnership and new ways of working.
- The new Kainga Ora Homes & Communities Act gives the government powers to establish Urban Development Authorities (UDA).
- Auckland Council's urban development agency Panuku Development Auckland undertakes projects tied to specific urban projects (e.g. Takapuna and Northcote) without linking transport between residential and business areas, and independent of the UGA.

- Transport planning is also uncertain with central government agency the Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) leading Auckland Transport (AT) in planning the next phase of the public transport network.

The test will be for the *Shore Unity* leadership group to have the required advocacy power and influence to forge a joint programme of key transformational initiatives designed to unlock delivery of its **vision**. The group will need to advocate to those with the mandate (central and local government) to make things happen but who do not - as yet - have all the mechanisms and tools to achieve quick action.



*“A more committed and purposeful partnering with government is needed between business, Auckland Council (and its CCOs) and central government (and its agencies).”*

### 3.3 Policy and Programme design

A similar challenge exists in respect of the design and delivery of an integrated policy and programme RoadMap.

However, this could be done initially by exploiting the impacts of COVID-19. The North Shore’s pre-COVID-19 professional, scientific and technical sector was the biggest contributor to economic growth but still has a significant shortfall in skilled workers. There is an opportunity to upskill redundant workers, and attract students from the Shore’s progressive, high quality education sector.

Also, the measures taken to combat COVID-19 in New Zealand have accelerated the trend towards digital transformation and creation of virtual workplaces. This is increasing the demand for products and services that facilitate these changes in all business sectors, and we can expect this to drive the growth of the North Shore’s businesses for the foreseeable future.

How? We can cross-train and upskill people into technology roles to address the forecast long-term tech skills shortfall and improve our poor productivity as a nation.<sup>2</sup>

Nonetheless, to convert this **vision** will require a concerted effort by the North Shore’s established tech sector, and also central and local government, and the wider business, education, and residential community.

## 4. ESTABLISHMENT STEPS

*A Shore Unity working group with seven members will be formed initially.*

The leadership group will be sought with skills and passion to make things happen, aligned with *Shore Unity's* four linked outcomes:

- 1 Nurture a connected and innovative residential, education and business community.
- 2 Promote the establishment of the *Shore Unity* area as a business centre of excellence.
- 3 Advocate for an integrated infrastructure plan.
- 4 Advocate for a seamless transport system.

The expertise will bring together a proactive group, knowledgeable of the North Shore's current strengths and weaknesses, and future potential to grow across business, employment, education, transport, property, government, infrastructure, advocacy, health, security, recreation, and sustainability.

BNH's general manager Kevin O'Leary will head *Shore Unity* in the first year and provide support in guiding the working group to drive advocacy, leading to the development and successful delivery of this transformative programme.

*"A Shore Unity working group with seven members will be formed initially."*



## 5. KEY OUTCOMES AND TASKS

Four interdependent outcomes were agreed at Stage 1 as needed to:

- Promote and co-ordinate the creation of a business growth alliance – for the benefit of the community, working with the rest of Auckland and NZ Inc.
- Form a single programme to enable *Shore Unity* to advocate to and collaborate with Auckland Council and government to ensure that the forecast growth is well managed and enabled efficiently.



### Outcome 1: Nurture a connected and innovative residential, education and business community

Ensure that a supply of affordable housing is linked within easy reach to education and business/employment opportunities.

#### Situation:

The North Shore is home for about a quarter of Auckland's population. Over the next 25 years, population is projected to increase by 221,000.<sup>3</sup> At 2.7 people per household, this will require some 81,963 residences built (equating to 3,279 per year).

*"The North Shore is home for about a quarter of Auckland's population. Over the next 25 years, population is projected to increase by 221,000."*

#### The Stage 1 project identified:

- A significant number of growing, affluent Shore-based technical-led businesses – some are international and located in each local board area - and strong construction and retail sectors.
- A large secondary school and tertiary population, from significant professional and switched-on families, attending both public and private sector institutions including New Zealand's largest co-educational, and single-sex schools.
- A lack of action to address long-standing frustrations with cross-Shore traffic, the high cost of housing, and skills shortages for businesses, along with the lack of easy connection between North Shore education, residential and business areas.

#### Tasks – to join the dots:

To enable more certainty for the North Shore as a long-term place to live, learn, work and recreate:

- Design a *Shore Unity* urban development agency (UDA) proposal, including: decide/advocate for what the UDA role would be (for the Shore and managed by the Shore), why it is needed, and who establishes and controls its management.
- Update projections against COVID-19 urban development impacts, including:
  - How much capacity is there for residential development, and where?
  - How much business space is available, and where?
  - How can education be better integrated with residential and business area growth, to provide a local source?
  - How can stronger connections be made between residential, education and business areas?



## Outcome 2: Promote the establishment of the *Shore Unity* area as a business centre of excellence

Create an innovative business and education collaboration cluster, focused on areas of strength in creative job opportunities, foreign exchange earnings and technical expertise.

### Situation:

The North Shore is Auckland's second-highest area for ICT businesses and professional services, and has New Zealand's highest growth rate for TIN200 companies in the five years to December 2018. One out of 16 jobs are professional services, and many businesses are "global from inception" – 42 generated \$1.1b of exports in 2018.<sup>4</sup>

- The professional, scientific and technical services of the North Shore generated more than \$1.5 billion in 2017, and the North Shore is supported by strong construction, retail, wholesale, real estate and other industry groups.<sup>5</sup>

*"We now have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to channel the huge disruption caused by COVID-19 to actually make some structural changes to the North Shore's economy and brand."*

### The Stage 1 project identified:

A significant shortage of skilled people and why the North Shore is ready for a more co-ordinated innovative business and education cluster development:

- We now have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to channel the huge disruption caused by COVID-19 to actually make some structural changes to the North Shore's economy and brand - and benefit NZ Inc - to move to a more productive, higher-value future with low environmental impact.
- Government is reorganising the technical training sector, creating an opportunity for *Shore Unity*.
- Government is also keen to boost New Zealand's productivity, creating an opportunity to focus on growing the digital economy, in which the *Shore Unity* area is strong, especially Takapuna, Albany, Silverdale, and Devonport.
- The key role government has, including transport, creates an opportunity for the North Shore to form a private sector-led version of an urban growth partnership linking residential, industry/employment, and (appropriate) education infrastructure and services. This would include a more sympathetic outcome-focused RMA planning system.

### Tasks – to join the dots

To enable:

- The scope for establishing a technical institute on the Shore to be assessed, including what business needs: e.g. practical training versus academic degree/certificate training/on-the-job training/block courses; and a suitable location (Takapuna, Albany or Silverdale).
- Growth-focused businesses to source innovative students, and receive global advice.
- Schools and the tertiary sector to know about high-growth businesses – the what, where and how to teach the new high-skill jobs being created, and that firms are often looking for someone with a "know how" passion rather than a person with a qualification.



## Outcome 3: Advocate for an integrated infrastructure plan

**This links to the establishment of a North Shore urban growth partnership:** a one-stop shop to ensure resilience and co-ordination, and that contributes to business growth, quality of life (wellbeing) and lifting productivity (GDP).

### Situation:

Siloed plans indicate that over the next few decades, to cope with projected population growth, the North Shore will need to give serious consideration to:

- Building the next Waitemata Harbour crossing, road and mass transit system, airport and ferry developments, plus providing an efficient/timely freight distribution and commercial service access (See **Outcome 4: Advocate for a seamless transport system**)
- Securing the North Shore's energy future (electricity and gas, including hydrogen)
- Ensuring high-speed broadband and telecommunications
- Securing water storage/supply, and wastewater services
- Investing in hospitals, schools and policing
- Ensuring a building and construction industry, for housing, commercial, and services

### The Stage 1 project identified: Tasks – to join the dots

- Council's Unitary Plan needs to trigger linked transport between residential developments and industry/employment, education, and health services, and open space and recreation:
  - The RMA is process-focused, not outcome driven – without reform (currently underway) the North Shore will not achieve real change, and more silo planning will continue.
    - For example, new suburbs have been built without planned public transport infrastructure.

*“Council's Unitary Plan needs to trigger linked transport between residential developments and industry/employment, education, and health services, and open space and recreation.”*

Advocate to ensure:

- The RMA reform process is outcome-driven and enables the scope and power of a North Shore urban growth partnership to be appointed to manage and drive the provision of an integrated infrastructure (and government) services plan.
- Auckland Council provides back-up provision of a Unitary Plan that triggers linked transport between residential developments and:
  - Industry/employment
  - Education services
  - Health services
  - Recreation services (including restaurants and sports/gyms) and open space
- Using post-COVID-19 population growth projections, prepare a list of each key infrastructure initiative required and a timeline of when it will be needed - and advocate to ensure it is delivered.



## Outcome 4: Advocate for a seamless transport system

**This also links to establishing a North Shore urban growth partnership** to ensure user-friendly, convenient provision of transport infrastructure and services, including modern metro services, vehicle and cycle parking, park and ride, and intra- and inter-regional (air, ferry and motorway) links; and including, of course, the next Waitemata Harbour crossing and provision of a rapid transit system to the North Shore, and advocacy on where this would go.

### Situation:

Transport infrastructure and service delivery – big and small projects – are a key concern, requiring work if the North Shore is to progress and thrive over the next 30 years.

*“Transport infrastructure and service delivery – big and small projects – are a key concern, requiring work if the North Shore is to progress and thrive over the next 30 years.”*

### The Stage 1 project identified:

- Strong support for provision of a resilient and co-ordinated transport system enabling effective, efficient movement of people and goods to/ from and around the North Shore. The plan would cover:
  - Waitemata Harbour crossing
  - Motorways
  - Arterial and local roads
  - Cycleway – access and local
  - Bus services – access and local
  - Freight and commercial services – access and local
  - Rapid transit services
  - Parking – street and off-street
  - Airport
  - Ferry infrastructure and services

### Tasks – to join the dots:

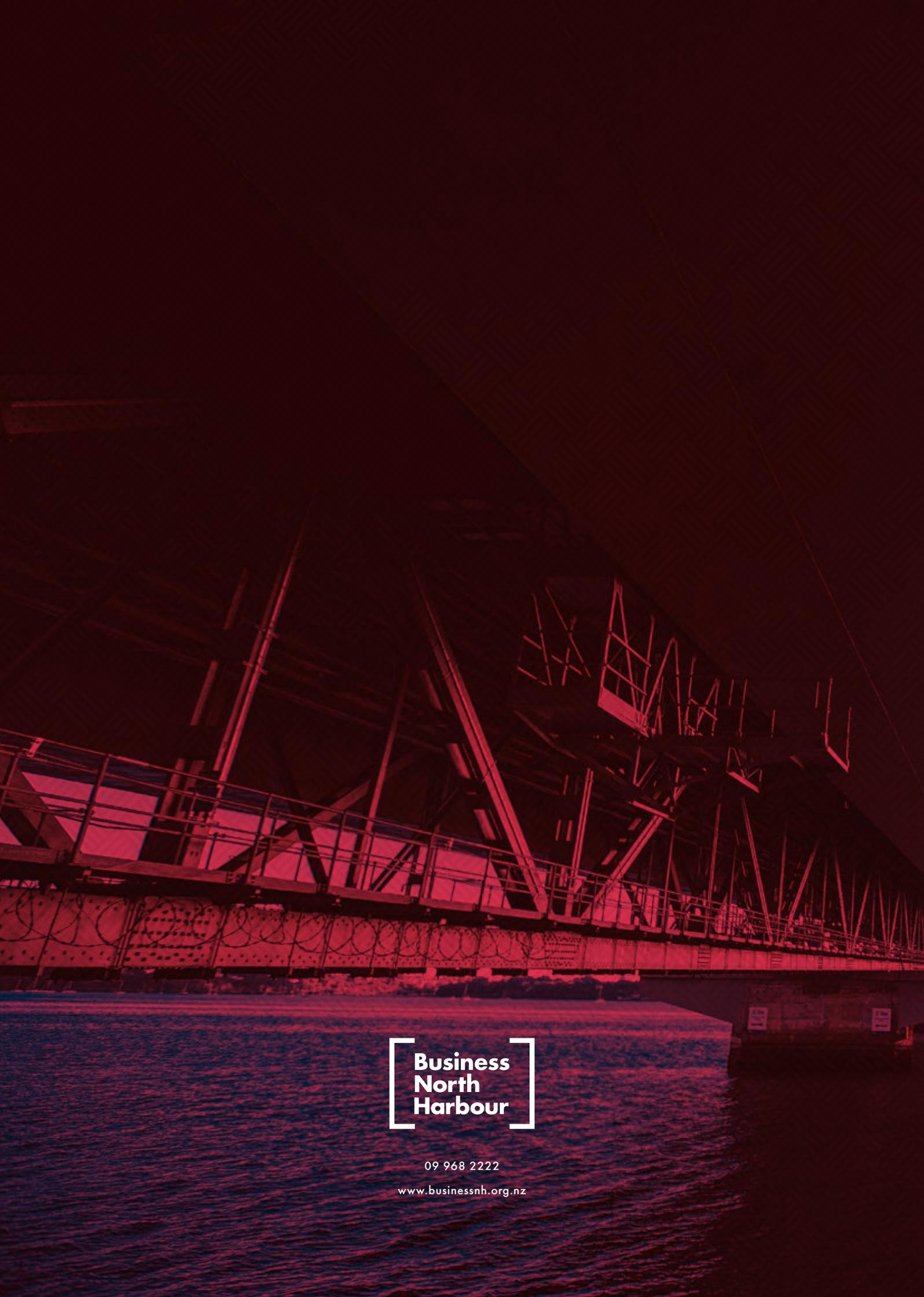
- Work with NZTA, AT and Shore interests (BNH, local boards and others) to put forward an integrated *Shore Unity* transport plan for delivery.
- The transport plan would address the issues identified in Stage 1, plus the updates of NZTA and AT’s plans, and create an agenda for governance advocacy.

### Endnotes

- 1 See Statistics NZ, Projected Auckland population growth: 2018-2043.
- 2 See “*Frontier firms: An international small advanced economy perspective*” by David Skilling, prepared for the NZ Productivity Commission, May 2020.
- 3 See Statistics NZ, Projected Auckland population growth: 2018-2043.
- 4 See Grow North Innovation District “174 Innovators in the North”; source [www.grownorth.co.nz](http://www.grownorth.co.nz).
- 5 See “Employment by Local Board and Industry, 2017” Chief Economist, Auckland Council, Statistics NZ, in “*Bridge to the Future*”, p.8.

## 6. NEXT STEPS

- Circulate *Shore Unity* report
- Establish *Shore Unity* agenda
- Working Group selection



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