Planning Tomorrow with Yesterday's World

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Why Futures Thinking Matters



Auckland Council has a role in:

- Enabling people to live and thrive
- Making decisions informed by peoples lived experiences and environmental limits
- Planning for both the immediate and long term from next week to the next 50 years, or more

Futures thinking is essential to how Auckland Council supports the wellbeing of Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland - both now and for generations to come.

How We Plan for the Future

Long-term plans, spatial planning, strategies	Policies and Regulations	Core Services
 Where to spend money and prioritise Where and when to grow (housing, roads, businesses) 	Set directions and ensure fairness	The needs of daily life – water, waste, transport, libraries, regulations

Need to understand

Emerging issues, risks, opportunities, plausible scenarios, and aspirations



Tools to develop understanding

Data based modelling and scenarios, trend analysis, strategic foresight

Flexibility is needed - not all tools work for every decision

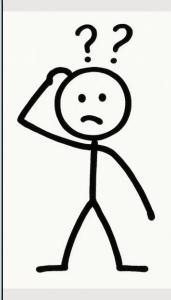
e.g., planning long-term infrastructure investments under uncertain population growth will require data driven modelling, whilst understanding future climate impacts on communities would require more story-driven and place based approaches.

But....

Tensions

Past and Current

- Meeting statutory requirements requires council to follow defined processes and timelines
- Plan for decades but work on three-year political cycles
- Evidence-based decision making, documentable and auditable processes are important
- Need to respond to the daily needs of our communities



Current and Future

- Growing complexity from climate change, biodiversity loss, rapid technological change, and changing needs of our communities
- Futures thinking is therefore dynamic, exploratory and uncertain in nature

Strategic foresight bridges this gap and is increasingly important

Provocation

There are growing calls to embed nature-based solutions in local government planning – to reduce emissions, and build social and economic resilience to the impacts of climate change

So, what if our planning aligned with the life spans and concerns of plants, animals, wetlands, and soils? How might this reshape how local government does strategic foresight?

