Te Kāhui Whaihanga New Zealand Institute of Architects

15th August 2025

Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga
Ministry for the Environment

Re: Submission on the Resource Management Reforms Package 4: Going for Housing Growth

Introduction

This submission is made on behalf of Te Kāhui Whaihanga New Zealand Institute of Architects (NZIA), the professional body representing more than 4,000 architects, graduates, students, and affiliated professionals across Aotearoa. For over 120 years, the NZIA has promoted the value of architecture in creating safe, inclusive, and sustainable communities.

Our purpose is to promote the role of architecture in delivering affordable, resilient, and inclusive communities, and to ensure that we have the right regulatory settings to enable this goal. We advocate for design not as a luxury, but as a tool of utility: one that adds long-term value, reduces risk, and serves the public good. Architecture is fundamentally practical, coordinates complexity, ensures regulatory compliance, and delivers outcomes that are safer, liveable, and enduring.

NZIA strongly supports the ambition and intent of Going for Housing Growth. We share the Government's objective to provide more homes, of greater diversity, in the right places, supported by infrastructure that works and communities that thrive.

We agree with the central premise that our housing market is underperforming due to constrained supply, land use inefficiencies, and planning processes that often take too long and cost too much. The proposals in Going for Housing Growth represent a significant step towards more responsive, better coordinated, and more equitable housing delivery.

However, how we grow is just as important as how much we grow. Growth without thoughtful design and strong spatial planning risks locking in higher housing costs, socially fragmented communities, and avoidable environmental impacts such as higher emissions and poor infrastructure outcomes. As architects, the Institute is committed to taking a whole-of-life, place-based perspective, ensuring that growth delivers not just more dwellings, but better homes and neighbourhoods that are affordable, socially connected, and environmentally responsible.

Our feedback focuses on four high-level priorities.

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Focus on "Building In" Before "Building Out"

We urge Government to embed a "build in first" principle at the heart of Going for Housing Growth. This means prioritising well-designed intensification in existing urban areas before enabling peripheral greenfield development.

- Leverage existing infrastructure: intensification makes better use of roads, water, schools, parks, and public transport already in place, avoiding the high cost of new networks in greenfield areas.
- Balance costs across land and infrastructure: the affordability of land should not be assessed in isolation. Peripheral development may appear cheaper per hectare but often requires extensive new infrastructure per dwelling or unit, dramatically increasing the total cost to the public.
- Reduce infrastructure burden: rates and maintenance costs for peripheral areas far exceed revenue, with councils inheriting kilometres of roads, pipes and trenches serving only a small number of households.
- Meet climate goals: compact growth supports public transport and active modes, reducing car dependence and associated emissions.

Our existing city footprints already contain significant unrealised capacity, including underutilised land, vacant and underutilised dwellings, and adaptable building stock. This land can accommodate growth without costly sprawl and should be the first priority.

We have the opportunity to learn from international examples (from Mexico's abandoned fringe housing to Japan's rural vacancies) which show the cost of building where people lack easy access to jobs and services. Applying these lessons can help ensure that future development in New Zealand supports affordability, community cohesion, and sustainable environmental outcomes, and avoids repeating costly mistakes seen overseas.

Prioritising Intensification, with Flexible and Responsive Growth Boundaries

Meeting our growing housing demands and improving affordability, means we need to make better use of the land and infrastructure we already have. Well-designed intensification, especially in areas with strong transport connections, walkable access to amenities, and existing services, is the most affordable, efficient, and socially beneficial way to grow. Concentrating development in these areas supports public transport, active modes, and vibrant, connected communities while protecting rural and productive land, and biodiversity.

Intensification should be the default. A clear set of capacity rules, based on quality design, mixed uses, and good amenity, should make it easy to build more homes in the right locations, and to do so quickly. These rules should actively incentivise the reuse and redevelopment of under-utilised urban

land, including vacant commercial sites and state-owned land in high-demand areas, before any expansion of the urban footprint is considered.

Where rigorous evidence shows that even ambitious intensification cannot meet projected demand, a targeted and well-planned release of land on the urban fringe may be needed. A flexible growth boundary framework, which has shown success overseas, provides a solution, if it:

- Is reviewed regularly to ensure sufficient, feasible development capacity over the long term.
- Links any boundary adjustment to an assessment of infrastructure requirements, factoring in not just engineering feasibility but also the economic, environmental, and social impacts of expansion.
- Requires that new growth areas are fully integrated into a broader spatial plan, with strong connections to public transport, services, and employment.

Internationally, cities that have balanced strong intensification policies with disciplined, evidence-based expansion have achieved both housing supply and sustainability goals. Copenhagen's "Five Fingers Plan" and Vancouver's transit-oriented development show how growth can be channelled into compact, well-connected patterns without sacrificing liveability. Oregon's Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) offers a proven, evidence-based model for protecting surrounding rural land while supporting sustainable, compact city growth. The UGB is reviewed regularly to ensure a 20-year supply of developable land, with expansions carefully managed to match population forecasts, housing demand, and infrastructure capacity. These approaches prevent disconnected, car-dependent sprawl, while supporting compact, well-connected urban form.

New Zealand can adopt the same discipline. Removing all planning controls risks entrenching low-density, infrastructure-heavy sprawl. Instead, planning tools should provide a clear "green light" for the right development in the right places, while ensuring any outward growth is strategic, affordable, infrastructure-ready, and delivers long-term value for communities and the environment.

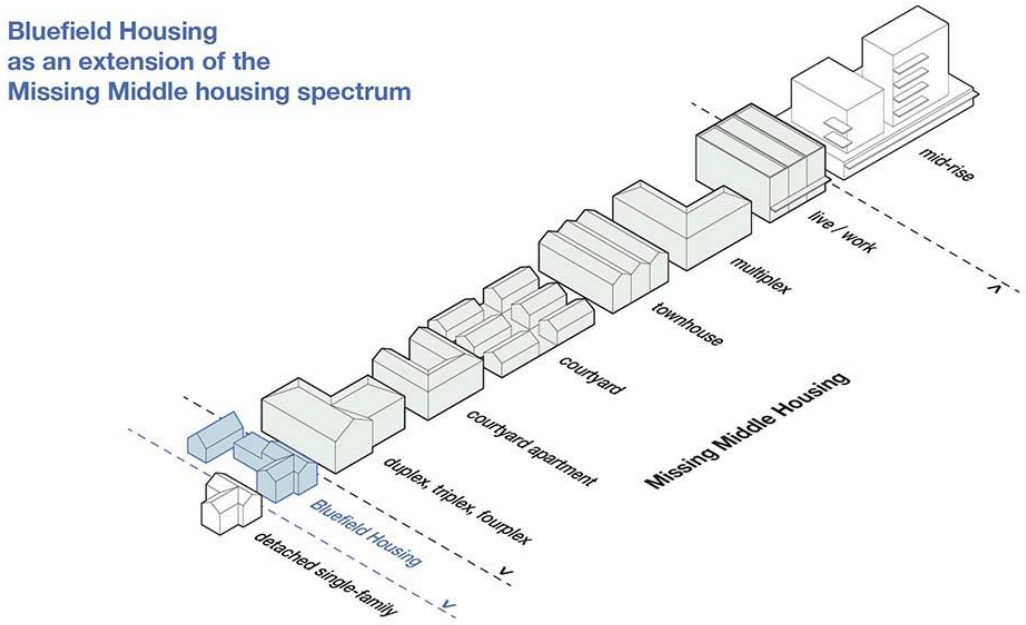
Reform Barriers to Practical Intensification

Meeting New Zealand's housing needs requires more than just "building more", it demands a balanced mix of housing typologies, from apartments and townhouses through to smaller-scale infill and the smart re-use of existing buildings. The approach delivers affordability, resilience, and liveability, while also adapting to local context, market demand, and community character.

Cohaus Grey Lynn shows this approach in action, combining three-storey apartments, terrace housing and single-family homes around shared gardens and amenities, achieving a density uplift of 1:19 on 2,407m². Its layout closely reflects the European-style perimeter block model, where buildings are positioned along the site boundaries to enclose a generous central courtyard –

resulting in efficient land use and a high level of amenity. The next phase of this project will deliver more homes (2:36 on 3,080m²) through apartments alone.

The Australian *Bluefields* model offers a compelling blueprint for this approach. It shows how moderate, well-planned infill can add multiple homes to a single lot, up to three or four in South Australia's Future Living Code Amendment (2021–2024, adopted 2025), without sacrificing greenery, privacy, or neighbourhood identity. By pairing gentle density with fast-track approvals for compliant dwellings, excluding heritage or sensitive sites from blanket intensification, and prioritising shared green space, good orientation, and landscape retention, Bluefields delivers more choice for both homeowners and tenants. It is a clear example of how New Zealand could enable high-quality, medium-density housing that works for people and place.



Apartments are a vital part of this mix, ranging from high-rise developments in our larger cities to low-rise apartments in Tier 2 cities. Mixed-use buildings, which include retail or commercial space at ground level with homes above, can bring life and convenience to neighbourhoods, supporting local businesses and reducing car dependence. Mt Maunganui shows how well-designed density, blending apartments and townhouses, can create vibrant, connected communities while making efficient use of land for housing, green space and shared amenities.

Townhouses and terrace housing can be delivered quickly and at scale, providing a bridge between apartment living and standalone houses. They can also integrate seamlessly into existing suburbs, especially when designed with zero-lot lines, shared green space, and thoughtful orientation.

Oregon's Middle Housing Model Code provides a useful precedent for New Zealand. Developed in 2001, the codes provide a standardised "ready-made" approach that applies automatically if local councils fail to act. For medium cities, it requires duplexes to be permitted on all residential lots under the same rules as detached houses, removing barriers like parking minimums, density caps and excessive setbacks. For large cities, it extends the same principle to a broader set of "middle housing" types (triplexes, quadplexes, townhouses and cottage clusters) ensuring they are allowed wherever single houses are permitted, with clear, objective design standards. This provides a nationally consistent, default code with the aim of accelerating delivery of small-scale, multi-unit housing, reducing consenting delays, and cutting costs, while enabling gentle intensification in existing neighbourhoods.

Partitioning existing homes is another under-utilised but cost-effective option, with minimal disruption. It creates new dwellings without consuming additional land or requiring major infrastructure upgrades. Auckland Council already allows this under the Auckland Unitary Plan, and a Nelson example shows how a villa was converted to include a separate dwelling for under $150,000. This low-impact approach can deliver quick, affordable housing, particularly in areas with established services. Partitioning can be combined with the Bluefields Model.

Heritage protections also need to be reviewed with a balanced lens. Not every pre-1940 villa can, or should, be preserved untouched. Sensitive retrofit and adaptive reuse can retain character while adding much-needed housing, following the lead of overseas "retrofit-first" policies that achieve win–win outcomes for heritage, sustainability, and housing supply. The adaptive reuse of vacant commercial buildings, such as offices in Auckland's CBD (with a 15% vacancy rate), is another untapped opportunity.

We have the opportunity to **fix key failings of the MDRS** to enable better medium-density housing. The 1m side yard setbacks waste land, reduce privacy, and reduce thermal efficiency; replacing them with zero-lot-lines would allow efficient, well-insulated terraced housing, with improved privacy. A transition zoning model can protect neighbours' winter sun while enabling staged height increases. Removing outdated rules, like minimum site sizes, and restrictive coverage limits, will cut costs, unlock smarter designs, and make every square metre work harder for people, place, and climate. Incentivising the amalgamation and redevelopment of two side-by-side sites – as many Pattern Book models require – could further enhance feasibility, deliver more cohesive designs, and make optimal use of scarce urban land. We can also utilise clever design to address some issues – Juliette balconies can provide a more cost-effective alternative to balconies in some circumstances, retaining amenity, light and fresh air.

This can also be extended to perimeter blocks of terrace housing or apartment blocks. Perimeter blocks arrange houses or apartments around a communal internal courtyard or shared green space, fostering stronger community interaction while protecting privacy from neighbours. This model supports versatile, high-quality medium-density housing that integrates well into existing

neighbourhoods. Combined with zero-lot lines, it allows deeper building footprints with better sunlight access and noise buffering.

New Zealand could draw on proven Australian models to speed up quality housing delivery, such as the Victorian Government's Future Homes programme and the NSW Housing Pattern Book – Pattern Designs. These initiatives offer architect-designed, ready-made plans for low- and mid-rise homes – complete with adaptable drawing packs and guidance – paired with a fast-track planning pathway for sites meeting clear criteria, such as proximity to public transport and town centres. If designs meet strict, mandatory standards on aspects like daylight, ventilation, green space, accessibility, and sustainability, approval focuses only on site-specific issues, with full merit review reserved for complex cases. This approach enables faster, more predictable consenting without sacrificing design quality, while encouraging well-located, greener, and better-designed neighbourhoods.

Masterplanning and Town Plans Over Blanket Zoning

One-size-fits-all zoning rules (such as blanket height increases) cannot deliver the nuanced, place-based outcomes we need.

- Strategic masterplans, spatial plans and neighbourhood plans allow for context-specific design which integrate housing with transport, social infrastructure, green space, and cultural heritage.
- Good plans and frameworks give certainty to developers and communities, de-risking projects and encouraging investment, while providing much greater cost certainty for developers through early coordination of infrastructure, land use, and design parameters.
- Well-prepared plans can also reduce conflict, providing early, detailed engagement on urban form and materials lessening objections and delays.

Our members have been frustrated by the paralysis created by inflexible spatial provisions in Auckland's Unitary Plan and MDRS rules, and the missed opportunities from not embedding design leadership early. We recommend:

- Embedding masterplanning into capacity assessment processes.
- Allowing masterplans to be dynamic, with scheduled reviews and the ability to adapt to innovation without full plan changes.
- Requiring social infrastructure overlays in masterplans — ensuring schools, health services, and public spaces keep pace with housing growth.

Conclusion

We support *Going for Housing Growth* as a rare opportunity to reframe how we plan for, design, and deliver housing. This programme recognises that housing is not available to everyone and seeks to solve this by increasing supply in the right places, noting that land supply is finite and land must be used more efficiently in our existing towns and cities. We agree that our housing does not meet all the needs of all people and all communities. Better housing and urban development outcomes are essential. New Zealanders are becoming accustomed to living in higher density environments. Good design is essential to encourage this continued uptake and to keep developing the urban culture we want to see here in Aotearoa New Zealand. If implemented with a "build in first" focus, retained growth boundaries, real intensification tools, and strong masterplanning and spatial planning, the programme can:

- Deliver more homes in the right places, faster.
- Support climate and productivity goals.
- Build communities that are future-proofed, socially, economically, and environmentally resilient.

The Institute would value the opportunity to work with government, councils, iwi, and industry to turn these policies into thriving, affordable, future-ready neighbourhoods. The measure of success will not be housing numbers alone, but also affordability, alongside the enduring quality, liveability, and cultural identity of the places we create.

Urban development in the new resource management system

Q1 What does the new resource management system need to do to enable good housing and urban development outcomes?

The new system must move beyond simply enabling more housing, to enabling better housing in the right places. This means recognising that in urban settings, property rights must be exercised alongside the responsibility to manage externalities such as infrastructure demand. Our "license" to use shared infrastructure must be planned and coordinated to ensure its capacity and efficiency are protected for all users. This means:

- **Ensuring affordability and quality** by prioritising intensification settings in existing urban areas that are more cost-effective to build in and cheaper for councils to service with infrastructure, while recognising that low-density sprawl increases long-term costs for ratepayers.
- **Prioritising well-designed intensification** in existing urban areas before greenfield expansion, using design quality to create compact, connected communities that endure for decades. Well-designed, durable buildings and neighbourhoods reduce long-term maintenance and infrastructure costs.

- **Embedding strong spatial and masterplanning tools** so growth is proactive, integrated with transport and social infrastructure, and gives developers and communities certainty.
- **Delivering diverse housing typologies** – ranging from apartments to townhouses, terraces and duplexes to adaptive reuse – supported by clear, consistent national rules that remove unnecessary barriers while protecting quality.
- **Providing clarity and transparency** in planning and infrastructure delivery to build trust and reduce disputes.
- **Setting environmental and social bottom lines** to ensure growth enhances resilience, equity, and long-term liveability.

A design-led, capacity-focused approach will create affordable, well-located development opportunities while safeguarding the qualities that make our towns and cities liveable.

Spatial planning in the new resource management system must deliver compact, connected, and resilient urban environments. The priority should be maximising well-designed intensification in existing urban areas before releasing new greenfield land. This means integrating housing with transport, infrastructure, and essential services to create communities that are affordable, liveable, and sustainable over the long term.

Key principles include:

- **Compact urban form:** Enable evidence-based, higher-density, mixed-use development, prioritising infill and brownfield redevelopment over sprawl.
- **Local amenity integration:** Apply the 15-minute city concept so residents have schools, healthcare, shops, parks, and jobs within walking or cycling distance.
- **Coordinated planning:** Align housing, transport, economic development, ecology, and climate resilience in a single, cross-sector spatial strategy.
- **Scalable densification:** Focus on “middle housing” and urban centres, using design standards, pattern books and masterplans to ensure quality, amenity, and climate performance.
- **Community-led localisation:** Support ultra-local five-year spatial plans nested within 30-year national frameworks to reflect local needs while meeting national goals.
- **Accessibility and inclusion:** Require housing to be affordable and accessible for people of all ages and abilities.
- **Sustainable mobility:** Prioritise walking, cycling, and public transport over private vehicles.

To raise quality and certainty, spatial plans should:

- Include provisions for rolling out urban capacity and infrastructure in targeted zones.
- Require design leadership from the outset, through urban massing studies, clear guidance, and robust material standards, rather than relying on ad hoc incentives.

- Use long-term (30-year) planning horizons to give communities and developers confidence about future growth patterns.

Peripheral expansion should only occur where there is robust evidence that intensification cannot meet demand, and only if new areas are fully integrated with transport, services, and employment. This protects food-producing land, reduces infrastructure costs, and prevents fragmented, car-dependent sprawl.

Housing growth targets

Q3 Do you support the proposed high-level design of the housing growth targets? Why or why not?

Yes – with targeted, well-managed implementation.

We support the proposed high-level design of housing growth targets, but they should be applied in targeted zones where effects can be proactively managed. Strong investment in urban design is essential to enable higher-density, well-located development that makes efficient use of infrastructure and supports communities to transition into more productive, resilient, and higher-value configurations over time.

Clear housing growth targets can help align planning, investment, and delivery. However, greater clarity is needed on how targets are set, funded, and integrated with infrastructure provision. If a location is guaranteed infrastructure investment to support growth, it becomes more attractive creating a self-reinforcing cycle. This does require external investment, without that, larger regions may absorb most of the growth while the smaller ones risk stagnation.

Targets should be underpinned by robust data, integrated with spatial planning, and linked to infrastructure certainty. City-wide Urban Design Frameworks and place-specific Spatial Frameworks can align housing growth with each location's climate, topography, and character. Identifying growth centres and corridors in advance will ensure intensification is both strategic and context-sensitive, delivering housing where it is most needed while protecting long-term quality and liveability.

Q4 How can the new resource management system better enable a streamlined release of land previously identified as suitable for urban development or a greater intensity of development?

We support the recognition that councils cannot be expected to service all developable land without external investment.

Releasing land for housing must be more than a box-ticking exercise. Without the right infrastructure, location, and coordination, "available" land risks remaining undeveloped or delivering poor outcomes. Many councils already struggle to service existing communities, so expecting them to fund and deliver new networks alone is unrealistic.

The new system should ensure land release is directly tied to long-term spatial growth plans, certainty of infrastructure provision, and measures to deter land banking. This requires stronger coordination between infrastructure agencies and councils. We would support cross-sector roundtables, with mandatory data sharing and clear consent timelines. Auckland Council has initiated stakeholder group meetings between representatives of the building industry, NZIA architects, designers, builders, engineers, surveyors, transport, water, power and heads of consenting departments. This is a good first step, we would like to see it made compulsory for infrastructure bodies to share relevant data and explain their consent timing.

We recommend:

- **National–regional–local coordination** to prioritise greyfield, bluefield, and brownfield sites and align with transport objectives.
- **Territorial authority–led land allocation** using clear national standards and, where appropriate, competitive processes to prioritise developments meeting sustainability and community objectives.
- **Streamlined, predictable processes** that reduce bureaucracy while protecting public outcomes.
- **Targeted intensification** in areas with strong transport links, supported by strategic masterplanning.

This approach delivers predictable capacity, integrates infrastructure planning, and focuses growth where it can deliver the greatest long-term social, environmental, and economic value.

Determining housing growth targets

Q5 Do you agree with the proposed methodology for how housing growth targets are calculated and applied across councils?

While more information is required, we recommend that capacity assessments embed stronger design processes. This will enable more accurate understanding of development potential and support the delivery of affordable, high quality, well-functioning developments.

Flexible Planning:
A more flexible approach to planning is needed, particularly in rural areas to accommodate diverse household needs and mobility patterns.

Rent Regulation:
Rent regulation should be reviewed to explore and address concerns about rent levels and legal certainty in development projects.

Inclusionary Housing:
The government should explore ways for Territorial Authorities to ensure inclusionary housing initiatives to achieve a mix of housing types and affordability within new developments.

Q6 Are there other methods that might be more appropriate for determining housing growth targets?

Yes, alternative methods for determining housing growth targets should be considered, particularly those that are locally responsive, data-driven, and informed by design. The key issue is not only how targets are set, but how they are managed and refined over time. Just as planning controls can be too generalised, growth targets also require flexibility and feedback mechanisms to remain effective and relevant.

Design-led approaches should be used to test whether targets translate into high-quality urban outcomes. Targets should be tied to spatial plans that reflect local context and community needs, ensuring that growth supports liveability and resilience. The quality of outcomes will depend heavily on the quality of data used to inform them. Therefore, ongoing funding for Stats NZ and robust data collection systems is essential. These systems should support smart city initiatives and provide public access to data that can guide land development and infrastructure investment.

Housing growth targets must be aligned with other national policies, including immigration, and climate targets to ensure consistency and accuracy in forecasting. Ultimately, targets should not be rigidly defined but should evolve based on evidence, community input, and urban design performance.

Calculating development capacity

Q7 How should feasibility be defined in the new system?

The Institute is calling for clearly defined, nationally consistent design and assessment standards that enable councils to fulfil their responsibility for balancing and managing feasibility more effectively. While councils are ultimately accountable for these decisions, their work is often hampered by inconsistent or subjective approaches to assessing capacity.

By embedding robust design standards, covering elements such as 3D spatial capacity and network infrastructure availability, the new system can reduce subjectivity, improve transparency, and produce feasibility assessments that are both realistic and buildable. This will

support councils to make better-informed decisions that directly improve affordability, quality, and long-term community outcomes.

Q8 If the design of feasibility is based on profitability, should feasibility modelling be able to allow for changing costs or prices or both?

Yes. While councils remain responsible for balancing these factors, the Institute is calling for feasibility modelling to incorporate allowances for both changing costs and price fluctuations, reflecting standard project planning principles. Without this, capacity assessments risk being overly optimistic and failing in delivery.

Embedding clearer, nationally consistent design and assessment standards will reduce the number of variables, provide a more accurate picture of buildable capacity, and lower systemic risk. This approach also ensures that public good and private interests are assessed together, supporting more equitable, affordable, and sustainable housing outcomes.

Q9 Do you agree with the proposal to replace the current 'reasonably expected to be realised' test with a higher-level requirement for capacity to be 'realistic'?

Yes, but this will require a detailed and systems design approach.

Q10 What aspects of capacity assessments would benefit from greater prescription and consistency?

There is a growing need for capacity assessment reports to incorporate more advanced modelling (Digital Twins), alongside qualitative factors that are essential to creating a liveable city. By doing so, these assessments become more realistic, helping to eliminate many systemic inefficiencies and unintended effects. This approach also ensures that communities are properly planned and integrated within a broader set of contextual parameters - including access to social services, green spaces, and natural resilience.

Additionally, climate change considerations and carbon accounting must be embedded within these assessments to support long-term sustainability and responsible urban development. Public and private interests should be evaluated together to achieve balanced, equitable outcomes.

Infrastructure requirements

Q11 Should councils be able to use the growth projection they consider to be most likely for assessing whether there is sufficient infrastructure-ready capacity?

More detailed information is required. We support highly defined capacity planning that integrates qualitative liveability criteria and neighbourhood-level planning, alongside a targeted and strategic rollout. The Singapore Liveability Framework is a good example; details are

provided in the appendix. The focus should be on delivering leading outcomes through modelled solutions that align with investment - shifting away from speculative likelihoods toward evidence-based certainty.

Spatial planning must clearly define where and how growth will occur, underpinned by robust data. Most, if not all, successful cities use growth projections to assess whether there is sufficient infrastructure-ready capacity - particularly for housing and employment.

This approach must also incorporate climate change considerations and carbon accounting to ensure long-term sustainability and resilience.

Q12 How can we balance the need to set minimum levels of quality for demonstrating infrastructure capacity with the flexibility required to ensure they are implementable by all applicable councils?

Modelling over time is essential to improving the quality and reliability of capacity assessments. Initially, the information must be practical and trialled in Tier 1 environments, where data availability and resourcing are stronger. The goal is to converge on common, clearly defined outcomes through accumulated and compounded effort.

Spatial plans must operate at a detailed local level, supported by robust data to guide growth effectively. This approach enables more precise planning and integration of infrastructure, housing, and services. Over time, it builds a foundation for scalable, evidence-based decision-making across regions.

For example, Oregon (USA) effectively balances infrastructure quality and implementability by setting statewide minimum standards while allowing flexibility for local adaptation. This approach combines clear, measurable performance benchmarks with the ability for councils to tailor implementation to their specific needs and resources.
They achieve this through:

1. **Statewide Minimum Standards** – Establishing consistent baseline expectations.
2. **Local Implementation and Adaptation** – Enabling tailored solutions based on local context.
3. **Programmed Review and Adjustment Timelines** – Ensuring standards remain relevant and effective.
4. **Collaboration and Support** – Facilitating coordination between state agencies and local councils.

New Zealand could adopt a similar framework at both national and regional levels, supporting consistent yet locally responsive infrastructure planning and delivery.

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Q13 What level of detail should be required when assessing whether capacity is infrastructure-ready? For instance, should this be limited to plant equipment (e.g. treatment plants, pumping stations) and trunk mains/key roads, or should it also include local pipes and roads?

We support the initiative to improve the efficiency of our national infrastructure and improving consistency around the country.

Data availability

"Infrastructure-ready" means that pipe connections are available at the street boundary to support the proposed site capacity. To ensure reliability, the system must deliver accurate and up-to-date information. However, historical records can pose a constraint. For example, Christchurch benefits from comprehensive data due to its post-earthquake rebuild, and newer areas of Auckland are similarly well-documented. In contrast, inner-city Auckland may face challenges due to inconsistent or incomplete local pipe records.

Where records are poor, local pipes should be excluded from assessments to avoid misleading conclusions. With current technology, all local roads should be included in infrastructure planning. For the housing sector to be productive, available capacity must be real and verifiable at the time projects begin - not assumed or estimated.

From "No" to "Yes, with conditions"

Infrastructure New Zealand recently issued a media release promoting a cultural shift from "no" to "yes, with conditions." We support this positive and pragmatic approach - provided those conditions are clearly defined and consistently applied.

Balancing consistency with local knowledge

We understand that the structure of local authorities and planning zones is currently under review. We support greater consistency across systems, on the condition that local knowledge and mana whenua values are respected and meaningfully integrated.

Strategic workforce, equipment and innovation planning

We also acknowledge that delivering services infrastructure requires skilled design and construction professionals, as well as specialised equipment. Establishing a bi-party Strategic Plan would help maintain a steady pipeline of work, ensuring the ongoing availability of both workforce and resources.

We strongly recommend that dedicated budget be allocated for research and development into innovative, sustainable infrastructure solutions. This should include not only traditional services infrastructure but also social and cultural infrastructure.

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Finally, infrastructure-ready capacity assessments must evaluate the entire system - right through to local pipes and roads - to ensure that capacity is real and available when housing and development projects begin.

Responding to price efficiency indicators

Q14 Do you agree with the proposed requirement for council planning decisions to be responsive to price efficiency indicators?

An overemphasis on urban fringe and greenfield land supply risks undermining efforts to create efficient urban capacity for housing. Rather than focusing solely on land price, efficiency calculations should be informed by development capacity and the cost of land per dwelling - factoring in infrastructure servicing, whole-of-life costs, maintenance, and ratepayer density.

It is also essential to include carbon costs and climate change implications in these assessments. A truly efficient and sustainable urban development strategy must account for environmental impacts alongside economic and social considerations.

Business land requirements

Q15 Do you agree that councils should be required to provide enough development capacity for business land to meet 30 years of demand?

A 30-year planning horizon is appropriate for long-term land use planning, provided it is supported by regular reviews every 5–7 years. This ensures urban form remains compact, efficient, and responsive to changing needs - without placing undue pressure on land values.

To be effective, neighbourhoods and business centres must be modelled together as part of an integrated capacity system. This enables a clearer understanding of how different land uses interact and ensures that city-specific challenges are addressed. Business centres - or key infrastructure elements that place disproportionate pressure on surrounding areas - should be assessed on their own merits, rather than being treated as generic mixed-use zones.

Planning must be holistic. Business and housing should not be considered in isolation. Spatial planning should be evidence-based, applied across multiple temporal and spatial scales, and allow for increased flexibility at broader scales to accommodate regional variation.

Over-reliance on non-specific mixed-use zoning should also be reviewed to ensure it delivers the intended outcomes.

We support this approach, with conditions:

- That a Strategic Plan is in place and supported by the relevant Council.

- That the Council's support is based on clear understanding and alignment with those funding the business land infrastructure—whether taxpayers, ratepayers, or private investors. Without this alignment, implementation is unlikely to be practicable.

Planning must be holistic. Business and housing should not be considered in isolation if we are to achieve well-functioning urban environments. Spatial planning should be evidence-based, applied across multiple temporal and spatial scales, and allow for greater flexibility at broader scales.

We also recommend national standardisation of planning processes. Business land should be assessed using the same timeframes and methodologies as general land use projections.

Responsive planning

Q16 Are mechanisms needed in the new resource management system to ensure councils are responsive to unanticipated or out-of-sequence developments? If so, how should these be designed?

Yes, initiatives that fall outside a city's targeted growth strategy must address any impacts they create on existing plans. In cases where such initiatives present significant regional opportunities, central government support may be appropriate to help resolve associated challenges.

In a well-managed system, there is no such thing as "out-of-sequence" development. If spatial planning is done correctly from the outset, further plan changes within a five-year period should be unnecessary.

Under certain circumstances, changes in land use or urban boundary expansion may be justified. Mechanisms like Oregon State law - which allows for the addition of land to the urban growth boundary - could be considered to enable flexibility while maintaining strategic oversight.

Carbon costs and climate change implications must also be factored into all land use and infrastructure decisions to ensure long-term sustainability.

"The Metro Council can, under certain circumstances, expand the urban growth boundary to meet immediate needs to provide lands for specific purposes that cannot be accommodated within the existing urban growth boundary and cannot wait until the completion of the next urban growth report. This rarely happens. In some cases, local governments may petition the Metro Council to consider an urban growth boundary expansion outside of the six-year review cycle to meet more immediate regional economic needs. (These petitions cannot be made in the year in which an urban growth report is required to be completed.) Since the

Metro Council is required to maintain a 20-year supply of land within the boundary for future jobs and housing and review that supply every five years, petitioners must address extensive criteria to justify such a narrowly targeted boundary expansion outside of the normal review cycle." (citation link)

Planning must be holistic and integrated, treating business and housing together rather than in isolation. Spatial planning should be evidence-based, applied across various temporal and spatial scales, and allow for increased flexibility at broader scales. A nationally standardised process is essential, with business land assessed using the same timeframes and methodologies as general land use projections.

Q17 How should any responsiveness requirements in the new system incorporate the direction for 'growth to pay for growth'?

Strategic Plans need to be far reaching and agreed upon by opposing political parties to ensure consistency over time.

Rural-urban boundaries

Q18 Do you agree with the proposal that the new resource management system is clear that councils are not able to include a policy, objective or rule that sets an urban limit or a rural-urban boundary line in their planning documents for the purposes of urban containment? If not, how should the system best give effect to Cabinet direction to not have rural-urban boundary lines in plans?

A fixed urban boundary should not be treated as a rigid limit. In a system that promotes density, greenfield developments must demonstrate clear advantages - through design and modelling - over more compact, centrally located alternatives. Infrastructure investment should be targeted toward concentrated, productive, and efficient areas, with transparent criteria for calculating return on investment, including whole-of-life costs and ratepayer density.

While rural-urban limits remain a necessary planning tool, spatial plans should define urban expansion based on evidence. Greenfield development should not be assumed or given automatic priority. Instead, any expansion must be justified through robust analysis.

Q19 Do you agree that the future resource management system should prohibit any provisions in spatial or regulatory plans that would prevent leapfrogging? If not, why not?

New Zealand's planning goals and guidelines do not need to explicitly prohibit provisions that prevent leapfrogging but rather should aim to manage urban growth and land use to ensure efficient and liveable communities.

Q20 What role could spatial planning play in better enabling urban expansion?

Spatial planning alongside evidence-based certainty should play a crucial role in enabling urban expansion by promoting sustainable development and efficient land use. Primarily, this expansion should consider directing growth within established urban growth boundaries and comprehensive plans through a structured and controlled process like Oregon State uses.

It should promote predictable and appreciable densification through good design. Highly defined urban plans with good volumetric, social and resilience strategies would enable a culture of pro-development and “no surprises” creating productive and liveable urban environments.

The proposal to restrict Council controls of land use is of concern. A national directive for regional land use would need to have been thoroughly considered for each place, with a considered approach to environmental and cultural context, to achieve good urban development outcomes.

Intensification

Key public transport corridors

Q21 Do you agree with the proposed definitions for the two categories of ‘key public transport corridors? If not, why not?

Yes, transport corridors - particularly those with efficient public transport - are essential to achieving good urban development outcomes. They support higher density living, reduce reliance on private vehicles, and enable more sustainable and connected communities.

However, not every bus stop or route within a network should automatically qualify as a key public transport corridor. The designation must be based on strategic value and transport capacity. In Auckland, for example, the initial focus should be on rail corridors, which offer higher capacity and more consistent service levels. This reinforces the need for location-specific spatial planning that reflects the unique transport and urban dynamics of each city.

The Copenhagen Finger Plan is a good example of strategic urban development framework and spatial planning that integrates transport, land use and environmental sustainability.

Copenhagen Finger Plan Key Concepts:

- **Structure**: the plan envisions the city growing along five "fingers" extending from the central "palm" (the urban core of Copenhagen). Each finger follows a transport corridor—primarily rail lines—supporting compact urban development along these axes.
- **Green Spaces**: the areas between the fingers are preserved as green wedges, used for agriculture, recreation, and environmental protection. This ensures access to nature and prevents urban sprawl.

- **Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)**: growth is concentrated around public transport nodes, promoting high-density, mixed-use development that reduces car dependency and supports sustainable mobility.
- **Balanced Growth**: the plan integrates housing, employment, and services along each finger, aiming for balanced and self-sufficient communities.
- **Regional Coordination**: it involves collaboration across municipalities to maintain coherence in land use, infrastructure investment, and environmental protection.

In summary, while public transport corridors are vital, their identification must be evidence-based and aligned with broader spatial planning strategies to ensure targeted, efficient, and sustainable urban growth.

Q23 Do you agree with councils being responsible for determining which corridors meet the definition of each of these categories?

Blanket zoning approaches are unlikely to deliver well-functioning urban environments, or the finer-grain, mixed-use development needed to achieve successful intensification. Instead, spatial planning that focuses on transport corridors - designed and implemented with local context in mind - can produce more nuanced and effective outcomes.

While transport corridors are essential to supporting urban growth, their planning must be evidence-based and location-specific. Not every transit node or bus stop should trigger zoning changes. A targeted approach, particularly one that prioritises high-capacity modes like rail in cities such as Auckland, is more likely to support sustainable and efficient development. The Copenhagen Fingerplan is an example, see appendix for more information.

Intensification catchments sizes

Q24 Do you support Option 1, Option 2 or something else? Why?

Neither approach is sufficient on its own - decisions must be grounded in evidence-based spatial planning. This ensures that development is strategically aligned with infrastructure, transport, and environmental considerations, rather than relying on blanket assumptions or reactive zoning.

However, we do support 15-minute city walkable catchments. 15-minute cities use *catchment zones* based on the distance a person can walk or cycle in 15 minutes from their home. These catchment zones are typically defined by the following principles: generally considered to be within about 1km walking distance (larger for cycling) from the centre to the edge. Within this area, most daily needs - including groceries, education, healthcare, parks, retail, and employment - should be accessible on foot. This catchment zones can encompass multiple neighbourhoods (often up to seven) and supports a population of approximately 23,000,

depending on urban density and layout. Note Melbourne uses a 20-minute neighbourhood model in its 2017-2050 Strategic Plan.

Minimum building heights to be enabled

Q25 What are the key barriers to the delivery of four-to-six storey developments at present?

There is a common perception that mid-rise buildings of 4 to 6-storeys are more expensive to construct than three-storey timber buildings or taller apartment blocks. However, building at this scale often results in broader benefits, including longer-lasting structures and higher design quality, particularly when better materials and architectural standards are applied.

With good massing design, buildings of up to eight storeys can be achieved while maintaining a compatible streetscape. Melbourne's Nightingale Brunswick developments are a strong example of this scale done well. The inclusion of a lift at this height should not be a major concern; as the construction market matures and demand increases, this typology can be delivered more cost-effectively.

Despite the potential of four-to-six storey developments, several persistent barriers limit uptake. Suburban lot sizes, excessive setbacks, lack of incentives, planning uncertainty, and high construction costs all contribute to slow delivery. To overcome these, we need to make it easier to develop across multiple plots, introduce net-zero lot lines and perimeter block planning rules, and actively incentivise quality intensification over less efficient growth models. These changes would unlock more efficient land use, reduce costs, and support well-designed, higher-density housing that delivers lasting community and environmental benefits.

Additionally, there is a reluctance to consider retrofitting or adaptive reuse as a viable pathway to deliver housing more affordably. Many existing 4–6 storey buildings are outdated but could be upgraded to meet modern needs at a lower cost than new builds.

Q26 For areas where councils are currently required to enable at least six storeys, should this be increased to more than six storeys? If so, what should it be increased to? Would this have a material impact on what is built?

Yes. This scale is appropriate in our inner cities around transport corridors, but good urban plans need to be created to accommodate this scale well. Scales of up to 10/12 storeys can be accommodated on large sites if the massing is mixed well with lower scaled buildings, attention to streetscape is designed well, and access to amenity is integrated.

Q27 For areas where councils are currently required to enable at least six storeys, what would be the costs and risks (if any) of requiring councils to enable more than six storeys?

Requiring building heights above six storeys brings both opportunities and risks. Without robust urban design frameworks, there is a heightened risk of low-quality outcomes, particularly if intensification is not paired with neighbourhood-scale spatial planning and effective design review processes.

More intensive land use requires greater investment in social infrastructure and public services. However, it can also unlock economies of scale, beyond land efficiency alone, by supporting vibrant local centres, improving housing choice, and making better use of existing infrastructure.

Taller buildings can affect neighbouring properties' sunlight, privacy, and outlook, yet they also offer benefits such as improved access to views and natural light, shared amenities, and the preservation of green space by building up rather than out.

Potential benefits of well-planned taller buildings include:

- Greater support for local businesses.
- Activated, safer streets through passive surveillance.
- Stronger social and community networks.

Risks if height increases are poorly planned or implemented include:

- Diluting density goals by dispersing growth away from priority areas.
- Undermining targeted intensification strategies.
- Uneven access to publicly funded infrastructure.
- Adverse impacts on heritage and established built form.

The taller the development, the more likely it is to encounter consenting challenges, particularly in sensitive or historic contexts. A balanced, context-specific approach is essential—one that maximises the benefits of additional height while ensuring it contributes positively to the surrounding urban fabric.

Offsetting the loss of development capacity

Q28 Is offsetting for the loss of capacity in directed intensification areas required in the new resource management system?

No, offsetting should not be automatically required. Intensification is not just a numbers game – it is about people, community, place, and design. Reducing it to a purely quantitative exercise risks shifting development pressure from areas of privilege to lower socio-economic communities under the guise of protecting "heritage," which can deepen social inequities.

Councils are best placed to manage local, place-based responses. If a development is deemed inappropriate due to a qualified matter (such as heritage), offsetting should not be guaranteed. Instead, decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis, guided by spatial planning and community context.

Q29 If offsetting is required, how should an equivalent area be determined?

As above

Intensification in other areas

Q30 Is an equivalent to the NPS-UD's policy 3(d) (as originally scoped) needed in the new resource management system? If so, are any changes needed to the policy to make it easier to implement?

Yes, but it must be improved. While encouraging development around transit nodes is important, Policy 3(d) lacks clarity and is difficult to apply in existing neighbourhoods.

To be effective, any replacement policy should be supported by:

- **Evidence-based spatial plans** with clearly defined outcomes and principles.
- **Design controls** for noise, shading, privacy, and amenity.
- **Professional design review** by architects, landscape architects, and urban designers.

Without these, the policy risks poor outcomes and community pushback. A more structured, locally responsive approach is needed to ensure successful transit-oriented development.

Enabling a mix of uses across urban environments

Q31 What controls need to be put in place to allow residential, commercial and community activities to take place in proximity to each other without significant negative externalities?

To successfully enable residential, commercial, and community activities to coexist in close proximity, a range of controls must be embedded within the planning and design process. We recommend the following:

1. **Detailed Urban Neighbourhood Plans**
   A comprehensive urban plan for each neighbourhood is essential. It should address land use integration, infrastructure capacity, and spatial relationships between different activities. This planning framework helps pre-empt and mitigate potential conflicts.
2. **Design and Environmental Controls**
   Key considerations include:
    1. **Access to sunlight** for residential and public spaces.
    2. **Noise and shading controls** defined spatially within the plan to ensure compatibility between uses.
    3. **Soft landscaping** to enhance amenity, manage stormwater, and buffer noise.

4. **Privacy and overlooking protections**, particularly between residential and commercial interfaces.
5. **Traffic flow management** to reduce congestion and improve safety.

3. **Robust Design Review Processes**
   All significant developments should be subject to review by qualified professionals, including architects, landscape architects, and urban designers. A formal design review panel process ensures that proposals are assessed for quality, context sensitivity, and long-term urban outcomes.
4. **Performance-Based Zoning and Monitoring**
   Introduce performance standards for mixed-use zones that address noise, light, air quality, and traffic impacts. These should be monitored and enforced to maintain liveability and business viability.
5. **Community Engagement and Co-Design**
   Early and ongoing engagement with local communities ensures that developments reflect local values and needs and helps build social licence for change.
6. **Incentives for High-Quality Mixed-Use Development**
   Consider financial or regulatory incentives for developments that meet high design and sustainability standards, including adaptive reuse of existing buildings.

By embedding these controls into the resource management system, mixed-use development can be a catalyst for vibrant, inclusive, and resilient urban communities.

Q32 What areas should be required to use zones that enable a wide mix of uses?

We recommend that zones enabling a wide mix of uses be required in areas clustered around city, town, and village centres. These locations are natural focus points for community life and are best positioned to support integrated, sustainable urban development.

Housing is just one component of a thriving urban environment. As architects, working on public places, such as libraries, community centres, and schools – we consistently hear a common aspiration: people want these places to feel like home.

Good quality housing is not only physical structures; good housing is a home and is an integral and foundational part of a thriving and well-functioning community. And that community thrives when supported by thoughtful urban development that integrates housing with social and physical infrastructure. We caution against setting housing policy in isolation from its context and surrounding land uses.

Similarly, we urge that services infrastructure – such as water, waste, and roads – not be planned in isolation from social infrastructure like public transport, schools, healthcare, green

spaces, and places for social gathering. These elements are interdependent and must be considered together to achieve resilient, inclusive, and future-ready communities.

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) neighbourhoods exemplify this integrated approach. They demonstrate how mixed-use zoning, when paired with accessible transport and community infrastructure, can create vibrant, walkable, and connected places where people want to live, work, and gather.

Minimum floor area and balcony requirements

Q33 Which rules under the current system do you consider would either not meet the definition of an externality or have a disproportionate impact on development feasibility?

While few current rules clearly fall outside the definition of externalities, their impact on development feasibility can be reduced through more detailed urban planning.

Minimum standards remain necessary, as developers often default to low-quality outcomes without clear guidance. The economics of development must account for public health, access to quality public realm, and recreational space - especially in higher-density environments.
We recommend:

- **Evidence-based urban plans** to guide development and reduce uncertainty.
- **Design review processes** involving architects, landscape architects, and urban designers to ensure quality outcomes.
- **Spatial plans** that define controls for shading, noise, and privacy to balance mixed-use development with liveability.

These measures help ensure that rules support both development feasibility and community wellbeing.

Targeting of proposals

Q34 Do you consider changes should be made to the current approach on how requirements are targeted? If so, what changes do you consider should be made?

Yes, we recommend incentivising higher-density development through good design and predictable, valued outcomes. This includes aligning planning requirements with spatial plans that reflect local context and community needs.

A default approach should be to prioritise place-based spatial planning, especially in Tier 1 and regional centres. The immediate focus should be on aligning these areas around context-sensitive intensification strategies that support liveability, infrastructure efficiency, and long-term resilience.

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Impacts of proposals on Māori

Q35 Do you have any feedback on how the Going for Housing Growth proposals could impact on Māori?

We strongly recommend that specific feedback be actively sought from Māori communities, including those involved in urban papakāinga, marae-based development, Māori social housing, and services such as mental health units and transitional housing. These forms of housing and support are essential to Māori wellbeing and must be considered in any zoning reform.

It is difficult to quantify how the proposed changes would impact Māori differently from Pākehā and other New Zealanders.

The proposed loosening of land use restrictions is a positive step for Māori landowners and their whānau. Yet, it does not address the needs of Māori who do not own land – many of whom face significant barriers to housing access and security.

The term *tangata whenua* - people of the land - reflects the deep ancestral and spiritual connection Māori have to their whenua. The dual meaning of *whenua* as both land and placenta speaks to this intrinsic bond. Any planning and zoning decisions must honour this relationship.

Home ownership rates among Māori remain significantly lower than those of Pākehā. This disparity is rooted in a complex history of systemic and institutional disadvantage. While one reform to the Resource Management Act cannot resolve these issues alone, it must acknowledge and respond to Māori housing needs in the proposal.

We urge that all zoning and urban development proposals be explicitly aligned with Te Tiriti o Waitangi and viewed through a te ao Māori lens. This includes:

- **Partnership**: Actively engaging with iwi, hapū, and Māori organisations in decision-making.
- **Protection**: Safeguarding Māori interests in land, housing, and cultural infrastructure.
- **Participation**: Ensuring Māori voices shape the planning and implementation of mixed-use zones.

Without this alignment, reforms risk perpetuating existing inequities rather than addressing them.

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Other matters

Q36 Do you have any other feedback on Going for Housing Growth proposals and how they should be reflected in the new resource management system?

We support the intent to enable housing growth but emphasise that growth must be guided by well-designed urban planning and a commitment to long-term sustainability and resilience. Investing in high-quality master and spatial plans, visible design exemplars, and successful case studies has the greatest potential to shape our cities into generators of social, economic, and environmental value. These new plans should simplify the process of building in urban areas, appeal to a wider range of households, and attract diverse businesses.

We encourage government support to incentivise well-researched innovation in both the built form and ownership models of housing. This includes:

- Alternative ownership and tenancy models such as co-housing, papakainga, rent-to-own, and build-to-rent.
- Requirements for large developments to include a mix of social and affordable housing.

These approaches would enable more people to access secure, appropriate housing and foster inclusive communities.

We caution against housing growth that relies on large-scale, conventional subdivisions on the urban periphery - particularly on former food-producing land. This model is not sustainable. It generates traffic congestion, environmental degradation, and social isolation, rather than creating homes and communities. Such outcomes run counter to the goals of the programme.

Economic growth and productivity would be better served by enabling more housing for more people within well-planned, mixed-use urban environments. These areas support walkability, access to public transport, and proximity to jobs, education, and services.

Finally, we urge the government to prioritise support for people experiencing homelessness. Investment in well-designed shelter and wraparound social services would not only meet urgent needs but also uplift the wider community. Addressing homelessness visibly and effectively would be a powerful signal that we are serious about resolving the housing crisis.

Transitioning to Phase Three

Q37 Should Tier 1 and 2 councils be required to prepare or review their HBA and FDS in accordance with current NPS-UD requirements ahead of 2027 long-term plans? Why or why not?

Yes. Tier 1 and 2 councils should be required to update their Housing and Business Assessments and Future Development Strategies in accordance with current National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD) requirements ahead of the 2027 long-term plans.

This is essential for:

1. **Alignment with New Growth Targets and Modelling**
   The updated growth targets and emerging urban modelling initiatives require a timely response. Councils must be equipped with current data and planning tools to ensure their strategies reflect realistic and sustainable development pathways.
2. **Local Context and Infrastructure Feasibility**
   Councils are best placed to understand the unique characteristics of their communities. They are responsible for commissioning and managing infrastructure and therefore have a clearer view of what is feasible in terms of development. Effective planning requires this local insight.
3. **Need for a Strategic Plan**
   Without an updated FDS, councils lack a coherent framework to guide infrastructure investment, land use decisions, and housing delivery. A robust plan is essential to coordinate efforts across agencies and ensure efficient use of resources.
4. **Retrofit and Adaptive Reuse – a Missed Opportunity**
   The current proposals lack any mention of retrofit - an internationally preferred method for sustainable urban development. There are at least 460,000 home requiring retrofitting in New Zealand. Retrofit offers a triple benefit:
   - Preservation of heritage buildings.
   - Advancement of sustainability goals and climate targets.
   - Provision of housing in existing urban areas.

Overseas examples, such as Sydney's *Heritage Floor Space Scheme*, demonstrate how financial incentives can encourage conservation and adaptive reuse. While Sydney's scheme applies to commercial buildings, similar principles could be adapted for residential use in Aotearoa New Zealand. The scheme provides incentive for conservation and ongoing maintenance of heritage items in central Sydney, by allowing owners of heritage buildings to be awarded unused development potential from their site, known as Heritage Floor Space. We recommend that central and local government explore incentive mechanisms to support this approach. Please refer to the appendix for more information about these examples.

In summary, requiring councils to update their HBA and FDS ahead of the 2027 long-term plans is practical and necessary to ensure that housing growth is well-planned, locally responsive, and aligned with sustainability and heritage goals.

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Appendix: Reference Case Studies

Below is a summary of the case studies referenced in the submission.

Pattern Book Case Studies

Ready-made architectural designs and purpose-built fast-track planning process to build faster and more affordable housing in Australia. Good quality, sustainable and cost-effective examples taken from the:

- **New South Wales Housing Pattern Book** NSW Housing Pattern Book | Planning
- **Victoria - Future Homes designs** Future Homes designs

Housing Typology	Description
Semis (Duplex) - 2-storey 2 dwellings 3-4 bedrooms	Dual occupancy design for 2 homes arranged side-by-side. Read more here

Housing Typology	Description
Terraces 2-storey 3 dwellings which can be placed side by side with zero-lot-lines to create row housing 2-4 bedrooms	Compact design for Low and Mid Rise (LMR) Housing Areas and a standard design for non-LMR Housing Areas. Read more here

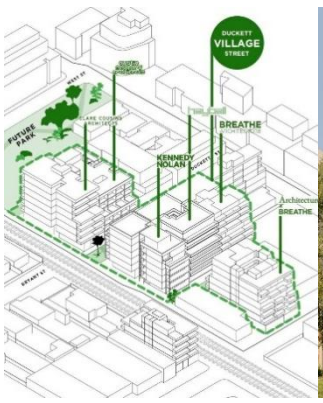
Housing Typology	Description
Manor Homes (Townhouses) 2-storey 4 dwellings @83m2 2-3 bedrooms	Compact design for Low and Mid Rise (LMR) Housing Areas. 2 apartments on the ground floor and 2 on the first floor. The proportions of the design would work well for infill development in residential neighbourhoods. It has the width of a detached house. Read more here

Housing Typology	Description
3-Level Walk-up Apartments + Townhouse 13 x 1–5-bedroom dwellings	The scheme consists of 3 key design elements: • a well-sized communal courtyard • a welcoming threshold garden • strategically located communal stairs. All elements are designed to support interactions between the residents and neighbourhood and respond to contextual conditions. Read more here

Housing Typology	Description
Mid-rise apartments 4-storeys Multiple designs under development and to be released later in 2025	Respond to the unique Australian climate, including a focus on indoor and outdoor living and how to incorporate shade and ventilation, Read more here

Multistorey Case Studies

Housing Typology	Description
Multistorey apartments **Mix of 5-8-storeys** Nightingale Village Brunswick, Melbourne	Precinct-scale housing development, known for its community-focused design and commitment to social, environmental, and economic sustainability. Six buildings designed by different architects, including a mix of apartments and commercialspaces, and a strong emphasis on fostering community interaction and reducing environmental impact. Read more here

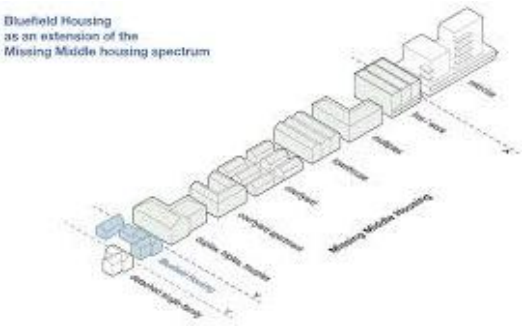


Housing Typology	Description
Multistorey 6-storey apartment 39 apartments Studios, 1 -2-bedrooms Morningside, Auckland.	Completed by Ockham Residential. No carparks, communal living emphasis, low maintenance materials, more affordable housing for downsizing or young professionals Read more here

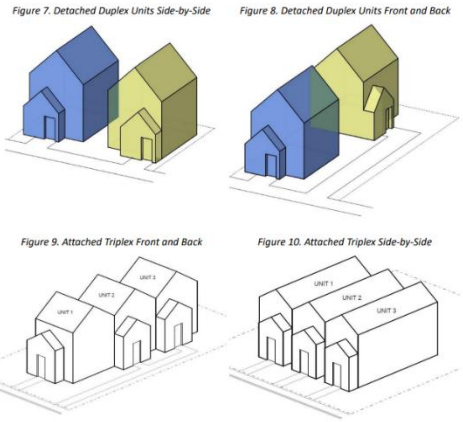
Urban/Housing Strategies + Models Case Studies

Urban/Housing Model	Description
European style Perimeter Block **Mix of** 3-level walk-up, terrace housing and a single-family home 19 dwellings	Mix of dwellings and heights with shared gardens and amenities, achieving a density uplift of 1:19 on 2,407m². Its layout closely reflects the European-style perimeter block model, where buildings are positioned along the site boundaries to enclose a generous central courtyard—resulting in efficient land use and a high level of amenity. Read more here

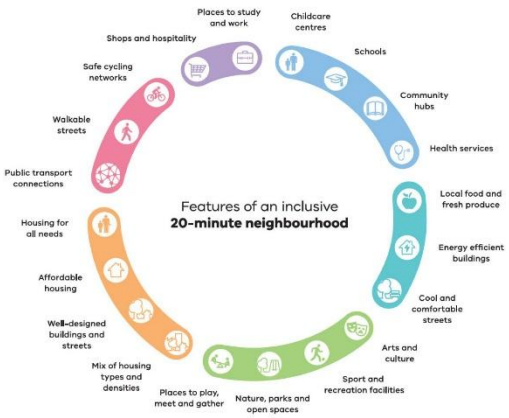
Housing Model	Description
Bluefields housing with adaptive reuse South Australia's Future Living Code Amendment (2021–2024, adopted 2025),	The Australian *Bluefields* model shows how moderate, well-planned infill can add multiple homes to a single lot, up to three or four in South Australia's Future Living Code Amendment (2021–2024, adopted 2025), without sacrificing greenery, privacy, or neighbourhood identity. Read more here and here



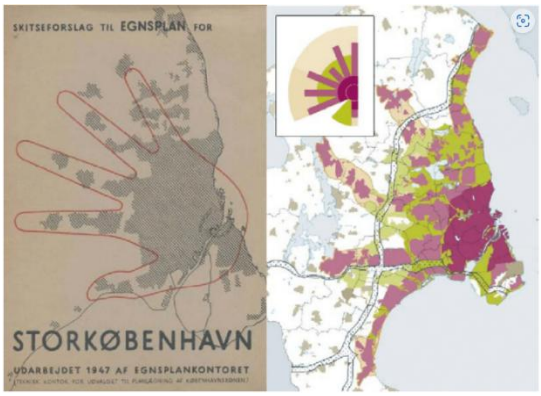
Housing Model	Description
Oregon's Middle Housing Code (2001) Duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes	Provide a standardised "ready-made" approach that applies automatically if local councils fail to act. For medium cities, it requires duplexes to be permitted on all residential lots under the same rules as detached houses, removing barriers like parking minimums, density caps and excessive setbacks. For large cities, it extends the same principle to a broader set of "middle housing" types (triplexes, quadplexes, townhouses and cottage clusters) ensuring they are allowed wherever single houses are permitted, with clear, objective design standards. This provides a nationally consistent, default code with the aim of accelerating delivery of small-scale, multi-unit housing, reduce consenting delays, and cut costs, while enabling gentle intensification in existing neighbourhoods. Read more here and here



Strategy Model	Description
Plan Melbourne 2015 – 2050 Strategies – 20-minute Neighbourhoods, Future Homes, Future Planning Framework, Greening Melbourne	Plan Melbourne will guide the growth of the city for the next 35 years. The vision for Melbourne: Melbourne will continue to be a global city of opportunity and choice. Read more here



Spatial Planning Model	Description
Copenhagen's Finger Plan	The Finger Plan establishes the overall framework for spatial planning in the Copenhagen area. In their municipal and local planning, the 34 municipalities must follow the provisions, principles and area designations of the finger plan. The aim of the Finger Plan is, among other things: 1. to concentrate housing, commerce, businesses, public institutions, etc. around a well-developed infrastructure in the finger city. 2. to reserve the areas between and outside the finger town green wedges, small urban communities, agriculture, etc. Read more here

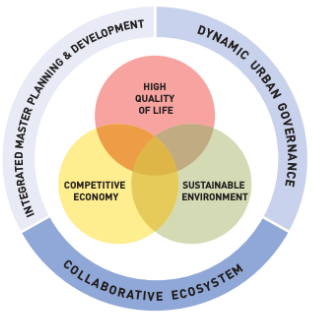


Urban Strategy Model	Description
The Liveability Framework - Singapore	A successful model from Singapore. High quality of life (enabled by quality affordable housing) was considered the primary objective supported by and directly related to a competitive economy and a sustainable environment . Centre For liveable Cities https://www.clc.gov.sg/

UNDERSTANDING LIVEABILITY THROUGH THE FRAMEWORK

Guided by the new complexities and contextual circumstances that govern the future urban landscape, the Liveability Framework serves as a reference for city leaders, policymakers and planners in planning for liveable and sustainable cities. While the refreshed framework adopts a future-oriented approach, it is built upon the body of work by Singapore's urban pioneers. Just as there were instances where the city underperformed, this framework provides the opportunity to get it right the next time and history will be the judge of how Singapore performs henceforth.

The Liveability Framework diagram depicts the three critical liveability outcomes which are represented as intersecting circles. Surrounding these is a "ring" structure consisting of the three complementary systems which provide the enabling conditions to achieve and sustain the outcomes. The diagram reflects a shift from traditional hierarchical models to a non-linear, systems-oriented relationship between systems and liveability outcomes.



The Liveability Framework
Image from Centre for Liveable Cities

Spatial Planning Model	Description
Oregon's Urban Growth Boundary	Each Oregon city is surrounded by an urban growth boundary (UGB); a line drawn on planning maps to designate where a city expects to grow over a 20-year period. This growth can occur with new houses, industrial facilities, businesses, or public facilities such as parks and utilities. Restrictions in areas outside of a UGB protect farm and forest resource land and prohibit urban development. Generally speaking, it's where the city ends and the farms and forests begin. Read more here