



# The UPPER NORTH ISLAND STRATEGIC ALLIANCE UPDATE



UNISA



WINTER 2017



UNISA Mayors & Chairs: Alan Livingston, Bill Shepherd, Phil Goff, Doug Leeder, Greg Brownless, Sheryl Mai and Andrew King.

## Commitment to collaborate

The Upper North Island Strategic Alliance (UNISA) is a collective of seven Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Auckland and Northland councils who work together on inter-regional challenges and opportunities. Mayors and Chairs from UNISA councils met in late March to sign their Triennial Agreement and publicly release the Upper North Island (UNI) Story and the UNISA value proposition.

The UNI Story is a succinct, visual document highlighting key trends for the demographics, economic performance, transport, housing, natural environment and the workforce in the Upper North Island. From Northland to Waikato, the Upper North Island supports 53 percent of the national population and generates 52 percent of the country's GDP. Growth here has increased more rapidly than for the rest of the country and that's predicted to continue. Sustaining this level of growth will benefit all New Zealanders but comes with challenges that local councils cannot manage alone.

The UNISA Value Proposition articulates the strategic importance of UNISA in addressing common issues for Upper North Island communities. UNISA can help align local and central government priorities to support economic growth, good living standards and healthy environments in the country's most populated regions.

Print or electronic copies of both documents are available from [sallyb@nrc.govt.nz](mailto:sallyb@nrc.govt.nz).

## Integrated land use and transport planning

UNISA members have started discussions with port industry stakeholders as the first step towards scoping of a joint approach to land use and transport planning.

UNISA Mayors and Chairs identified the need for this work at their December 2016 meeting, in response to forecasts of escalating growth in freight and population. Further scoping work may include a review of the 2013 Upper North Island Freight Story, and discussions with other stakeholders and central government agencies.

## UNISA connects with Auckland Policy Office

Led by the State Services Commission, the Auckland Policy Office (APO) is home to policy and system leaders from 15 government departments including Internal Affairs, Treasury, Ministry for the Environment, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Business Innovation & Employment, and Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

APO staff have been connecting with UNISA, as advisors and observers in UNISA staff, governance and project team meetings. This connection is helping to raise the profile of UNISA's work with Wellington-based central government agencies, and facilitate local government access to central government experts and decision-makers.

## Labour trends and economic growth

A report on Upper North Island sector trends and labour demand, commissioned by UNISA last year, found that for the next two financial years overall demand for labour is expected to exceed supply, with only a small surplus of labour expected in 2019-20.

The report also explored local government options for addressing labour market challenges. It found that councils have a natural role in facilitating economic growth through regulatory functions and investment; however central government agencies hold the most relevant policy levers for managing labour supply.

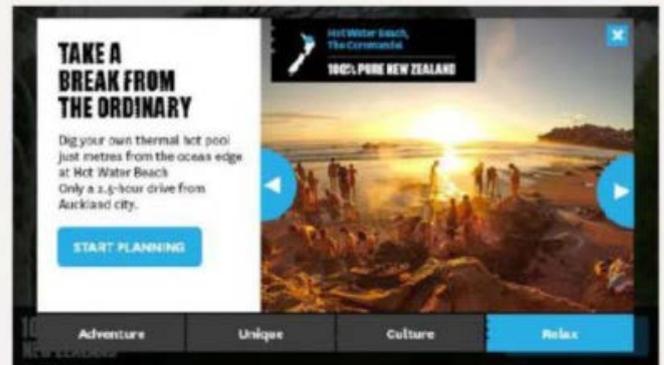
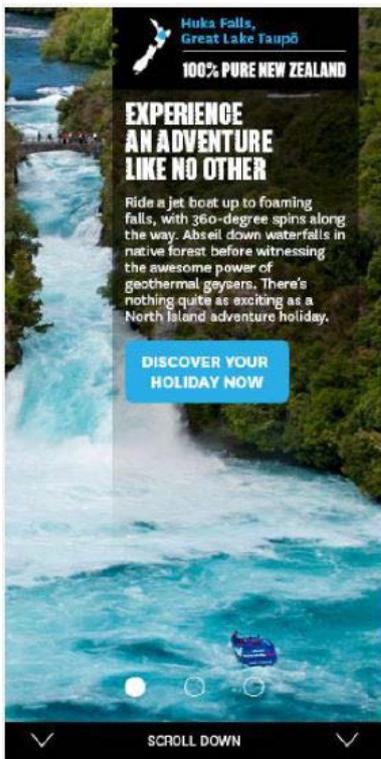
In response, UNISA members have agreed to regular liaison and information sharing that supports central government-led labour management initiatives, as well as ongoing collaboration on cross-council economic development projects.



Collaboration for inter-regional success and a strong New Zealand.

[www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/unisa](http://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/unisa)

UNISA



Joint marketing has achieved unprecedented success.

## Successful tourism campaign targets Aussies

At the 31 March UNISA Mayors and Chairs Meeting, Jason Hill, Head of Tourism at Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development presented on last year's successful Upper North Island Tourism Campaign, which leveraged the combined funding of local tourism organisations.

Through the UNISA Tourism Group; Destination Northland, Hamilton, Waikato Tourism, Destination Rotorua Marketing, Destination Great Lake Taupō and Tourism New Zealand, have been pooling resources to deliver a joint tourism marketing campaign for the last five years. Trade partners including Flight Centre, Air NZ, Te Puia, Waitomo, and the Hobbiton Movie Set also contributed to the campaign this year.

The 2016 focus was on promoting four Upper North Island touring holiday themes to Australians: adventure, discover, refresh and connect. The campaign delivered a record return on investment and the best performance ever for a Tourism NZ campaign in Australia. Newzealand.com web pages delivered more than 22,000 referrals to the target regions (a 219 percent increase from last financial year). Flight Centre reported a 59 percent sales increase (year over year) for the period, and room nights were up 73 percent. Due to its success, a similar joint campaign will be delivered in August 2017.

### Contact us

To find out more about UNISA's work, contact:

**Sally Bowron** [sallyb@nrc.govt.nz](mailto:sallyb@nrc.govt.nz)

**Freephone** 0800 002 004

