



UNISA

Value
PROPOSITION
2019-2022

THE UPPER NORTH ISLAND STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

What is the Upper North Island Strategic Alliance?

Growth in the upper North Island has increased more rapidly than anywhere else in New Zealand, and it's predicted to continue.

That's why the Upper North Island Strategic Alliance (UNISA) was established in 2011. Comprising councils from the four regions plus the largest city in each, it responds to and manages a range of interregional and inter-metropolitan issues.

The alliance comprises of Northland, Waikato and Bay of Plenty regional councils, Auckland Council, Whangarei District Council, and Hamilton and Tauranga city councils. Mayors and chairs from the respective regions make up the alliance.

To extend its reach, each regional council is responsible for representing and communicating with the councils in their respective regions.

UNISA is also committed to inviting non-member councils to join UNISA's governance meetings where there are items of shared interest on the agenda.

Why is the Upper North Island so important?

From Northland to Waikato and across to the Bay of Plenty, the upper North Island supports 53 per cent of the national population and generates 52 per cent of the country's gross domestic product (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 it comes with challenges that local upper North Island councils cannot manage alone.

The upper North Island also contains vital transport networks and acts as New Zealand's gateway to the world, with Ports of Auckland, Tauranga and Northport exporting and importing the majority of New Zealand's goods.

What value does UNISA provide?

- Unified approach in responding to national issues. UNISA can develop agreed positions on matters of national and regional importance and provide a shared voice to work with central government. Collaboration between parties is simpler and more effective when a united team works together.
- Identifying and acting on opportunities and constraints for the upper North Island. The regions of the upper North Island depend on each other in a number of ways and share some opportunities and constraints. Together, they are important to the current and future success of New Zealand as a whole. UNISA can identify, assess and act on these opportunities and constraints.
- Coordinated views, planning and decision making. The upper North Island is critical to New Zealand's economic success, with more than half of New Zealand's population, GDP, jobs and freight movement. The upper North Island also has key infrastructure, such as ports, transport networks and airports. As such, considered planning and thinking is important to New Zealand as a whole.



What does success look like?

- UNISA is recognised for well-coordinated views, based on sound evidence, on matters of significance for the upper North Island.
- UNISA is a 'go-to' or touch stone for central government on matters affecting the upper North Island.
- Members of UNISA, other councils in the upper North Island and government agencies have an understanding of inter-regional connections and how to capitalise on these.
- Better working relationships between agencies in UNISA and with central government.

How is this undertaken?

- Collective projects to inform decision making, identify opportunities and ensure coordinated planning and decision making.
- Working with central government through joint submissions, position statements and collaborative projects.
- Overseeing the implementation of the UNISA Work Programme.

What is UNISA's current focus and what has it achieved?

UNISA has commissioned a number of projects since being established:



1. Independent Port Study 2012

Looked at the supply and demand for ports and port-related infrastructure in the upper North Island. This informed Auckland Council's decisions about the provision of port facilities in its city.



2. Upper North Island Freight Study 2013

Considered one of UNISA's biggest success stories, this collaborative project with the New Zealand Transport Agency, KiwiRail and Auckland Transport led to better land use and transport planning. It provided an evidence base for sharing with local government, industry, operator and port partners and identified priority transport networks and roads for investment purposes.



3. Industrial Land Demand 2015

Study sought to understand how industrial land provision in the upper North Island is meeting industry needs and how investment decisions, industrial land allocation and supply can be optimised. A methodology/tool was developed and adopted for use by all member councils, identifying industrial land and how much is needed.



4. Tourism

This work identified areas in which UNISA could add value to the tourism sector in the upper North Island and found areas where collaboration and joint leverage could improve the functioning in the upper North Island. It led to the Australia Market Tourism NZ joint venture campaign.



5. Upper North Island Key Sector Trends to 2015 and Labour Demand to 2020

Identified sectors that operate at a scale and issues relating to labour skills and/or shortages in these sectors to 2020.

UNISA is currently responding to Government inquiries and providing clear and agreed messages on behalf of the upper North Island:

- **Productivity Commission inquiry into local government funding and financing**

UNISA made a submission that brought together key shared points from UNISA partners and discussed the upper North Island context and made suggested changes to the funding and financing system.

- **Upper North Island supply chain strategy – freight and logistics**

The study is to look at the network of freight and logistics in the upper North Island. Given the importance of this work for the upper North Island, UNISA has had ongoing involvement with the study.

- **UNISA and the inquiry into the Auckland fuel supply disruption**

UNISA has been actively involved in the inquiry into the Auckland fuel supply disruption, an independent response to the shutdown of the refinery to Auckland pipeline in September 2017. UNISA's main focus is on the second part of the inquiry which aims to draw lessons from this shutdown and provide recommendations for improving the resilience of fuel supply to the upper North Island.

UNISA is engaged in some longer term projects of critical importance to the upper North Island:

- **Interregional marine pest management pathway**

UNISA is supporting the possible development of an Interregional Marine Pest Pathway (IRMPP) management plan for the upper North Island as an option to restrict the spread of marine pests. The freight and leisure craft movements between the upper North Island regions are the most comprehensive in New Zealand and provide an obvious vector for the spread of marine pests.

- **Climate change**

There is a move to ensure climate change mitigation and adaptation are standard operating processes for UNISA councils. Councils have already committed to energy tracking and management methods to reduce energy use, with some adding external certification of carbon footprints. The majority have used the Global Protocol for Community-Scale Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventories (GPC) methodology for district, city or region-wide carbon footprint work. The next step is to look at what UNISA can do as a collective to build community understanding and preparedness. We want to develop practical processes and tools to help communities deal with new conditions, strengthen resilience and minimise adverse effects.

