



# MANIFESTO FOR AUCKLAND

# **MAYOR'S UPDATE**

In 2023, I released my *Manifesto for Auckland—The deal Auckland needs from the government*. My Manifesto called for a fundamentally different relationship between Auckland and central government and outlined a plan to fix Auckland, including specific policies that would help unlock Auckland's potential.

A lot has happened since then, and we've made significant progress in three key areas:

## **Partnerships & devolution**

The relationship between council and government has worked well for transport and water reform. By taking a more joined-up approach, one more akin to an actual partnership, we have been able to drive better outcomes for Auckland, quickly. In practice, this has required politicians and officials, respectively, work to agree on policy that benefits Auckland and acknowledges our difference in size and scale. This pragmatic and localised approach should be taken elsewhere.

## **Transport**

The government has agreed to transfer decision-making power back to Auckland Council and work with us to develop an Integrated Transport Plan. This is a big win for Auckland. While we continue to work through the details, we know this will result in better transport outcomes, increasing connectivity, equity of access, productivity, and better living standards.

## **Infrastructure & water reform**

We reached a groundbreaking agreement to solve Auckland's water problems once and for all. Three Waters has been replaced with a new model that will see billions more invested in upgrading water infrastructure while keeping household water bills affordable.

As a council, we've used the tools available to us to deliver better funding outcomes and utilise our existing assets. By establishing the Auckland Future Fund, we will provide long-lasting, intergenerational benefits, improving Auckland's physical and financial resilience and reducing our reliance on rates to fund services and activities.

We've also put a lot of pressure on the company responsible for our major asset, the Port of Auckland, to better perform, increase their revenue, and provide a greater return to the people of Auckland. At the same time, we're making better use of waterfront land and increasing public access to downtown Auckland.

Of course, progress with certain policies doesn't mean we shouldn't keep the pressure on Wellington to deliver better for Auckland. In fact, there's a lot more work to be done.

# THE VISION

*My vision is simple: I want Auckland to be a city where people can grow their income, realise their potential, and live and work locally. An Auckland that leverages its diversity to grow our economy, lifting living standards for everyone.*

*Of course, the devil is in the detail. Getting growth right, making it work for us, is the key driver to a successful future for Auckland; for those living here now, those who will hopefully return, and those yet to come.*

*This manifesto is the framework to get us there.*

*Wayne Brown*

WAYNE BROWN  
MAYOR OF AUCKLAND





# ***FIX AUCKLAND, FIX NEW ZEALAND***

## **WAYNE BROWN'S PLAN FOR GROWTH**

*New Zealand is doing it tough right now. Economic growth has stalled, unemployment levels are increasing, and our living standards are slipping as the cost of living continues to increase.*

While many countries around the world face similar economic headwinds, we find ourselves grappling with generational and systemic issues. We didn't get here overnight.

Successive governments have failed to address our biggest problem: a lack of investment in the real economy. Instead, they've relied on population growth to make GDP figures look good.

Most of that growth has been in Auckland, New Zealand's largest and only international gateway city.

Since the release of my Manifesto for Auckland, there has been a lot of chatter about 'city or

regional deals'. The bureaucrats in Wellington have even come up with an application form that councils must fill out to 'apply' for such a deal.

But if the government is serious about 'going for growth', they can't keep treating us like any other city or council in New Zealand. We are the key to the country's economic success. Auckland is the financial capital of New Zealand; the shopfront when it comes to foreign investment. If we get the settings right, then the big players will invest in Auckland, and the benefits will flow to the rest of the country.



---

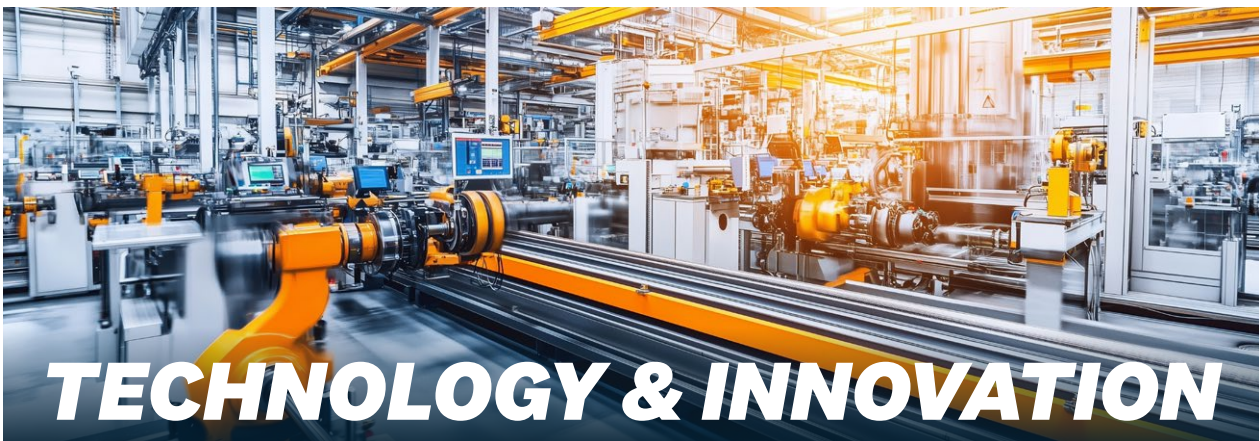
*Successive governments... relied on population growth to make GDP figures look good.*

---

## **THREE GROWTH AREAS**

The days of taking Auckland for granted are over. I want to ensure our recent success is the beginning of something transformational, not just a passing fad.

So, I've updated the Manifesto with a new focus on how Auckland can lead the way out of recession and drive economic growth. My message is simple: if the government wants to grow New Zealand's economy, the answer is Auckland.



New Zealand is one of the least productive countries in the OECD; we work longer hours but still produce less. One of the drivers for low productivity is the lack of focus and support for innovation.

As mayor, I'm determined to change that. I want Auckland to become the South Pacific hub of technological innovation that the big players want to invest in.

I don't believe in picking winners or corporate welfare. Instead, I want to collaborate with the government on how we can give Kiwi entrepreneurs front-row access to cutting-edge facilities—and keep them in New Zealand.

Let's talk seriously about establishing an Advanced Technology Institute here in Auckland that can attract foreign and local investment and provide an umbrella for new start-ups. This will require input and buy-in from across the sector, including our already well-established and world leading universities in Auckland. We must all work together to form a wide network of enablers that will support and champion Auckland as a tech friendly/focused city. This will require more than just talking about it. It will require council and government to identify and remove the barriers and constraints to making Auckland an attractive place to invest and innovate in.

---

***I want to collaborate with the government on how we can give Kiwi entrepreneurs front-row access to the cutting edge of scientific research—and keep them in New Zealand.***

---



We are working with the government to change planning laws so we can enable new homes to be built in the right places. But we need more coordination across all key infrastructure requirements and a clear plan on what the government intends to do to support growth in Auckland.

We desperately need more funding and financing tools to support growth in the right places and for all political parties to recognise that, as a city, we take the lion's share of population growth across the country and all the unintended consequences.

We need to be innovative in our approach and always consider the burden to the ratepayer—currently it is disproportionate to the relative benefits, and this must change. Auckland's productivity is already 15% higher than the rest of the country, as noted by our chief economist, but it is not enough.

Auckland Council is doing its bit in trying to lift productivity across the city. My reform of our council-controlled organisations is key to this.

By finally bringing in most of the policy and planning for infrastructure, economic development, land use regulation and urban regeneration that shapes our city in-house into council, we will unleash Auckland's productivity through integrated, coordinated and properly prioritised investment, rather than reacting to decisions made in isolation.

I look forward to being able to share more details of how the new Auckland Development Office will play a role in this over the next few months as we work with the industry and key stakeholders to shape this up. It's not business as usual; it is the new and improved way we will approach growth and economic development.





Auckland is a wonderfully diverse place; 42% of residents were born overseas. We are proud to welcome people and cultures from all over the world.

But a lack of planning and coordination has made it impossible for our infrastructure to keep up with population growth.

We also need to make sure we are attracting people who are going to bring the right skills and investment.

I call on the government to give us a seat at the table when it comes to developing an Auckland-specific immigration policy.

We also need to make it easier for tourists to visit. There is no good reason why China—our biggest export partner—should not be on the list of visa-waiver countries. This is also a significant hurdle preventing the Southern Link between Southeast Asia and Brazil. Removing the current transit visa will enable airlines like China Eastern to provide a service linking these two huge economies via Auckland.

Auckland is the gateway to New Zealand and the obvious place to host big international sporting events and

concerts. But these kinds of events need local investment.

In the past, Auckland ratepayers have subsidised the likes of SailGP and P!nk. But every dollar spent on major events is a dollar less on the basics like critical infrastructure like roads and stormwater pipes.

A much better way to support growth in the visitor economy is to fairly share the cost with those who financially benefit from tourism. The accommodation industry tells me that this funding challenge has been talked about with governments of different stripes and countless government departments for over 20 years to no avail.

I call on the government to reconsider a bed-night visitor levy. I'm open-minded about how such a scheme would work, but any revenue raised in Auckland should stay in Auckland. But do it quickly and don't let some bureaucrat's need for a nationally consistent framework leave this to wither on the vine for another 20 years.

## **FIX AUCKLAND, FIX NEW ZEALAND**



## **NEXT STEPS**

While I have reservations about applying a national framework to Auckland, we have nevertheless taken this opportunity to submit our proposal for an Auckland Deal.

I am pleased that Auckland Council was able to put together a thoughtful document that aligns with the Manifesto. But the fundamental part of any deal has to be genuine partnership and

devolution. We've already demonstrated it can be done with water reform—and we're about to do it again with transport reform.

So, let's apply the principle of partnership and devolution to a broader Auckland Deal.

*See appendix for Auckland Deal*

---

*The fundamental part of any deal has to be genuine partnership and devolution.*

---



# GOVERNMENT REPORT CARD

The government gets too easily distracted by mega-projects and press releases. Some ministers have been better than others. Overall, they have made a reasonable effort this term but could try harder and have fewer Wellington bureaucrats involved. **B+**.

<b><i>Partnership &amp; Devolution</i></b>	The relationship is changing. But not fast enough. Poor performance when it comes to the bed night levy; appointing a new tourism minister was a good save. Regular meetings in Auckland with the Prime Minister would be good.	<b>B</b>
<b><i>Transport</i></b>	We've agreed to change the law to restore democratic control of transport planning in Auckland. Now to develop an Integrated Transport Plan.	<b>B</b>
<b><i>Housing, Growth &amp; Urban Regeneration</i></b>	We're working with the government to change planning laws so we can enable new homes to be built in the right places. But give us the funding and financing tools to support growth. GST back, please.	<b>B</b>
<b><i>Infrastructure, Water Reform &amp; Climate Resilience</i></b>	We solved the water problem—a huge win for Auckland. Now we need to make sure the rest of our infrastructure can keep up with population growth.	<b>A-</b>
<b><i>Environment</i></b>	We're working with the government on new legislation and national direction to improve the way we use and allocate natural resources and managed the effects of fishing in high-value areas in the Hauraki Gulf.	<b>B+</b>
<b><i>Social, Cultural &amp; Economic Development</i></b>	Celebrated 1000 jobs with our MSD Ngā Puna Pūkenga partnership. Working on what we need legislative change for, and what we can do ourselves, to bring democratic accountability to the organisations we give ratepayer funds to. We need more police on our streets.	<b>B+</b>

# THE AUCKLAND DEAL

*I am asking political parties to make a long-term commitment to an Auckland Deal that will enable us to address our urgent priorities as a region and implement our plan to fix Auckland, covering:*

1. **Partnership & Devolution:** A fundamentally different relationship between Auckland Council and central government based on mutual respect and alignment of goals.
2. **Transport:** An Integrated Transport Plan to enable people and goods to get around our city faster, cheaper, and with lower emissions.
3. **Housing, Growth & Urban Regeneration:** Tools and investment to enable Auckland to plan and deliver infrastructure, to support growth in decent houses, and to regenerate run-down areas.
4. **Infrastructure, Water Reform & Climate Resilience:** Finishing, fixing, and protecting our existing infrastructure with tools to fund and finance the major investment required to deal with the deficit.
5. **Environment:** Enabling us to protect and make the most of our environment, including our Three Harbours.
6. **Social, Cultural & Economic Development:** A formal partnership to deliver and fund agreed priorities.

*We have done the groundwork. This manifesto includes specific policies in each of these areas that are needed to unlock Auckland's potential.*

Signed by Mayor Wayne Brown  
for and on behalf of **Auckland**

*Wayne Brown*

Signed by the Prime Minister  
of NZ for and on behalf of  
**central government**

\_\_\_\_\_