

Simplifying Local Government **Pathfinder Proposal for Taranaki**

Mō tātou, For us
Mā tātou, By us



August 2026

A collaboration between New Plymouth District Council (NPDC)
and Taranaki Regional Council (TRC)



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**



Mayor's foreword

Taranaki has a proud history of strong local government, resilient communities and a willingness to work together in the region's best interests. As the demands on local government continue to evolve, we have both an opportunity and a responsibility to consider whether our governance arrangements remain best suited to serving future generations.

This Pathfinder Proposal represents a valuable and prudent step in that process. It reflects the work undertaken by councils, elected members, officers and stakeholders across the region to explore future governance options, assess their relative merits and establish a strong foundation for future decision-making. Importantly, this work has not been about promoting a predetermined outcome. Rather, it has focused on building shared evidence and understanding the opportunities, challenges and trade-offs associated with a range of council structures.

Taranaki is a unique region. While we share a common economy and environment, we are also made up of distinct communities with their own identities, priorities and aspirations. It is natural that different views exist regarding what our future governance arrangements should look like. Those differences are not a weakness of this process; they reinforce the importance of ensuring that future decisions are well informed, carefully considered and reflective of the diversity of our region.

The Head Start programme has provided an important opportunity for councils to come together and have meaningful conversations about the future of local government in Taranaki. Through this work we have considered a broad

range of options, developed a shared assessment framework and identified three

shortlisted models that warrant further investigation. Just as importantly, we have strengthened the evidence base for future decision-making and built a platform for continued collaboration across the region.

We acknowledge that this proposal does not present Cabinet with a single preferred council structure. We believe that is both appropriate and responsible at this stage. While the work undertaken to date has identified a clear direction of travel, it also highlights the importance of further analysis, engagement and discussion before a final position can be reached. Significant questions remain regarding local representation, service delivery, financial implications, Treaty settlement arrangements and the aspirations of communities and iwi partners.

We therefore request Cabinet view this Pathfinder Proposal not as a departure from the Head Start process, but as a practical and responsible application of its objectives within the Taranaki context. It reflects a region committed to doing the work properly, taking communities and iwi partners on the journey, and ensuring that any future proposal is built on a robust foundation of evidence and understanding.



Max Brough
Mayor, New Plymouth District

A word from the Chair

Taranaki Regional Council supports the Pathfinder approach as a constructive and evidence-based way to consider the future of local government in our region. The proposal recognises these decisions are significant and should not be rushed. They require careful analysis, meaningful engagement and a clear understanding of how any changes would affect communities, iwi, councils and the long-term interests of Taranaki as a whole.

From a Regional Council perspective, one of the most important considerations is ensuring that regional-scale functions continue to be governed and delivered effectively. Many of Taranaki's most significant responsibilities - including catchment management, environmental monitoring, biosecurity, flood protection, resource management, regional transport planning and natural hazard management - operate across district boundaries and rely on specialist capability, long-term planning and region-wide coordination. These functions are fundamental to the wellbeing, resilience and sustainability of our region.

The Pathfinder process provides an opportunity to examine how those functions can be maintained, strengthened and adapted for the future. As Taranaki faces increasing challenges from climate change, infrastructure pressures, environmental management, economic transition and changing community expectations, it is essential that future

governance
arrangements
support
integrated
decision-
making across
the natural
systems,
communities



and infrastructure networks that connect our region. Taranaki Regional Council is committed to working constructively with all Taranaki councils through the next phase of this programme. While they may hold different perspectives, there is a shared responsibility to ensure that any future model serves the whole region well. That includes maintaining the scale, capability and coordination required for regional functions, while also recognising the importance of local voice, community identity and effective local decision-making.

This Pathfinder Proposal is an important step in that process. It does not seek to settle every question now, but it does establish a credible pathway for the detailed work that must follow. Taranaki Regional Council will do all it can to ensure future arrangements are carefully designed, well informed and capable of effectively supporting Taranaki's people, environment and economy for generations to come.

Craig Williamson
Chair, Taranaki Regional Council

Table of contents

He kupu whakataki	5
Executive summary	5
Introduction	6
Background	7
Strategic case and Taranaki context	10
1. Strategic case for change	10
2. Taranaki context	12
3. Catchment management and regional stewardship	14
Strategic assessment criteria and evaluation approach	16
4. Shortlisting council structures	18
5. Model 1 – Single Unitary Authority	21
6. Model 2 – Combined Authority	23
7. Model 3 – Two Sub-Regional Councils and Joint Committee	25
Next phase of work	27
8. Working with the community	27
9. Working with iwi, hapū and Māori	28
10. Detailed assessment programme	30
Partnership and support required from Central Government	31
Closing statement	32
Appendix A: Shaping Taranaki's Future survey summary	34
Appendix B: Initial analysis of council structures against Head Start Assessment Criteria	37
Appendix C: High-level financial analysis	44
Appendix D: High-level functional analysis	50
Appendix E: Summary of regional activities and assets analysis against models	53

He kupu whakataki

Mā wai tēnei waka e whakatere?

Mā koutou, mā mātou, mā tātou!

Mā tātou katoa tēnei waka e whakatere.

Ko tēnei waka, he waka eke noa!

Who will steer this waka?

You will, we will!

Together, we all will!

All of us will steer this waka.

For we are all in this together!

Executive summary

Taranaki welcomes the opportunity provided through the Government's Head Start pathway to consider how local government arrangements can evolve to meet the region's future challenges and opportunities. This Pathfinder Proposal represents the outcome of the first phase of that work.

Participating councils (New Plymouth District Council and Taranaki Regional Council) have undertaken a structured programme of analysis, engagement and assessment to better understand the opportunities, challenges and trade-offs associated with alternative governance arrangements. This included council structure development, financial and functional analysis, community feedback, consideration of Treaty settlement and partnership implications, and elected member engagement.

Community feedback to date has highlighted the importance of maintaining strong local representation and community voice, while also identifying opportunities to improve efficiency, reduce duplication, strengthen regional coordination and support more integrated planning and infrastructure investment.

To support transparent decision-making, council structures have been assessed using a Multi-Criteria Analysis framework combining the mandatory Head Start criteria with additional criteria reflecting the Taranaki context, including, financial resilience, regional growth and investment, Treaty settlement arrangements and Māori partnerships and future flexibility. The assessment indicated that opportunities exist to strengthen local government arrangements within Taranaki and that models involving greater integration generally performed more strongly against the agreed criteria. At the same time, the analysis highlighted the need to carefully balance regional coordination, service delivery, local representation, financial sustainability and Māori partnership considerations.

The work completed to date has enabled a broad long list of governance options to be narrowed to three shortlisted models for further investigation: a Single Unitary Authority, a Combined Authority, and Two Sub-Regional Councils supported by a Joint Committee. Each presents a different balance between regional integration, local decision-making and implementation complexity, and requires further assessment before any final conclusions can be reached.

The Pathfinder process has also confirmed that further engagement with the broader community, iwi partners and stakeholder engagement are essential before a preferred council structure can be identified. While initial discussions and community feedback have informed this work, future phases will place strong emphasis on engagement and partnership alongside more detailed technical analysis.

Accordingly, this proposal does not present Cabinet with a single preferred council structure. Instead, it reflects Taranaki's view that the most responsible course of action is to progress a small number of credible options into a more detailed phase of analysis, engagement and testing.

This proposal is submitted as a meaningful contribution to the Head Start process and as evidence of the progress already achieved. It outlines a credible programme of future work and a commitment to continue working with Central Government, iwi partners, communities and regional stakeholders to determine how local government can best serve the people of Taranaki in the decades ahead.

Introduction

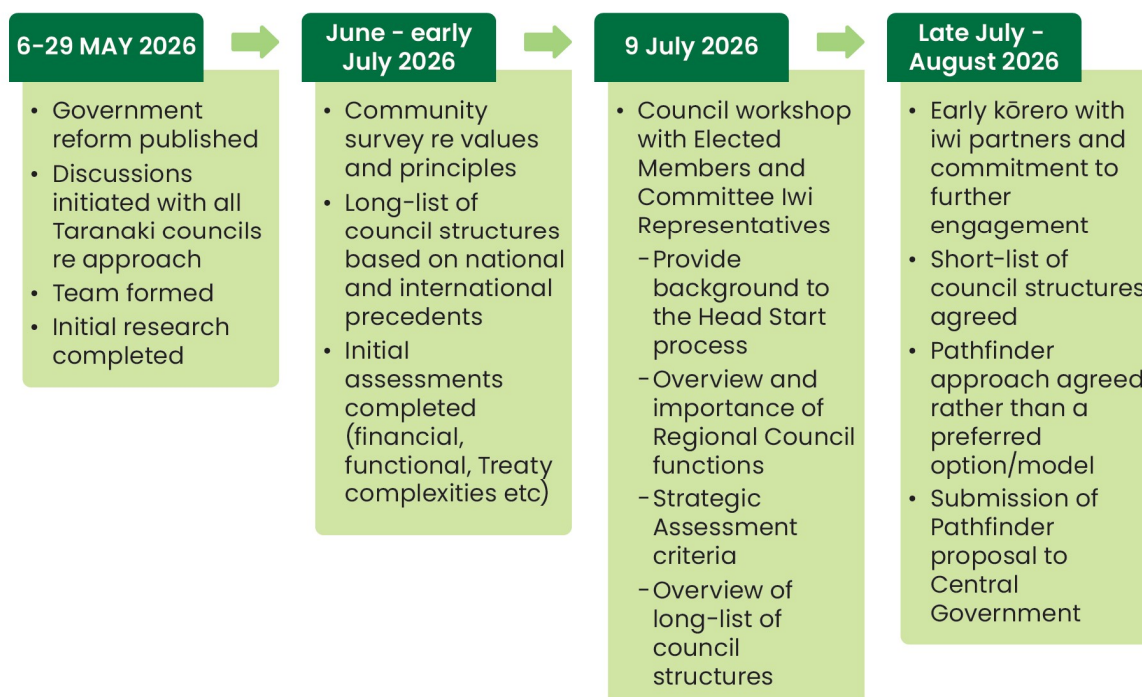
This Pathfinder Proposal has been developed collaboratively by New Plymouth District Council (NPDC) and Taranaki Regional Council (TRC) as a constructive way to participate in the Government's Head Start process, while reflecting the specific local government context in Taranaki.

The region's four councils continue to work together and maintain strong working relationships, recognising they may take different approaches to how they engage with the reform process at this stage. NPDC and TRC have chosen to use this proposal to identify a shortlist of viable options for further exploration, rather than move directly to a single preferred option. This approach reflects the importance of further analysis, engagement with iwi partners and conversations with the wider community before any final position is reached.

The term **"Pathfinder Proposal"** has been used to describe an approach that keeps several credible options open for consideration. It signals to Cabinet that meaningful work is underway in Taranaki, while also recognising that local democracy requires iwi partners, stakeholders and communities to have the opportunity to understand the options, provide feedback and help shape the direction before any final proposal is submitted.

Background

Progress to date:



Over the past three months, a significant body of work has been undertaken to support consideration of future governance arrangements for Taranaki. This has included the development of a range of governance model options spanning a continuum from minimal integration through to full regional integration. The purpose of this work has been to identify credible options that warrant further investigation and assessment against regional priorities, community expectations and Government objectives.

To inform this process, a rapid functional analysis has been undertaken across this Proposal's participating councils. This examined current regional and territorial authority functions and included discussions with senior leaders regarding the extent to which functions could be effectively governed at a regional level, as well as where a continued local governance may be appropriate. The analysis has provided an important evidence base to inform the design and assessment of potential future governance arrangements.

High-level financial analysis has also been completed to understand the potential implications of different council structures. This has included consideration of current debt and asset profiles, indicative economies of scale and the likely costs associated with any transition to alternative governance structures. While further detailed analysis will be required, this work has provided an initial understanding of the financial opportunities and challenges associated with potential reform options.

Community perspectives have been incorporated through a survey, which sought feedback on residents' appetite for change and the factors they consider most important when evaluating potential future governance arrangements. A summary of these survey results is included as **Appendix A**.

In parallel, discussions have commenced with Post-Settlement Governance Entities (PSGEs) and iwi representatives to establish an ongoing dialogue regarding governance model options, Māori participation and representation and the implications of any future local government arrangements for Treaty settlement commitments and relationships.

Key findings and emerging insights

Community feedback has provided a clear and consistent message that the retention of local voice and effective representation is a critical consideration in any future governance arrangement. Survey respondents emphasised that any reform must achieve better outcomes for communities rather than structural change for its own sake. Many identified opportunities to improve efficiency, reduce duplication, strengthen regional coordination and support more integrated planning and infrastructure investment across Taranaki.

At the same time, the survey highlighted concerns regarding the potential loss of local representation, particularly for smaller communities, rural areas and those outside New Plymouth. While there was support for exploring opportunities to streamline governance arrangements and strengthen regional collaboration, feedback indicated that communities expect any future model to maintain meaningful local influence and responsiveness to local needs.

The programme's financial and organisational analysis has also generated valuable insights. Preliminary assessment suggests there are opportunities for efficiencies and economies of scale under some council structures, although the magnitude and distribution of these benefits will require further investigation. The work has also highlighted differences in debt and asset profiles across districts that will need careful consideration as options continue to be developed and evaluated.

The functional analysis indicates that a substantial proportion of local government functions could potentially be governed effectively at a regional level. However, there are several areas where a stronger local dimension may continue to be important. These include relationships with iwi and hapū, the governance of local parks and community assets and decisions regarding the distribution of certain community and endowment funds. These findings reinforce the importance of designing governance arrangements that can balance regional coordination with appropriate local decision-making.

Collectively, this work provides a strong foundation for the next phase of analysis, engagement and option development. It has helped identify both the opportunities and complexities of local government reform in Taranaki, while ensuring that future decisions will be informed by evidence, community perspectives and ongoing engagement with iwi partners and stakeholders.

Where we are

A joint workshop for elected members from participating councils and iwi committee representatives was held as part of the option development process. The workshop provided an overview of regional governance functions, introduced a preliminary assessment framework and explored a range of potential council structures for Taranaki. Through facilitated discussion, participants considered the opportunities, challenges and implications associated with each model and provided initial feedback on their relative strengths and limitations.

The workshop represented an important step in testing emerging thinking and establishing a shared understanding of the considerations that will influence future decision-making. Insights from participants informed an initial high-level multi-criteria assessment of the options and contributed to the identification of the shortlisted models included in this Pathfinder Proposal.

Next phase of work

While work to date has established a strong foundation for future analysis, it also highlights the significant work still required before any preferred governance arrangement can be identified. The council structures in this proposal represent high-level concepts that require further refinement and testing. The next phase of work will focus on a comprehensive assessment of local government functions and services to determine the most appropriate governance and delivery arrangements under each model. This analysis will provide a clearer understanding of the potential benefits, implementation implications and degree of change associated with alternative council structures.

A key priority will be broader engagement with communities across Taranaki. Given the significance of changes to local government arrangements, it is essential that residents, businesses, community organisations and stakeholders understand the options under consideration, the benefits and challenges associated with each and the implications for local representation, service delivery and regional outcomes. Future consultation and engagement activities will play a critical role in informing councils' consideration of governance options and supporting well-informed decision-making.

Equally important will be ongoing engagement with iwi, hapū and Māori to ensure their perspectives inform the development and assessment of governance options. This engagement will support consideration of how Māori participation, representation and partnership arrangements can be reflected within future council structures. Further work will also be undertaken to review existing Treaty settlement arrangements, statutory obligations and partnership agreements across the region. This assessment will explore the implications of different council structures for these arrangements and help identify issues, opportunities and areas requiring further analysis and engagement as the work progresses.

Collectively, this next phase of work will provide the analysis, evidence and community input necessary to evaluate the shortlisted options in greater detail and determine whether a preferred model should be advanced for further consideration through the Government's Head Start process.

Strategic case and Taranaki context



A region at a crossroads

- A traditionally strong economy that is now under increasing economic pressure
- A declining oil and gas sector, declining productivity and GDP as well as loss of high paid jobs and talent. Amplified by reliance on volatile export-focused industries.
- Central government reforms are reshaping expectations of local government, highlighting a need for structural change.
- A region that is united by much yet has individual communities with distinct identities and aspirations.
- A natural environment that underpins the region's wellbeing, with more than 530 named lakes and rivers. Strong track record of managing environmental taonga at catchment scale.

In a rapidly changing environment, what future council structure will ensure Taranaki thrives for generations to come?

1. Strategic case for change

Taranaki is a region with strong communities, a diverse economy, significant environmental assets and a long history of local government collaboration. The region benefits from shared infrastructure networks, interconnected natural systems, common economic interests and longstanding relationships between councils, iwi, businesses and communities. These strengths have served Taranaki well. However, as the region looks to the future, there is increasing recognition that many of the opportunities and challenges facing Taranaki extend beyond individual council boundaries and may require different approaches to governance, planning and service delivery.

Taranaki economy

Taranaki is facing a period of significant economic transition. Analysis by Venture Taranaki indicates Taranaki is increasingly exhibiting the characteristics of a regional economy facing structural decline rather than a temporary cyclical downturn. Economic output has failed to recover to pre-2020 levels, with regional GDP falling to \$11.63 billion in the year to March 2025, representing a 2.5% contraction, compared with a 0.9% decline nationally. More significantly, regional GDP remains 5.6% below its 2020 level, highlighting that the region has yet to regain the economic activity lost over the past five years. Productivity has also been in long-term decline, falling by an average of 1.8% per annum over the past decade, compared to a national average of 0.6% annual growth. The region's apparent economic strength increasingly masks deep structural weakness: household incomes remain below the national average, with 32% of households earning less than \$50,000 annually, compared to 27% nationally, and only 21% earning more than \$150,000, compared to 28% nationally. Recent signs of economic improvement have been driven almost entirely by exceptionally strong dairy payouts rather than broad-based growth, leaving the region heavily exposed to commodity cycles and vulnerable to future downturns.

The impacts of declining oil and gas activity is an important shift. In 2017 mining (predominantly oil and gas) accounted for about 26% of the regional economy. By 2025 its contribution had fallen to just

12.8%. In the last year alone, oil and gas (mining) saw a reduction of \$178.7m in contribution to the regional economy. The largest positive contributor was agriculture which added \$44.7m, highlighting that the gains in other sectors are currently well below the scale of the losses being experienced in oil and gas.

The decline is also being felt across the labour market. Analysis indicates that more than 1,700 jobs have been lost in the region across large energy users, oil and gas and the contractors and consultancy workforce that services both areas. The result is a growing risk of skilled workforce attrition, reduced household spending, declining business turnover and a weakening industrial capability base.

The vulnerability of the regional economy is further intensified by its high reliance on exports and exposure to external shocks. In 2025, the region generated about \$5.15 billion in goods exports, equivalent to around 44% of regional GDP. Dairy products accounted for about \$2.34 billion, while meat products contributed around \$672 million and mineral fuels, oils and related products contributed \$600 million. Together, these categories generated about \$3.61 billion, or 70% of the region's goods exports, highlighting Taranaki's dependence on a relatively concentrated group of export industries. Recent disruptions have highlighted these risks; the closure of the Awakino Gorge on SH3 demonstrated how exposed the region is to infrastructure failures. Infometrics estimates about 22% of Taranaki's GDP is reliant on road transport and the closure disrupted an estimated \$2.58 million in transport-exposed GDP per day. Without substantial intervention to diversify the economy, retain skilled workers and replace the economic contribution of the oil and gas sector, Taranaki faces the prospect of prolonged economic stagnation and reduced regional competitiveness over the next decade.

Local government landscape

Taranaki has a long history of strong local government, with councils that have served their communities well and contributed significantly to the region's social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing. However, the context within which local government operates is changing rapidly. The scale, complexity and interdependence of emerging challenges are increasing, while expectations of local government continue to grow. This changing environment provides the impetus for considering whether current governance arrangements remain best suited to meeting the long-term needs of Taranaki communities.

Over recent years, Central Government has increasingly driven reforms that have direct implications for the role, responsibilities and operating environment of local government. These reforms have spanned a range of policy areas including water services, resource management, climate adaptation, infrastructure funding and financing, regional governance and the future role and functions of councils. More recently, Government has signalled a stronger focus on councils delivering core services and infrastructure, alongside proposals intended to improve affordability and financial sustainability for communities.

Collectively, these reforms are reshaping the expectations placed upon local government. Councils are being asked to operate in an environment characterised by increasing regulatory complexity, heightened compliance obligations, greater public scrutiny and growing expectations regarding service delivery and organisational capability. The current local government arrangements were

established in a markedly different context and were not necessarily designed with these contemporary challenges in mind.

While the existing arrangements continue to deliver important services and outcomes for communities, maintaining the status quo may not necessarily provide the scale, capability, efficiency or strategic leadership required to successfully navigate the next 20 to 30 years. Reflecting on future local government arrangements now provides an opportunity to proactively consider how governance structures can support better outcomes for future generations of Taranaki residents while retaining a strong focus on local representation and community voice.

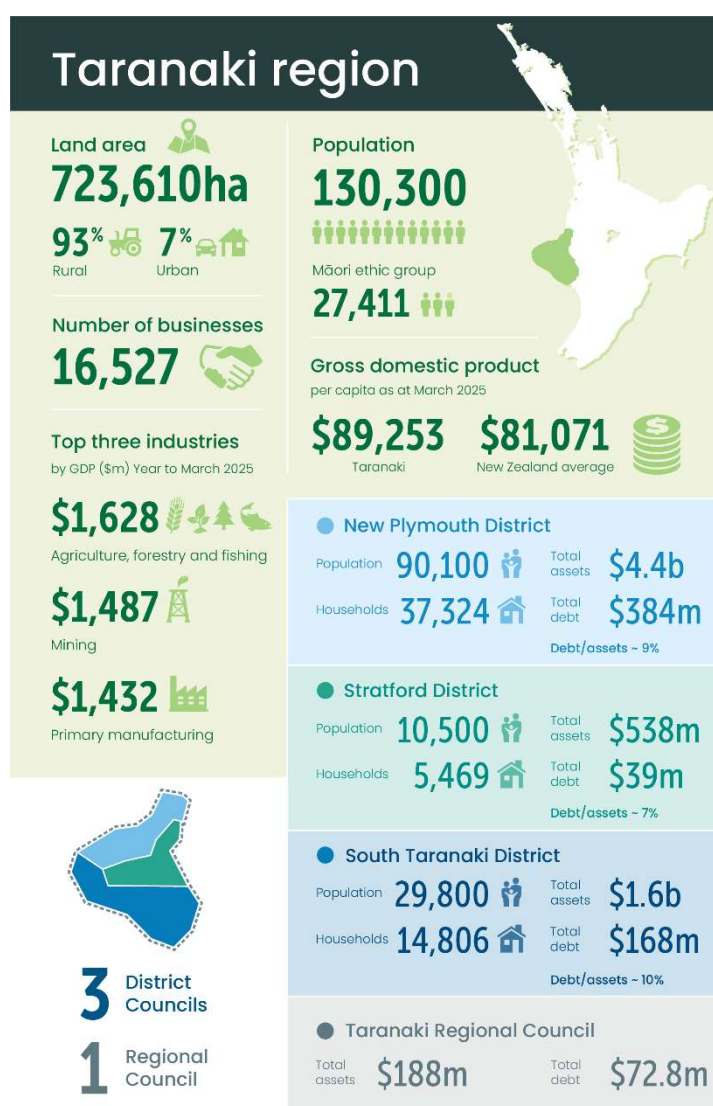
2. Taranaki context

Any consideration of future local government arrangements must be grounded in the unique characteristics, strengths and aspirations of Taranaki.

Taranaki is a distinctive region with strong communities, a unique environment dominated by Taranaki Maunga, significant natural resources and a strong sense of place. The region's economic base includes agriculture, energy, manufacturing, tourism and emerging renewable energy opportunities. Taranaki's communities are connected through shared infrastructure, environmental systems, economic relationships and social networks that extend across council boundaries.

The region is also shaped by its unique cultural heritage and the enduring relationship between iwi/Māori, councils, communities and the Crown. Iwi, hapū and PSGEs play a significant role in regional leadership, environmental stewardship, future planning and an increasing role in economic activity within the region. Existing and future governance arrangements will therefore need to recognise the importance of Māori partnership and representation, while ensuring Treaty settlement obligations and relationships are respected and maintained.

Taranaki's geography presents both strengths and challenges for local government. The importance of the maunga and the myriads of rivers within the region sets Taranaki apart



from the rest of the country. Communities range from the region's largest urban centre in New Plymouth through to smaller rural and provincial communities across Stratford and South Taranaki. While these communities have distinct identities, priorities and aspirations, they are also interconnected through shared economic activity, transport networks, environmental systems and public services.

The region faces several common long-term challenges. Like many parts of New Zealand, councils are managing increasing infrastructure investment requirements, ageing assets, affordability pressures, climate-related risks and changing community expectations. There is also growing demand for specialist expertise across areas such as environmental management, infrastructure planning, regulatory services, climate adaptation and strategic policy. Ensuring councils can attract, retain and sustain this capability will be an ongoing consideration for the future.

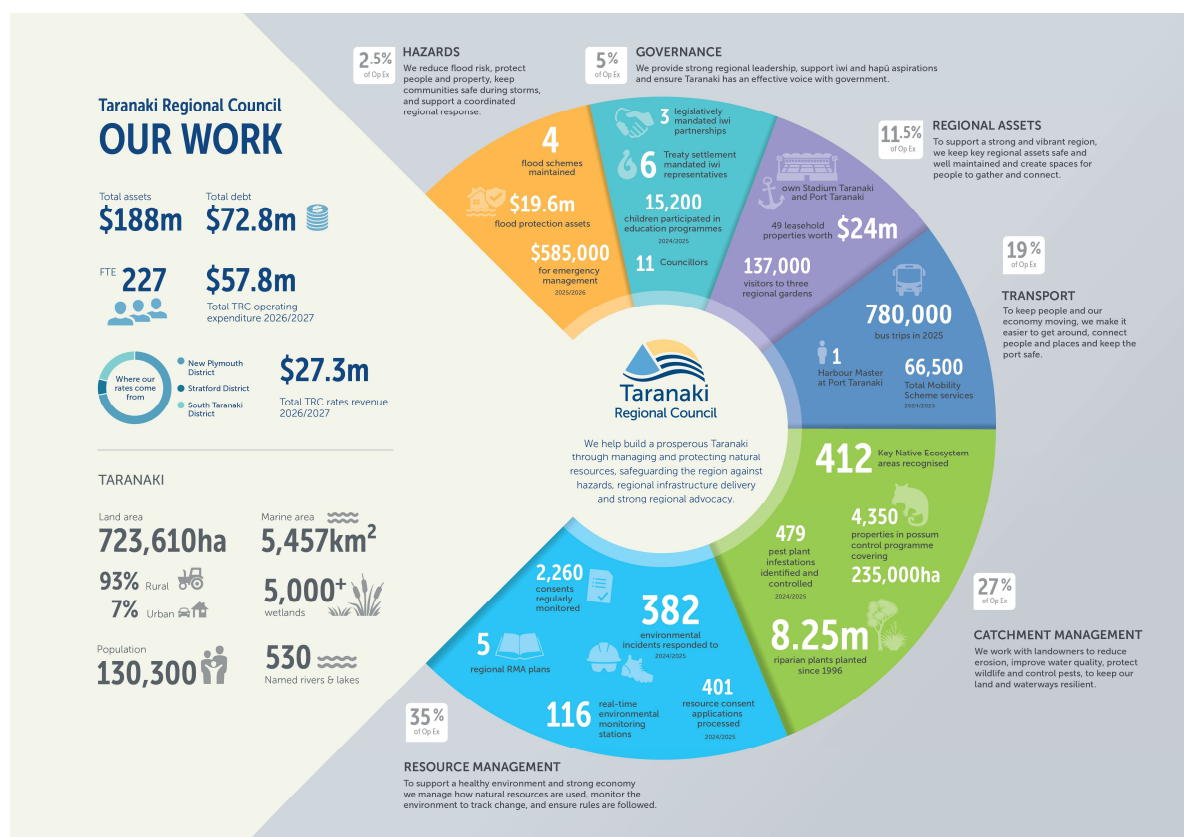
At the same time, Taranaki is well positioned to capitalise on significant opportunities. The region has an established track record of collaboration across local government, iwi, business and community sectors. Existing regional partnerships demonstrate a willingness to work collectively on complex issues where a coordinated approach can deliver better outcomes for communities.

This Pathfinder approach provides an opportunity to examine how governance arrangements can build on these strengths while responding to future challenges. The work is focused on ensuring that any future arrangements can deliver effective local representation, supporting strong community outcomes, enabling meaningful Māori participation and providing the organisational capability and leadership required to address increasingly complex regional issues.

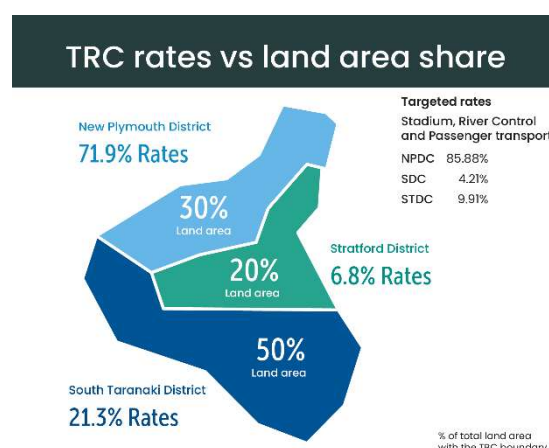
Ultimately, the objective is to ensure that local government in Taranaki remains sustainable, responsive and fit for purpose in a changing environment. By considering future governance arrangements now, the region can take a deliberate and evidence-based approach to determining how best to position itself for the decades ahead.

3. Catchment management and regional stewardship

Many of Taranaki's most significant environmental and resilience challenges are managed at a catchment scale rather than a district scale, requiring coordinated planning and investment across the region.



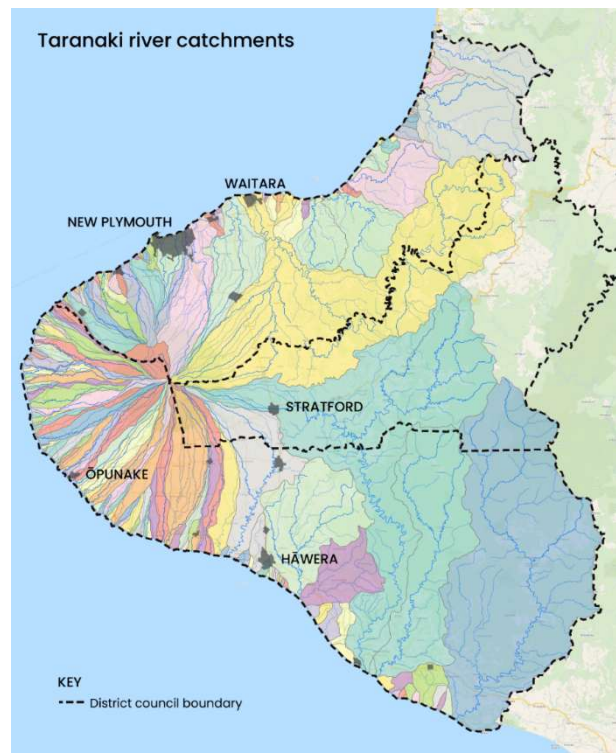
Taranaki's natural environment is one of its defining assets and underpins the economic, cultural and social wellbeing of its communities. The region's rivers, lakes, wetlands, coastal environment, productive land and biodiversity networks operate as interconnected systems that extend across district boundaries. Effective management of these resources therefore requires a coordinated regional approach that aligns environmental stewardship, land-use planning, infrastructure investment and community outcomes.



Taranaki Regional Council plays a central role in this regard through its responsibilities for resource management, environmental monitoring, catchment management, flood protection, biodiversity

protection and natural hazard management. These functions are delivered across the entire region and are increasingly focused on complex challenges such as water quality, climate adaptation, resilience and long-term environmental sustainability. It is important to note current district boundaries cut across catchment areas (see right) which could pose challenges in effective catchment management, depending on the final council structure.

The scale of this work is significant. Taranaki contains more than 530 named rivers and lakes, more than 5,000 hectares of wetlands, extensive productive farmland and a diverse coastal and marine environment. TRC maintains four flood protection schemes and manages more than \$19 million in flood protection assets, while also working with landowners and communities to improve catchment health through erosion control, riparian planting, biodiversity enhancement and pest management initiatives.



Increasingly, environmental challenges require decisions that span multiple policy areas and organisational responsibilities. Catchment outcomes are influenced not only by environmental management, but also by transport, infrastructure, urban development, economic growth and community planning decisions. As climate change, freshwater management and resilience challenges continue to evolve, there is growing recognition that governance arrangements should support integrated decision-making across these interconnected issues.

A future-focused local government system must therefore be capable of providing coordinated leadership over the natural systems that sustain the region. Regardless of the governance model ultimately selected, consideration will need to be given to how regional-scale functions, including catchment management, resource management and natural hazard planning, can continue to be delivered effectively while supporting local decision-making and community participation.

Strategic assessment criteria and evaluation approach



An evidence-based approach

- Council structures sit along a continuum, ranging from minimal integration of governance and service delivery to full regional integration.
- A long list of five council structures has been shortlisted to the **three** with the strongest overall alignment with both Government and local criteria.
- Shortlisted models are 1) Single Unitary Authority, 2) Combined Authority and 3) Two Sub-Regional Councils and Joint Committee.
- Multi-Criteria Analysis measured council structures against both compulsory Head Start criteria and additional Taranaki criteria.
- Functional, financial and Treaty assessments have been completed for each model, with more detailed investigation planned for the next phase of work.

We let the evidence shape the outcome, not the other way around.

Development of assessment criteria:

To support a robust and transparent evaluation of potential council structures, an assessment framework was developed that combined the compulsory Head Start assessment criteria issued by Central Government with a set of additional criteria reflecting matters considered important within the Taranaki context.

The mandatory Head Start criteria provides a consistent national framework for assessment and focuses on deliverability, support for the new planning system, simplification of local government, economies of scale and the maintenance of effective local representation and community voice. These criteria ensured that all council structures were assessed against the core objectives of the Government's local government reform programme.



Deliverability: Proposals are realistic and demonstrate how new arrangements can be implemented in a timely manner.



Supports the new planning system: Shows clear support for implementing the new planning system – including progress on spatial and natural environment plan development – and avoids or minimises disruption to that work.



Simplifies local governance: Proposes more efficient regional governance arrangements, consolidating decision-making and improving alignment between a region's councils.



Economies of scale: Supports regional strategic planning and effective delivery of key regional functions (including transport and catchment management), and demonstrates responsible and affordable asset management, infrastructure investment, and service delivery.



Maintains local voice: Demonstrates fair and effective representation for communities of interest and how decisions will be made at the local level, balancing urban and rural interests.

Recognising that local circumstances and regional priorities are also important, elected members and workshop participants were invited to consider additional criteria that they believed should inform the assessment of council structures for Taranaki. Through a facilitated discussion, participants considered the unique characteristics, opportunities and challenges facing the region and identified matters they viewed as critical to the long-term success of any future local government arrangement.

This process resulted in strong support for the inclusion of additional criteria relating to financial resilience, support for regional growth and investment, Treaty settlements and iwi, hapū and Māori partnerships and future flexibility. While workforce retention and attraction were also considered during the process, it received comparatively less support from participants and was not carried forward into the final assessment framework.



Financial resilience: The model will support affordable, equitable, and sustainable funding over the medium to long term, and maintain financial stability across local government in the region.



Support growth and investment: The model will enable the attraction and effective deployment of investment to support regional economic growth and development in the region.



Treaty Settlements and iwi/hapū/Māori partnerships: The model will maintain Treaty settlement arrangements and existing commitments, and enable effective participation by iwi, hapū and Māori in local government decision-making.



Future flexibility: The model can be adapted over time in response to change without requiring further structural reform. Changes could include population growth or decline, service pressures, future policy and legislative reforms, and evolving community needs.

The resulting criteria provide a balanced combination of nationally prescribed measures and locally informed priorities, ensuring that council structures could be assessed against both Government expectations and the specific needs of Taranaki communities.

Multi-Criteria Analysis methodology:

A Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA) framework was used to evaluate the relative performance of council structures against the agreed assessment criteria. The MCA was designed to provide a structured, transparent and evidence-based approach to comparing a diverse range of council structures while recognising that no single criterion should determine the outcome in isolation.

Each council structure was assessed against the Head Start criteria and the additional Taranaki-specific criteria using a five-point scale. Scores ranged from 1 (low alignment) through to 5 (strong alignment), with intermediate scores reflecting varying levels of alignment with each criterion. In addition to assigning scores, assessors documented the rationale supporting each assessment to ensure transparency and provide a clear record of the strengths and limitations of each model.

Initial assessments were undertaken by subject matter experts drawing on their knowledge and expertise across governance, planning, financial management, infrastructure, local government operations, Māori participation and partnership arrangements, resource management and strategic

policy. This enabled each model to be considered from multiple professional perspectives and ensured that assessments reflected a broad understanding of potential impacts and opportunities.

The results of the preliminary assessment were subsequently provided to a Steering Group of senior leaders for review and comment before informing the shortlist of council structures included in this proposal. This process enabled assumptions to be tested and ensured that the assessment framework was applied consistently across all council structures.

The MCA was not intended to predetermine an outcome or replace future political decision-making. Rather, it served as a decision-support tool, enabling council structures to be assessed in a methodical and transparent manner. The approach provided a common basis for comparing options, identifying strengths and weaknesses and understanding the trade-offs associated with different local government arrangements.

The assessment process ultimately enabled the long list of council structure options to be refined and prioritised, resulting in the identification of the three highest-performing council structures for further consideration through this Pathfinder Proposal. These shortlisted models demonstrated the strongest overall alignment with both the Government's Head Start objectives and the additional assessment criteria reflecting strategic priorities for Taranaki.

While the MCA was effective for narrowing the long list of council structure options to a shortlist, the scores and supporting rationale should be viewed as preliminary only. Further analysis, engagement and testing will be undertaken in the next phase of work to better understand the relative strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and risks of the shortlisted council structures before any conclusions are reached regarding a preferred model.

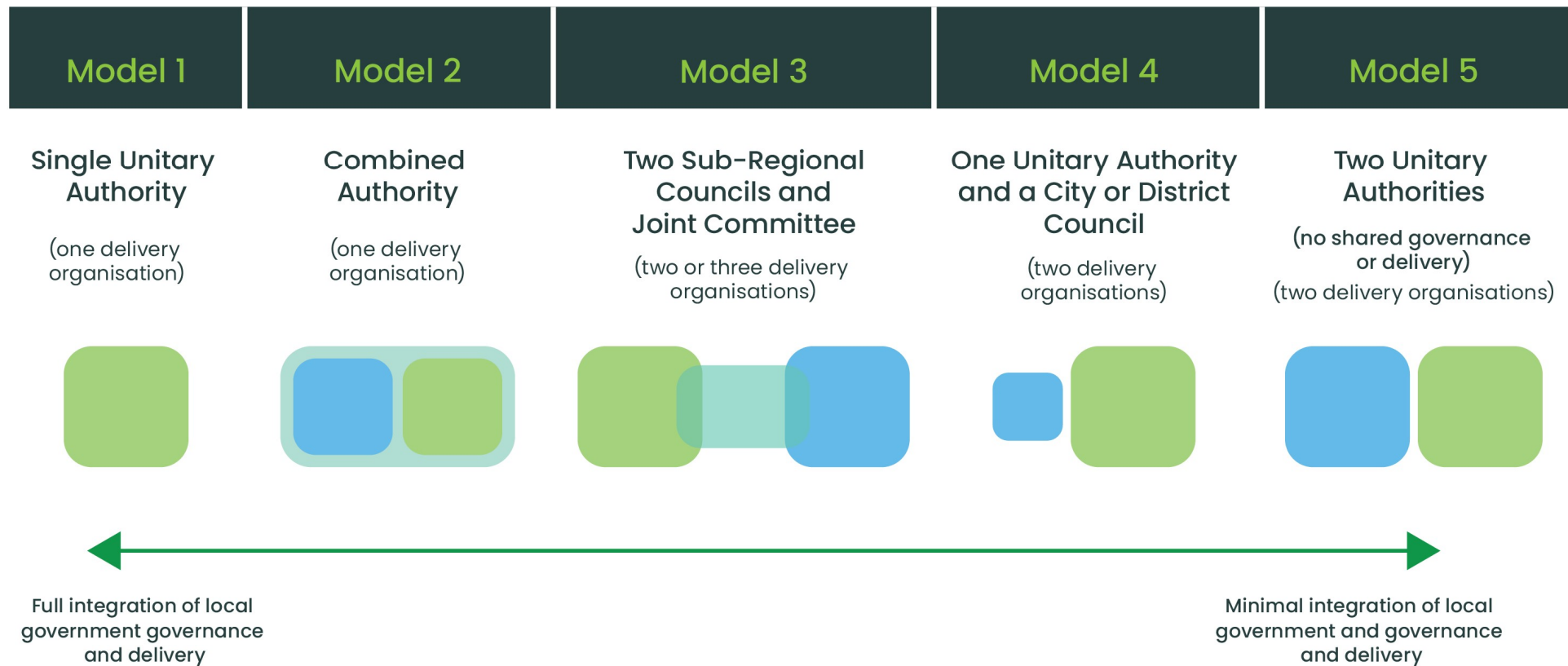
4. Shortlisting council structures

Models sit along a continuum

The council structures considered were deliberately designed to sit along a continuum ranging from minimal integration of local government governance and service delivery through to full regional integration.

This approach recognised that there is no single model capable of meeting all criteria equally and that different arrangements involve varying trade-offs between local autonomy, regional coordination, implementation complexity, representation, efficiency and long-term adaptability.

The continuum (see below) provided a structured way to explore a broad range of possibilities rather than beginning with a preferred solution. Models ranged from retaining largely separate governance and delivery arrangements through to a fully integrated regional governance and delivery model operating under a single authority.



*Taranaki status quo is further this way →

Multi-Criteria Analysis results

The MCA demonstrated a clear pattern across the assessment process. Models positioned toward the higher-integration end of the continuum generally performed more strongly against both the compulsory Head Start criteria and the additional strategic criteria developed through the Taranaki assessment process. These models provided greater opportunities to simplify governance arrangements, strengthen regional strategic planning, improve coordination of regional-scale functions such as transport, catchment management and environmental management, and realise economies of scale through reduced duplication of governance, systems and organisational capability. Conversely, models positioned closer to the minimal integration end of the continuum generally retained a greater degree of organisational duplication and governance complexity, limiting their ability to achieve the same level of strategic alignment and regional coordination.

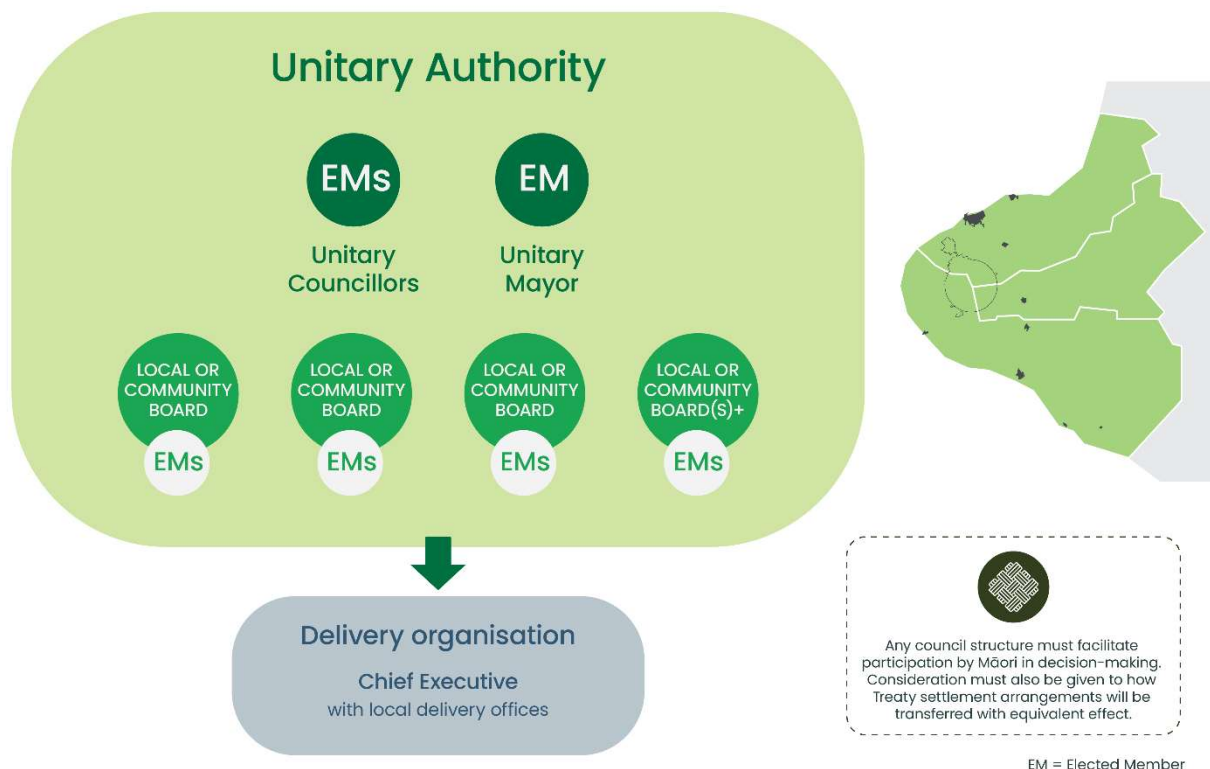
Head start criteria	Model 1 Single Unitary Authority	Model 2 Combined Authority	Model 3 Two Sub-Regional Councils and Joint Committee	Model 4 One Unitary Authority and a City or District Council	Model 5 Two Unitary Authorities
Supports the new planning system	5	4	4	3	1
Simplifies local governance	5	3	2	2	2
Economies of scale	5	4	3	3	1
Maintains local voice	2	4	4	2	4
Deliverability	4	4	3	3	2
Additional criteria					
Treaty settlements*	4	3	3	3	2
Financial resilience	5	4	3	3	2
Support growth and investment	5	4	3	4	3
Future flexibility	5	4	3	2	1

* Further analysis and engagement with iwi partners will be required before any conclusions can be drawn regarding the relative strengths or weaknesses of individual council structures.

As a result, the assessment process identified Models 1, 2 and 3 as the strongest-performing options overall and these have been shortlisted for further investigation through the Pathfinder process. While these models differ significantly in their degree of integration, they each demonstrated the ability to maintain regional-scale functions, support strategic planning and service delivery, and provide a credible platform for responding to future local government challenges.

Models 4 and 5 were not advanced for further consideration as they demonstrated weaker overall alignment with the assessment criteria, primarily due to the increased governance complexity, duplication of functions and reduced ability to achieve regional integration and economies of scale when compared to the higher-performing options. A more detailed assessment of all models against the Head Start criteria is provided in **Appendix B**.

5. Model 1 – Single Unitary Authority



A Single Unitary Authority represents the greatest level of integration considered through the continuum. Under this model, a single council would assume responsibility for all regional and territorial local government functions across Taranaki, supported by one Long-Term Plan, and a single delivery organisation supported by local offices. Community Boards, Local Boards or alternative local governance arrangements could be established to maintain local representation and community input.

The assessment identified this model as providing the strongest opportunity to simplify governance arrangements and align strategic decision-making across the region. By bringing together regional and district functions within a single organisation, the model has the potential to reduce duplication, improve coordination and enable more consistent service delivery. Regional planning, transport, regulatory functions, emergency management, catchment management and environmental functions could be integrated within a common strategic framework.

An important strength of the model is its ability to retain regional-scale functions at the scale for which they were originally designed. Functions such as catchment management, environmental monitoring, biosecurity, flood management and regional transport planning would continue to operate across the full region, avoiding fragmentation of specialist capability, technical systems and long-term planning frameworks. Initial functional analysis indicated that a significant proportion of current local government functions could potentially be governed at a regional level under this model.

The preliminary financial assessment identified the Single Unitary Authority as offering the greatest economies of scale of all council structures assessed. The model removes the greatest degree of duplication across governance, management structures, systems and support services, resulting in the

highest indicative efficiency opportunity of the options considered. The assessment also indicated a relatively balanced regional debt position and strong asset backing across the region.

From a Treaty settlement and Māori participation in decision-making perspective, the model appears to provide the most straightforward pathway for transferring existing obligations, relationships and partnership arrangements into a future governance structure. Existing settlement commitments and regional governance arrangements could largely be transitioned into a single organisation, although detailed work would still be required to determine future governance mechanisms, representation arrangements and delegated decision-making authorities.

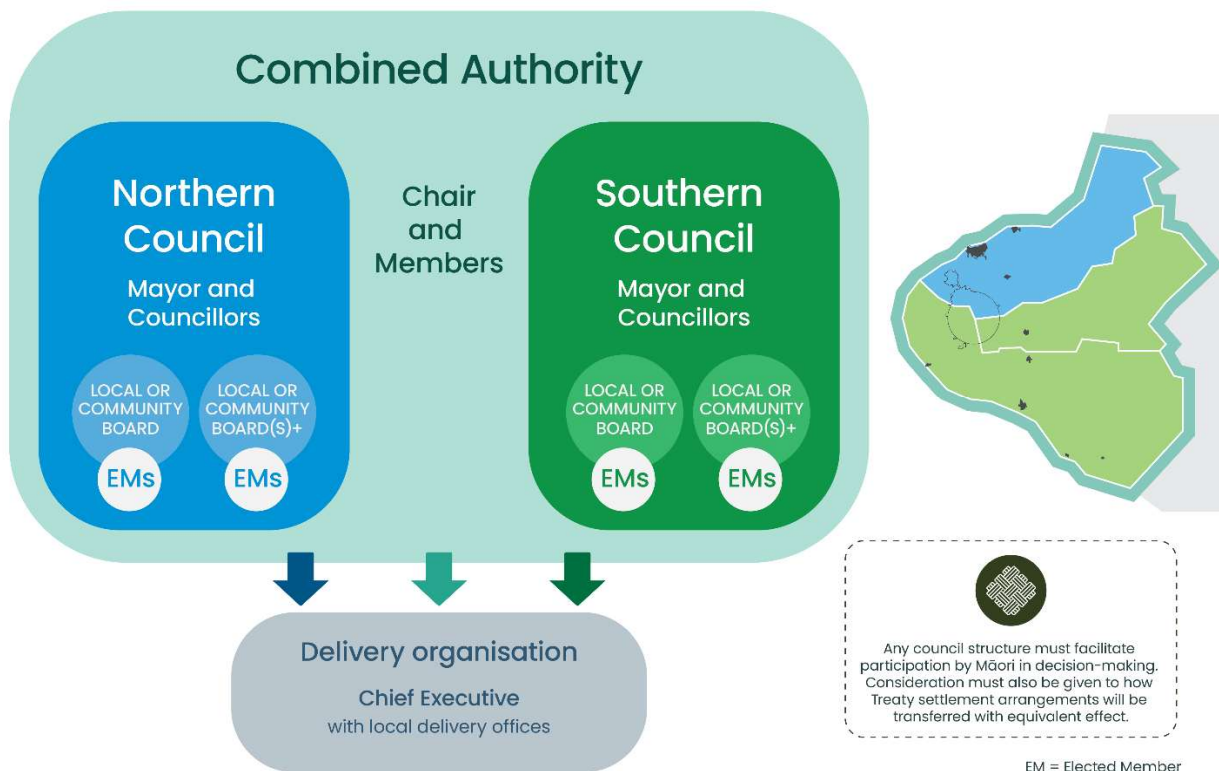
Balanced against these advantages, the model would involve the greatest level of organisational change. Implementation would require the integration of governance structures, planning systems, rating arrangements, assets, liabilities, technology platforms and organisational capability across the region. The transition effort would be substantial and would require careful management to avoid disruption to service delivery and other major reform programmes.

Overall, the Single Unitary Authority provides the strongest opportunity to achieve long-term governance simplification, service integration, catchment management and economies of scale. While it involves the highest implementation complexity, it also offers the clearest future-state governance structure and the strongest alignment with the objective of creating an integrated regional governance system.

Matters for detailed investigation in next phase

- The design of second-tier governance arrangements, including Community Boards, Local Boards or alternative local representation models that ensure effective local representation for smaller and rural communities.
- Delegated authorities and decision-making responsibilities between regional and local governance tiers.
- The future allocation and delivery model for local government functions and services within a target operating model.
- Detailed financial modelling, including rating harmonisation, debt allocation and transition costs.
- The transfer and continuation of Treaty settlement obligations, iwi partnership arrangements and Māori participation mechanisms.
- Regulatory function independence, compliance monitoring and management of potential conflicts of interest.
- Organisational design, workforce transition and implementation sequencing.

6. Model 2 – Combined Authority



Model 2 seeks to balance regional integration with empowered local decision-making. Under this approach, a Combined Authority would govern and fund regional-scale functions while the two Councils would govern and fund (through targeted rates) local functions within their respective territories. The Combined Authority would set region-wide service standards, informed by local input, that Councils must meet. Service delivery would be undertaken through a single delivery organisation, supported by local offices.

The model was assessed as offering many of the functional advantages associated with a Single Unitary Authority while preserving separate local governing bodies. It provides opportunities to integrate strategic planning, transport, regulatory functions, flood management and other regional-scale activities while enabling local matters to remain under local governance, with broad regional alignment through service standards. The model also retains the ability to operate regional environmental management, catchment management, biosecurity and transport functions at an appropriate regional scale.

A key strength of this model is its flexibility. Regional-scale functions could be progressively expanded over time as confidence and experience with the model develops. This provides an evolutionary pathway that may allow the region to further strengthen collaboration without requiring immediate full structural integration.

The financial assessment identified moderate to high economies of scale. While retaining separate governing bodies introduces additional governance complexity, the existence of a single delivery organisation still creates opportunities for shared systems, support services and operational efficiencies.

The overall efficiency opportunity is lower than a unitary authority but remains substantial when compared with current local government arrangements.

Treaty settlement and Māori participation in decision-making considerations are more complex than under a Single Unitary Authority because governance responsibilities are shared across regional and local entities. The extent to which existing arrangements can be maintained will depend heavily on which governing body is responsible for which local government function and how the final governance boundaries are determined. Particular consideration will be required regarding existing catchment-based arrangements and joint management arrangements.

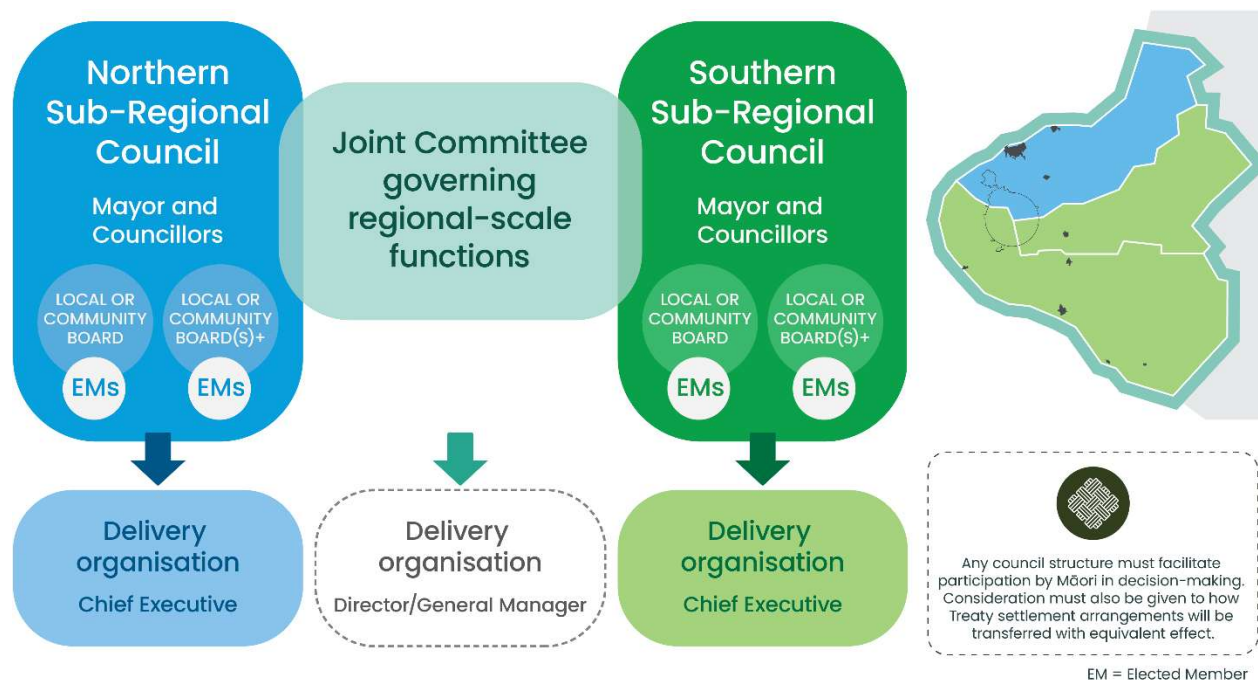
The principal challenge associated with this model is that its success relies heavily on the ongoing alignment of participating governing bodies. While governance remains more localised than under a Single Unitary Authority, the model requires clear accountability frameworks, agreed service standards and effective mechanisms for resolving differences between governance entities.

Overall, the Combined Authority model provides a pragmatic middle ground between maintaining separate councils and full integration. It offers substantial opportunities for improved coordination and service delivery while retaining a stronger local governance presence than a Single Unitary Authority.

Matters for detailed investigation in next phase

- Definition of regional-scale and local-scale functions.
- Governance composition and voting arrangements for the Combined Authority.
- Service standards, delegations and accountability mechanisms between governance layers.
- Rating and funding powers including allocation of revenue responsibilities and financial accountability mechanisms.
- Detailed Treaty settlement, catchment management and Māori participation in decision-making arrangements.
- Delivery organisation design and integration pathway.
- Long-Term Plan arrangements and regional planning responsibilities.

7. Model 3 – Two Sub-Regional Councils and Joint Committee



Model 3 represents the least integrated of the shortlisted options while still retaining a regional governance mechanism. Under this approach, two sub-regional councils would be established, supported by a Joint Committee responsible for governing regional-scale functions. Regional functions could be delivered by a separate organisation, through one or both existing delivery organisations, or through alternative shared delivery arrangements.

This model largely preserves the philosophy of local governance while creating a formal mechanism for effective governance of functions requiring regional alignment. It reduces the number of local authorities operating within Taranaki while recognising that regional challenges such as transport, environmental management, catchment management and strategic planning continue to require collective decision-making.

The functional assessment identified moderate opportunities for improvement compared with the status quo. The model maintains regional planning capability and specialist environmental expertise while providing a platform for increased collaboration over time. Importantly, it retains the ability to manage regional functions at an appropriate scale while reducing the number of district organisations from three to two.

However, many local government functions would continue to be delivered through separate organisations, limiting the efficiency gains that can be achieved. Corporate services and support functions would likely remain duplicated and the benefits of the model are dependent on the willingness of participating entities to transfer functions to the shared regional entity over time.

The financial assessment nevertheless identified a relatively strong scale opportunity. While governance complexity remains notably higher than the other shortlisted models, savings can still be achieved through shared regional functions and delivery arrangements. Importantly, the model largely retains

existing asset and debt positions, potentially reducing some implementation risks associated with restructuring.

From a Treaty settlement perspective, the model remains workable but introduces similar challenges to the Combined Authority model. Future arrangements would depend heavily on the allocation of functions between governance entities, the role of the Joint Committee and the interaction between governance body boundaries, catchments and existing partnership arrangements. Particular consideration would need to be given to the Waitara catchment, which spans the current district council boundary, as well as to existing joint management arrangements and Māori participation in decision-making mechanisms.

Overall, this model offers an incremental pathway toward greater regional integration while preserving a strong local governance focus. It provides a platform for future evolution but relies on robust governance arrangements and long-term commitment between participating bodies if additional efficiencies and integration benefits are to be realised.

Matters for detailed investigation in next phase

- Functions and powers of the Joint Committee.
- Governance, accountability and decision-making arrangements across three governance layers.
- Rating powers, funding flows and financial accountability mechanisms.
- Long-term service integration pathways and opportunities for additional functions to be governed at a regional scale.
- Treaty settlement transition arrangements and Māori participation in decision-making mechanisms.
- Catchment-based governance implications and regional planning responsibilities.
- Delivery organisation design, allocation of operational functions and clear prioritisation and accountability mechanisms with the different governance bodies.
- Future flexibility and mechanisms for expansion or adaptation over time.

Next phase of work



A path to a detailed proposal

- Building on this solid foundation with further investigation into governance, representation and decision-making arrangements, legal, legislative, financial and resourcing analysis, Treaty settlement considerations.
- Meaningful community and stakeholder engagement with residents across the region, enabling well-informed debate and feedback.
- Taking the time needed to work with iwi, hapū and Māori on participation, governance arrangements and Treaty settlement matters.
- Partnership, guidance and support from Central Government and ongoing dialogue with other councils and partners.
- Development of an Integrated Local Government Framework in collaboration with Waikato, Bay of Plenty and Southland to develop a shared evidence base that will support local government decision-making and be of wider sector benefit.

Pathfinder is not just a milestone, it's a commitment to the journey ahead.

The Pathfinder process has enabled an initial assessment of a broad range of council structures and the identification of three shortlisted models for further consideration. While this work has established a strong evidence base and narrowed the range of potential local government arrangements, the shortlisted models remain intentionally high-level and require further investigation before any final recommendations can be made.

The next phase of the programme will focus on undertaking a comprehensive assessment of the shortlisted options to support local decision-making and, if appropriate, the development of a Detailed Proposal for consideration by Central Government. This work will involve further technical analysis, engagement with iwi partners, the community and key stakeholders and a more detailed examination of implementation implications, opportunities and risks associated with each model.

Community and stakeholder engagement, education and consultation will be a major focus of the next phase of work. Early community feedback and input will help identify a preferred council structure, which is a key milestone in the next phase. A public consultation process will then provide communities, iwi partners and stakeholders with an opportunity to consider the implications of the preferred option and provide feedback prior to any final proposal being developed. Community feedback will form an important part of the decision-making process and will help ensure that any future local government arrangements reflect local aspirations and priorities.

8. Working with the community

Community and stakeholder engagement will be a core element of the next phase of work. The proposed reforms are significant and will likely affect every Taranaki resident in some way, yet the reality is many people are unaware of what is ahead. Others have been waiting to see further details and information before forming a view. The analysis completed over the past three months has put participating councils in a strong position to now conduct meaningful, well-informed community engagement.

The community engagement plan for the next phase will include a structured, sequenced calendar of communications, education, engagement activities and formal consultation. The goal is to ensure everyone in Taranaki has the opportunity to understand what is being considered and why, ask questions and share views, challenge assumptions and take time to reflect before they provide feedback as part of formal consultation.

The programme will aim to build awareness of issues before engagement events take place, so participants arrive with enough context to contribute meaningfully. Targeted stakeholder meetings will help identify sector-specific issues, local impacts and practical opportunities. Wider public engagement will test whether those themes are shared more broadly and whether additional concerns need to be considered.

A big focus of the engagement strategy will be on meeting people where they are. A mix of channels will be used so that residents, community organisations, businesses, rural communities, interest groups and people who may not normally engage with councils are aware of the issues and can participate in ways that suit them. This may include direct briefings and workshops, community drop-in sessions or event pop-ups, online resources and tools such as webinars, social media campaigns, simple feedback mechanisms and straightforward communications that explain the issues in a range of formats. The intent is not simply to broadcast information, but to support two-way dialogue and make it easier for people to participate constructively.

The intended approach reflects recognised good practice for public engagement. It will be clear what is open for influence, how feedback will be used and when decisions are expected. This will help manage expectations while still providing space for community views to shape a detailed proposal.

It's acknowledged there may be value in all four Taranaki councils collaborating or aligning on community engagement in the next phase and this possibility will form part of the ongoing conversations between councils. Regardless, the participating councils plan to share information and engagement opportunities with the entire region and feedback will be actively encouraged from everyone in Taranaki.

Overall, the planned community engagement is about building trust in the process as much as gathering feedback. Setting out a clear way forward, using a range of engagement methods, being clear about the purpose of each activity and reporting back on what has been heard will ensure the final detailed proposal is genuinely informed by local perspectives and made with a clear understanding of the community context.

9. Working with iwi, hapū and Māori

Councils recognise that Māori partnership, participation, representation and Treaty settlement arrangements are important considerations in any discussion regarding the future of local government in Taranaki. While some initial conversations have occurred during the initial phase, the time available through the Head Start process has been limited and has not enabled engagement with the breadth of iwi, hapū, PSGEs and Māori interests appropriate for matters of this significance. Councils acknowledge that further discussion and relationship-building will be required before any future arrangements could be fully understood, explored or assessed.

The purpose of this Pathfinder Proposal is therefore not to reach conclusions on Māori participation, governance arrangements or Treaty settlement matters. Rather, it seeks to identify issues that require further consideration and to signal the importance of ongoing partnership and dialogue as this work progresses. Initial analysis has highlighted the diversity and complexity of existing arrangements across

the region and the need for a more comprehensive understanding of their implications within any local government reform process.

Regardless of decisions made in relation to this Proposal, participating councils intend to continue working with iwi partners to strengthen relationships, improve shared understanding and support future discussions regarding the region's long-term governance arrangements. Subject to the direction and preferences of iwi partners, participating councils anticipate that an Engagement Plan would be developed collaboratively to guide these conversations and help ensure engagement approaches are appropriate, inclusive and responsive to local circumstances.

It is anticipated that future engagement would help inform three connected conversations that have emerged through the Pathfinder process, as follows.

Partnership with Māori

Exploring how future local government arrangements could support meaningful partnership, participation and local iwi and hapū voice, and identifying the outcomes that iwi, hapū and PSGEs consider important within future governance arrangements.

Treaty settlement arrangements

Developing a fuller understanding of existing settlement commitments, statutory arrangements, governance mechanisms, operational agreements and relationship-based arrangements across the region and considering how future local government reform may interact with those arrangements.

Council structures

Considering how different council structures may support local representation, community aspirations, effective decision-making and Māori partnership outcomes, and understanding the opportunities and challenges associated with different approaches.

These conversations are interconnected but distinct. Councils recognise that Treaty settlement arrangements, Māori participation in decision-making arrangements and future governance structures each raise different considerations and may require different forms of discussion and engagement. Future work will therefore be undertaken carefully, recognising the diversity of perspectives that exist across iwi, hapū and PSGEs and the importance of providing sufficient time and opportunity for those perspectives to inform future analysis.

Councils are not proposing changes to Treaty settlement redress, statutory obligations or existing commitments through this Pathfinder Proposal. Equally, councils recognise that it cannot be assumed that existing arrangements would automatically transfer unchanged into any future governance structure. Should local government reform progress, a key focus of future work would be to better understand existing arrangements, the outcomes they are intended to achieve and how those outcomes and relationships could continue to be supported in the context of any future governance arrangements.

10. Detailed assessment programme

The next phase of work will be considerably more detailed and will focus on several interrelated workstreams.

Integrated Local Government Framework

A key component of the next phase will be the development of an Integrated Local Government Framework (ILGF). The ILGF is intended to move the discussion beyond governance structures alone and establish a future-focused framework describing how local government functions, services, decision-making and community outcomes could be more effectively delivered within Taranaki over the coming decades.

Taranaki is working in partnership with the Waikato, Bay of Plenty and Southland regions to undertake a joint procurement process and collaboratively develop the Integrated Local Government Framework (ILGF). This approach is intended to reduce duplication of effort, leverage shared investment and strengthen the evidence base supporting future local government decision-making. The collaborative nature of the programme will also enable participating regions to share learning and emerging insights as the work progresses, with the resulting framework expected to provide value and potential application across the wider local government sector.

The ILGF will examine how local government can best respond to emerging challenges including infrastructure investment, climate adaptation, demographic change, regulatory reform, economic development and evolving community expectations. It will consider opportunities to improve strategic alignment, service delivery, decision-making, accountability and organisational capability irrespective of the council structure ultimately selected.

Importantly, the ILGF will support detailed assessment of the shortlisted governance options by identifying future target operating model requirements, service delivery expectations and desired regional outcomes. This work will provide a more robust evidence base for evaluating economies of scale, organisational design implications, resourcing requirements and implementation pathways across the shortlisted models.

Legal and legislative assessment

While the Pathfinder process has considered governance structures at a conceptual level, detailed legal and legislative analysis will be required during the next phase. This work will examine the legislative pathways available to implement the shortlisted council structures and identify any statutory, regulatory or policy barriers that may require resolution.

This assessment will also consider implementation sequencing, transitional governance arrangements, statutory responsibilities and any legislative amendments that may be required to support future governance arrangements.

Governance, representation and decision-making arrangements

A detailed review of governance and representation arrangements will also be required. This work will extend beyond elected member numbers and ward structures to consider broader questions regarding local representation, second-tier governance arrangements, delegated authorities, local decision-making responsibilities and community participation mechanisms.

For some shortlisted models, this may include consideration of Community Boards, Local Boards or alternative place-based governance structures designed to maintain strong local voice within a more integrated governance system.

Financial and resourcing analysis

The financial assessments undertaken during this initial stage have been intentionally high-level and based on existing publicly available information. The next phase will require more comprehensive financial modelling, including analysis of transition costs, implementation funding, debt allocation, rating implications, operating costs, asset management considerations and long-term financial sustainability.

Additional work will also be required to assess organisational capability, workforce implications, leadership requirements and future operating models to ensure governance arrangements are supported by sufficient capacity and expertise.

Treaty settlement and Māori participation considerations

As outlined in the section above, all shortlisted models require a significantly more detailed assessment of Treaty settlement obligations, existing governance arrangements and opportunities for Māori participation in local government decision-making.

Future work will need to be undertaken in partnership with iwi, hapū and Treaty settlement entities to understand the implications of governance reform on existing settlement commitments, joint management arrangements, statutory acknowledgements, co-governance mechanisms and legislated partnership arrangements. Particular consideration will need to be given to ensuring continuity of existing arrangements where appropriate while exploring future opportunities for Māori participation and partnership within any council structure.

Partnership and support required from Central Government

Participating councils are committed to undertaking a robust and evidence-based assessment of the shortlisted council structures. However, several aspects of the next phase will require active partnership and support from Central Government.

Guidance on future representation arrangements

Further guidance from Central Government regarding representation review requirements would assist participating councils as they progress the next phase of the Head Start programme. Clarity regarding how statutory representation review obligations interact with local government reform processes would help avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and ensure resources remain focused on the development and assessment of future governance arrangements.

For New Plymouth District Council, a representation review is required to meet current legislative requirements. Aligning the wider governance reform options under active consideration in time for the 2028 election with the representation review timeframe would reduce the likelihood of duplication of planning and engagement work. However, if Cabinet cannot confirm acceptance of a final (and substantially different) council structure until May 2027, this could impact on the level of detail informing Council's representation review for the 2028 election. This would result in a high likelihood of a more comprehensive representation review being undertaken prior to the 2031 election.

For Taranaki Regional Council, the position is different. Undertaking a full representation review for a governance entity that will cease to exist at the 2028 local government elections would result in significant duplication of effort, unnecessary cost and consultation fatigue for communities.

Accordingly, participating councils request that Central Government consider preparation of representation review guidance and expectations, specific to councils participating in the governance reform proposal process. This could include allowing representation reviews to be scaled appropriately or incorporated into any approved governance reform process. Such an approach would

enable future representation arrangements to be considered alongside governance structures, local decision-making arrangements and community representation mechanisms in a more integrated and efficient manner, while maintaining appropriate democratic accountability and public participation.

Treaty settlement and legislative support

The most significant area requiring Crown involvement relates to Treaty settlement arrangements and associated legislative commitments. Many existing governance, co-governance and partnership arrangements arise directly from Treaty settlements or legislation negotiated between iwi and the Crown.

Providing certainty regarding the treatment of these arrangements within any future governance reform process will be critical. Ongoing Crown participation and support will be required to ensure existing commitments are appropriately recognised, maintained or adapted and that governance reform does not create unintended consequences for settlement obligations or established relationships.

Ongoing partnership through the Head Start process

Finally, continued engagement between Taranaki councils and Central Government will be critical to the success of the Head Start programme. Regular dialogue regarding the progress of the ILGF and wider sector benefits, policy development, legislative direction, assessment expectations and implementation considerations will help ensure local work remains aligned with Government objectives while reflecting the unique circumstances and aspirations of the Taranaki region.

Through the Pathfinder process, Taranaki has demonstrated a willingness to proactively explore future local government arrangements and to undertake a structured and evidence-based assessment of governance options. The next phase provides an opportunity to build on this work through continued partnership with Central Government, enabling a detailed evaluation of the shortlisted models and supporting informed decisions about the future of local government in the region.

Closing statement

Participating councils acknowledge that this Pathfinder Proposal differs from the conventional outline proposals anticipated through the Head Start process. It does not present a single preferred council structure for implementation. Instead, it reflects a structured and evidence-based exploration of future local government arrangements and identifies the council structures that have demonstrated the strongest alignment with both the Government's Head Start criteria and the strategic priorities identified through the Taranaki assessment process.

The work to date represents a significant commitment by participating councils, elected members, officers and stakeholders to engage constructively with the future of local government in the region. Through the application of a transparent assessment framework, the programme has reduced a broad range of potential council structures to three shortlisted options and established a clear programme of work required to support future decision-making. This provides a strong foundation for the next stage of analysis and engagement while ensuring that decisions are informed by evidence, community perspectives and a comprehensive understanding of implementation implications. Taranaki is playing a leading role in the collaborative development of the ILGF working alongside Waikato, Bay of Plenty and Southland to establish a shared and consistent evidence base to support local government decision making. The framework will also support the assessment of governance options within participating regions while also generating insights and approaches that may be of value to the wider local government sector.

As this Proposal sets out, Taranaki presents a unique local government context. It is expected that different views currently exist as to the most appropriate future governance arrangements for the region, and that those differences should be viewed as a natural and healthy part of any governance reform discussion rather than an impediment to progress.

Importantly, participating councils will continue working collaboratively and in good faith with all councils across the region throughout the next phase to look for opportunities for alignment. The Pathfinder process has strengthened understanding of the opportunities, challenges and trade-offs associated with different council structures and has created a platform for ongoing discussion and analysis. Further technical work, community engagement and detailed assessment will enable councils to refine their understanding of the shortlisted options and continue progressing toward a preferred approach. While this Pathfinder Proposal focuses on options within the Taranaki region, participating councils remain willing to continue discussions with neighbouring northern councils and communities where there may be mutual interest in exploring future opportunities for collaboration, alignment or alternative governance arrangements.

Accordingly, the participating councils ask Cabinet to view this Pathfinder Proposal as an important milestone rather than a final destination. While additional work is required before a preferred council structure can be identified, we wish to reiterate that the proposal clearly demonstrates both the direction of travel and the substantial progress already achieved. It provides a credible, evidence-based pathway for the region to continue exploring governance reform in a manner that reflects Government objectives while recognising the unique characteristics and aspirations of Taranaki communities.

The councils look forward to continuing to work closely with Central Government, iwi, communities and regional partners over the coming months to undertake the detailed analysis required, identify a preferred approach, and determine how local government can best serve the people of Taranaki for future generations.

Appendix A: Shaping Taranaki's Future survey summary

The New Plymouth District Council Shaping Taranaki's Future survey aimed to gather an initial indication of what matters to our community when it comes to local governance and decision making.

The values-based survey combined qualitative and quantitative questions and was open online and in hard copy from 15 to 28 June 2026. It was completed by 532 people. At the same time, we also received separate submissions from Taranaki Federated Farmers, a group of fuel companies and an individual.

Responses were thoughtful and well-considered, with strong consistency in the issues and outcomes respondents cared about. There was general openness to change with 76% of respondents either fully or generally supportive of the idea of change to local government in Taranaki. Findings were considered a useful indicator of community views. More in-depth consultation with iwi partners, stakeholders and the community is planned in the next phase of work.

Top themes from respondents

When thinking about local government change, what do you think is the biggest opportunity for Taranaki? (open text)

1. **Cost savings and efficiency** - reducing duplication across multiple councils, streamlining "back office" functions, cutting management layers and bureaucracy, lowering rates, controlling spending and achieving economies of scale through amalgamation.
2. **Greater regional coordination** - "one voice for Taranaki", regional planning for infrastructure, transport, water and development and better alignment and collaboration. Some also saw it as an opportunity for a stronger collective voice when dealing with central government.
3. **Improved service delivery, consistency and simplicity** - improving how councils work for people and businesses. Consistent rules across the region, simplified processes (especially consenting), faster decision-making, less red tape and a "one-stop shop" for council services.

Other themes:

- Desire to retain local decision-making and community voice.
- Calls for better leadership, transparency and accountability.
- Economic development and a region-wide economic strategy.
- Infrastructure and long-term integrated planning.
- Community, inclusion and iwi engagement (less dominant than financial/efficiency themes).

*When thinking about local government change in Taranaki, what is your biggest **concern**? (open text)*

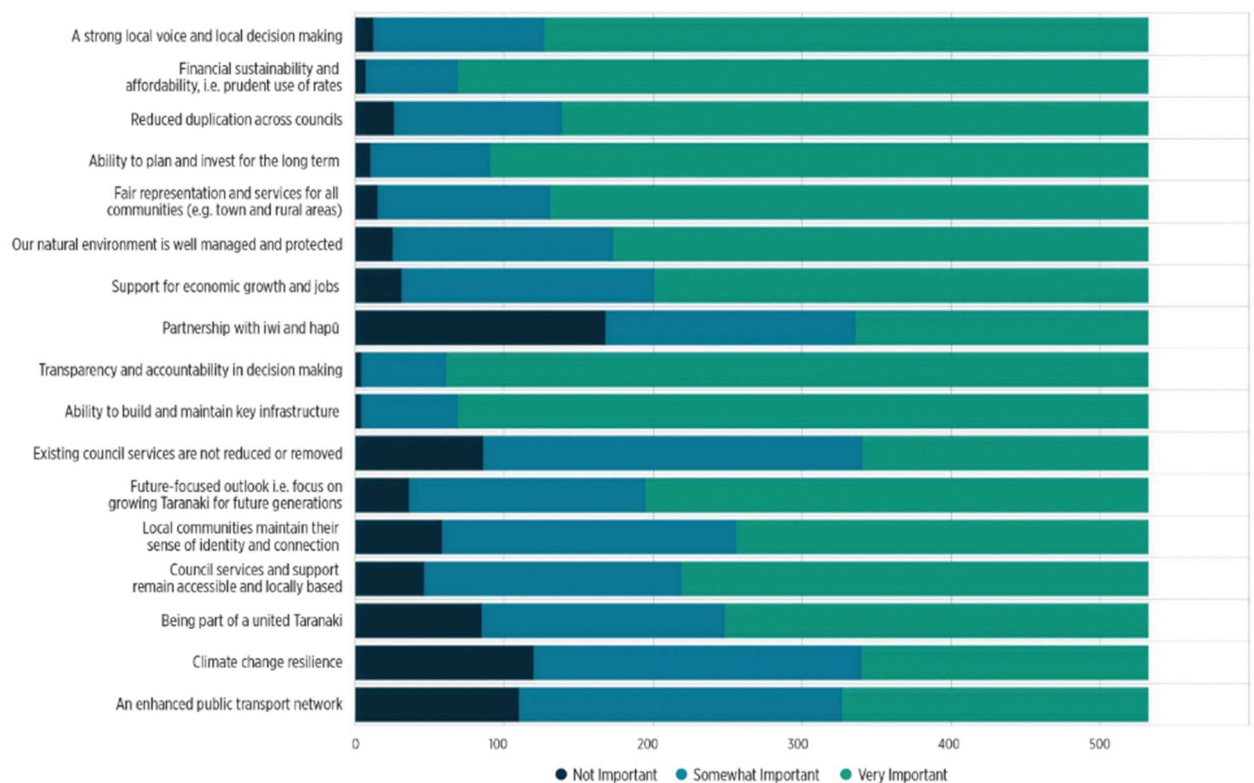
1. **Loss of local voice, representation and identity** - smaller towns being overlooked, New Plymouth dominating decision-making, loss of direct access to decision-making, erosion of local identity and community-specific needs.
2. **Centralisation of power and reduced accountability** - fear reform could reduce democratic influence, even if it improves structure. One large entity becoming harder to hold accountable, decisions moving further away from communities, loss of checks and balances between councils, influence shifting to unelected officials and greater control from central government.

3. **Costs, inefficiency and risk of “bigger bureaucracy”** - scepticism based on past reforms with many doubting the financial benefits of reform. Concerns include high transition costs, risk of larger, more complex bureaucracy, doubt that savings will materialise, potential for duplicated services to persist and rising rates instead of reductions.

Other themes:

- Risk to smaller communities and concern about an urban v rural divide
- Loss or weakening of regional council functions
- Process concerns (rushed, poorly planned, insufficient consultation)
- Governance quality and decision-making
- Potential loss of jobs, expertise and institutional knowledge
- Some concerned iwi voices may be reduced and others concerned about iwi influence increasing
- Service quality and disruption risk during transition

When thinking about local government change in Taranaki, how important are the following outcomes? (respondents were asked to rate outcomes)



What does “a strong local voice” in local government look like to you? (open text)

The most common theme was that all communities are fairly represented and have genuine influence over decisions that affect them. This includes ensuring smaller towns and rural areas are not overshadowed by larger centres and that representation structures reflect the region’s diversity.

A strong emphasis was placed on meaningful engagement, with consultation that results in visible changes to decisions and priorities. Democratic accountability and transparency were seen as essential, with open processes and clear communication in decision-making.

Is there anything you would like to add? (open text)

The most distinctive **additional** insights related to the process of reform itself, including concerns that change is being rushed, uncertainty about what a future council structure would look like and how it would work and the risk of losing technical expertise and institutional knowledge during any transition.

Governance structure

This survey did not specifically ask for respondents' preferred future council structure however many shared their views across the open field questions – either explicitly or implicitly. These comments were weighted toward some form of amalgamation, unitary authority or single Taranaki-wide council, often justified by reduced duplication, lower administration costs and a stronger regional voice. A smaller but still notable group preferred retaining multiple councils, strengthening local representation or removing only the regional council while keeping district councils.

Note: Analysis was derived from open-text comments rather than a direct survey question, meaning some respondents may have had a view but did not mention it. Respondents were also commenting before detailed models had been developed and implications understood.

Appendix B: Initial analysis of council structures against Head Start Assessment Criteria

Model 1 – Single Unitary Authority

Head start criteria	Model 1
Supports the new planning system	5
Simplifies local governance	5
Economies of scale	5
Maintains local voice	2
Deliverability	4

Supports the new planning system

Strongest alignment. A single regional governance structure would provide the clearest basis for integrated spatial, environmental and land use planning. A single unitary authority would provide for one regional spatial plan and one combined natural environment and land use plan. In this model, plan development would be more streamlined through a single local government structure. Overall, resource management planning under this model is likely to be more effective than the status quo.

Simplifies local governance

Strongest alignment. A single unitary authority would consolidate decision-making and integrate the functions of three district councils and one regional council. This model would provide strong simplification and streamlining of governance and service delivery elements. The design of second-tier governance arrangements would need to be clear so as not to recreate complexity.

Economies of scale

Strongest alignment. A single governance structure, single Long-Term Plan, and single delivery organisation would minimise duplication across governance, executive leadership, and corporate services. A consolidation of procurement and financial/IT systems within a single delivery organisation would maximise purchasing power and operational efficiency and would enable financial resources to be allocated where they are needed across the region.

Maintains local voice

Some alignment. A single unitary authority involves substantial centralisation of decision-making which can create actual and/or perceived loss of local identity or influence. There may be a lower proximity of unitary authority elected decision-makers (at tier-one governance level) to communities. However, there is strong potential in this model for robust second-tier governance that provides fair and effective representation for communities of interest throughout the region.

Local Boards could potentially provide a more empowered option for local decision-making within the unitary authority compared to Community Boards. A reasonable number of Local Boards or Community Boards (more than the number of current district councils) across Taranaki could be an effective mechanism to maintain local voice in this model. The method of electing representatives on the unitary authority governing board (e.g. ward-based and/or at-large) would also influence actual or perceived local voice.

Deliverability

Strong alignment. The single unitary authority model strongly aligns with the deliverability criteria due to its simple, unified structure and clear implementation pathway, though significant transition costs and community connection risks would require careful management.

Model 2 – Combined Authority

Head start criteria	Model 2
Supports the new planning system	4
Simplifies local governance	3
Economies of scale	4
Maintains local voice	4
Deliverability	4

Supports the new planning system

Strong alignment. In this model it is assumed that regional-scale planning functions (i.e. the regional spatial plan and functions under the Environment Act 1986) would be governed by the Combined Authority governing body. This model would also enable the integration of land-use planning functions under the (proposed) Planning Act into the Combined Authority. Based on these assumptions, this model would strongly support the new planning system. Overall, resource management planning under this model is likely to be more effective than the status quo.

This model does not align with this criterion as strongly as Model 1. This is due to the early stage of model development and the uncertainty of the role of Local Governing Bodies as a bespoke design feature in the model.

Simplifies local governance

Moderate alignment. This model integrates the functions and consolidates decision-making of three district councils and one regional council into a single Combined Authority. The Combined Authority model is more complex than a single unitary authority as there are three layers of governance: a Combined Authority governing body, two (or more) Local Governing Bodies and multiple Local Boards or Community Boards to appropriately represent smaller communities of interest across the region.

A Local Governing Body is a bespoke second-tier governance body that is designed to address perceived shortfalls in the Local Board model. Specifically, each Local Governing Body would have its responsibilities and powers prescribed in legislation (providing clearer authority) and would have the ability to set targeted rates for the local-scale functions that it governs within its respective territory (providing more empowered decision-making). The

roles, responsibilities and accountability mechanisms of each tier of governance, and how they are expected to interact with each other, would need to be carefully designed to minimise complexity.

Economies of scale

Strong alignment. The Combined Authority model would provide high economies of scale. A single delivery organisation provides significant operational efficiencies and purchasing power across the region. However, multiple governing bodies and (potentially) multiple Long-Term Plans would maintain duplication in governance, planning, and decision-making, reducing the overall scale benefits compared to Model 1.

Maintains local voice

Strong alignment. There is centralisation of decision-making for regional-scale functions and region-wide service standards in the Combined Authority governing body which could create actual or perceived loss of local identity or influence. However, the Combined Authority's three layers of governance/representation enables significant opportunities for fair and effective representation at regional, sub-regional, and smaller communities of interest levels across the region. To maintain meaningful local voice, it is critical that the three governance tiers have clear roles and responsibilities, strong accountability mechanisms, and effective relationships with one another.

Deliverability

Strong alignment. The Combined Authority model strongly aligns with the deliverability criteria and would balance regional delivery with local representation. However, governance alignment between multiple governance bodies and a single delivery organisation would require resolution. This model would require bespoke legislation to establish Local Governing Bodies.

Model 3 – Two Sub-Regional Councils with Joint Committee

Head start criteria	Model 3
Supports the new planning system	4
Simplifies local governance	2
Economies of scale	3
Maintains local voice	4
Deliverability	3

Supports the new planning system

Strong alignment. In this model it is assumed that regional-scale planning functions (i.e. the regional spatial plan and functions under the Environment Act) would be governed by the Joint Committee. This model would also enable the integration of land-use planning functions under the Planning Act into the Joint Committee. Based on these assumptions, this model would strongly support the new planning system. Overall, resource management planning under this model is likely to be equally as effective as the status quo, but there is potential for it to be more effective depending on design.

This model does not align with this criterion as strongly as Model 1 due to the current design uncertainty of the Joint Committee in this model, which reflects the relatively bespoke nature of this design detail and the early stage of model development.

Simplifies local governance

Some alignment. This model provides partial simplification of local governance compared with the status quo, as the number of local government entities would move from four to two. However, this model introduces governance complexity for regional-scale functions with a Joint Committee. The membership, role, responsibilities and funding model for the Joint Committee would need to be clear, as would the relationship between the Joint Committee and the two sub-regional councils.

The governance of local-scale functions remains duplicated in this model, maintaining similar complexity to the status quo of Taranaki's local government arrangements in this regard. Second-tier governance arrangements within each sub-regional council would need to be clearly designed to avoid recreating complexity. There is likely to be duplication of service delivery in this model but this could be mitigated by having shared service arrangements agreed between the two, potentially three, service delivery organisations.

Economies of scale

Moderate alignment. This model would provide moderate economies of scale. Compared with the status quo, a level of governance duplication is created in relation to regional-scale functions through the model's Joint Committee mechanism, especially if the Joint Committee members must go back to their respective councils for decision-making. In addition, the presence of two sub-regional councils, each with their own Long-Term Plans, and separate organisational structures would continue to require duplicated governance, executive leadership, and corporate and operational services. Procurement and operational efficiencies are improved compared with the status quo, but not to the extent of Models 1 and 2.

Maintains local voice

Strong alignment. This model strongly maintains local voice by having two sub-regional councils that would each have second-tier governance bodies within them to support fair and effective representation for smaller communities of interest across the region. Members of the Joint Committee responsible for governing regional-scale functions would be appointed by the sub-regional councils. This arrangement would mean slightly less local voice/representation in the governance of regional-scale functions compared with an arrangement where candidates were directly elected by voters onto the Joint Committee. To maintain meaningful local voice within this model, the three governance tiers would require clear roles and responsibilities, strong accountability mechanisms, and effective relationships with each other.

Deliverability

Moderate alignment. This model is assessed as being moderately deliverable on the basis that there would be greater structural complexity than Models 1 and 2, and there are unresolved governance, funding and delivery arrangements which increase implementation risk. There is a potential need for bespoke legislation to support the Joint Committee arrangement.

Model 4 – One Unitary Authority and a City or District Council

Head start criteria	Model 4
Supports the new planning system	3
Simplifies local governance	2
Economies of scale	3
Maintains local voice	2
Deliverability	3

Supports the new planning system

Moderate alignment. This model would provide strong alignment on paper if the Unitary Authority governed and delivered regional-scale planning functions (i.e. the regional spatial plan and functions under the Environment Act). This model would also enable the integration of the natural environment plan with one land use plan. However, the asymmetrical governance and power dynamics between the two entities is likely to undermine effective governance and delivery of the new planning system.

Simplifies local governance

Some alignment. This model would provide some simplification of governance arrangements as the number of local government entities would move from four to two. However, while this model would provide coordinated governance of regional-scale functions, it introduces complexity in relation to the membership of the Unitary Authority governing body. Given that City or District Council residents would have to pay rates to the Unitary Authority for regional-scale services, it is assumed that those residents would have the ability to vote for representatives on the governing body of the Unitary Authority. The complexity of determining appropriate governing body membership in the Unitary Authority would be enhanced by the fact that, assuming New Plymouth was the basis for the City or District Council, the population within the City or District Council territory would be significantly larger than the population within the Unitary Authority's territory.

This model would also maintain complexity for the rating of regional-scale functions, i.e. ratepayers within the City or District Council territory would need to pay rates to both the City or District Council and the Unitary Authority. The apportionment of regional-scale rates across the region would also need to be worked through.

The governance and delivery of local-scale functions would remain duplicated in this model, maintaining similar complexity to the status quo of Taranaki's local government arrangements in this regard. Lastly, second-tier governance arrangements within each local government entity body would need to be clearly designed to avoid recreating complexity.

Economies of scale

Moderate alignment. This model would provide moderate economies of scale. Efficiencies would be achieved within the Unitary Authority itself through integrated governance and delivery of regional and local functions and operations. However, the existence of two governing bodies and two delivery organisations, the need for two Long-Term Plans, and separate governance and corporate service functions across the region, would reduce opportunities for efficiency gains and maintain moderate duplication.

Maintains local voice

Some alignment. Subject to where the boundary is drawn between the two local government entities, this model would provide good representation for urban and rural interests through two separate local government entities. Smaller communities of interest within each sub-region would be represented via Local or Community Boards within the respective local government entity.

However, this model only has some alignment overall because it is unclear how the local voice of residents in the City or District Council area would be maintained in relation to the governance of regional-scale functions compared with the status quo, as there is no clear ability for residents of the City or District Council area to elect Unitary Authority governing body members or input into regional-scale decisions. This design detail will need to be worked through. Additionally, there is a risk that this model would exacerbate the actual and/or perceived rural versus urban divide.

Deliverability

Moderate alignment. This model is considered moderately deliverable due to the complex boundary, governance and delivery arrangements that would be involved, and the significant unresolved design and implementation challenges that would need to be worked through and resolved.

Model 5 – Two Unitary Authorities (no shared governance or delivery)

Head start criteria	Model 5
Supports the new planning system	1
Simplifies local governance	2
Economies of scale	1
Maintains local voice	4
Deliverability	2

Supports the new planning system

Low alignment. This model would involve dividing the region into two sub-regions, with each sub-region governed by a Unitary Authority and no mechanisms for shared governance or delivery. This model would not enable effective delivery of a regional spatial plan or functions under the Environment Act, in particular the management of freshwater and terrestrial biodiversity.

Two natural environment plans would split environmental management of the region which is a potentially unworkable prospect. However, if two natural environment plans were permitted under the Natural Environment Act, there may be some benefit from each Unitary Authority combining their respective natural environment plans with their land use plans.

Surface freshwater could not be effectively managed in any catchment that is split by the boundary between the Unitary Authorities. Groundwater would also be difficult to manage overall, with aquifers spreading over any feasible boundary. Overall, this model presents serious design problems and is potentially unworkable for the new planning system.

Simplifies local governance

Some alignment. This model would provide partial simplification as the number of local government entities would move from four to two. This model would introduce complexity by duplicating the governance and delivery of regional functions and maintain complexity through the ongoing duplication of governance and delivery of local-scale functions that is similar to the status quo.

Importantly, this model would introduce high complexity and the risk of unintended consequences, and potentially even unworkability, for functions currently delivered by the Taranaki Regional Council that rely on a regional-scale approach to be effective. The current regional council functions most at risk of negative impacts from this model are resource management planning, resource consent planning, resource consent processing, state of environment monitoring, environmental science investigations, biosecurity, catchment management, transport planning and services, river and flood risk management.

As with the other models, second-tier governance arrangements within each Unitary Authority would need to be clearly designed to avoid recreating complexity.

Economies of scale

Low alignment. This model would provide limited economies of scale. While each Unitary Authority would benefit from integrating regional and local functions within its own territory, there is a complete absence of shared governance, delivery or corporate services, meaning duplication remains across both organisations. Purchasing power, standardisation opportunities, and operational efficiencies are significantly lower than the other models.

Maintains local voice

Strong alignment. This model would have strong alignment with this criterion because dividing the region into two sub-regions, each governed by a Unitary Authority, would reduce the proximity between residents and their elected decision-makers and thereby maintain strong local voice. If the boundary drawn between the two Unitary Authorities reflects Taranaki's existing "north-south" territorial authority boundaries then there would be good alignment with existing local identities. Smaller communities of interest across each sub-region would be represented via Local or Community Boards within each Unitary Authority.

Deliverability

Some alignment. This model is the least deliverable due to the fragmentation and duplication of regional functions across two entities. There are likely to be legislative changes required and difficulty in demonstrating sufficient Head Start alignment to achieve reform objectives.

Appendix C: High-level financial analysis

Purpose and interpretation

This appendix provides a high-level financial comparison of the five local government reform models. The focus is on relative percentage-based indicators rather than estimated dollar savings.

The analysis should be read as indicative scenario modelling only. Percentages are intended to support comparison between models and should not be interpreted as forecast savings, approved budget reductions or implementation-ready business case values.

Summary

Model 1 has the strongest overall scale opportunity, with the highest estimated saving as a percentage of total expenditure and the clearest pooled regional balance sheet position.

Models 2 and 4 both sit in similar positions within the high-opportunity range. Model 4 however has a higher level of transition difficulty and transition cost.

Model 3 provides a moderate scale opportunity, with balanced sub-regional debt-to-assets outcomes where regional debt and assets are allocated by rating units.

Model 5 provides the lowest estimated scale opportunity and retains the greatest ongoing organisational duplication.

Transition difficulty does not directly follow the scale opportunity ranking. Models 4 and 5 rate as very high risk because they require allocation or division of regional functions, assets, systems and responsibilities.

Scale opportunity indicators

The table below summarises the key percentage indicators from the scale opportunity model. These are the preferred measures for high-level comparison because they avoid over-emphasising indicative dollar estimates.

Model	Scale opportunity as % of total expenditure	Relative opportunity	Key interpretation
Model 1 Single Unitary Authority	4.41%	Very High	Highest scale opportunity due to one organisation, one governance structure, one main corporate platform set and least duplication.
Model 2 Combined Authority	3.30%	High	High scale opportunity due to shared delivery arrangements and consolidation of several corporate and system functions. Savings are moderated by retained governance entities, planning processes and accountability requirements.
Model 3 Two sub-regional councils and a Joint Committee	2.62%	Moderate	Moderate scale opportunity from consolidation into two sub-regional councils and shared regional governance. Savings are moderated by retained duplication and coordination requirements.

Model	Scale opportunity as % of total expenditure	Relative opportunity	Key interpretation
Model 4 One Unitary Authority and a City/District Council	3.26%	High	High scale opportunity, broadly comparable with Model 2, but lower than Model 1 because local accountability, organisational support and some systems/interfaces remain duplicated.
Model 5 Two Unitary Authorities	1.69%	Low	Lowest scale opportunity because two full organisations retain separate systems, management and duplicated regional capability.

NOTE: Efficiencies are conservative, and are reflective of savings from corporate services, executive leadership and governance only. They will not account for wider transformation opportunities across service delivery and other directorates, until that level of work has been undertaken and can be fed into the models during the next phase.

High-level key summaries by model

Model 1 Single Unitary Authority

Aspect	High-level analysis
Overall position	Highest scale opportunity and strongest pooled financial position.
Key strengths	One organisation, one governance structure and one delivery platform provide the greatest opportunity to remove duplication.
Key considerations	Very high transition complexity due to full consolidation of governance, staff, systems, assets, liabilities, rating arrangements and service delivery.

Model 2 Combined Authority

Aspect	High-level analysis
Overall position	High scale opportunity, but savings are moderated by retained governance complexity.
Key strengths	Shared delivery arrangements support consolidation of several corporate and system functions.
Key considerations	Multiple governance entities, planning processes and accountability requirements remain, making the model more complex than a single organisation structure.

Model 3 Two Sub-Regional Councils and Joint Committee

Aspect	High-level analysis
Overall position	Moderate scale opportunity with relatively balanced balance sheet outcomes.
Key strengths	Moves from four councils to two sub-regional entities, with potential to coordinate regional functions through a Joint Committee.
Key considerations	Retains duplication across two operating entities and creates additional interface requirements for regional functions.

Model 4 One Unitary Authority and a City/District Council

Aspect	High-level analysis
Overall position	High scale opportunity, broadly comparable with Model 2.
Key strengths	Partial consolidation through one unitary authority supports governance and corporate services efficiencies.
Key considerations	Very high implementation risk due to the need to allocate services, staff, systems, assets, liabilities, debt and revenue streams between two future organisations.

Model 5 Two Unitary Authorities

Aspect	High-level analysis
Overall position	Lowest annual scale opportunity and high transition complexity.
Key strengths	Creates two full unitary authorities, with balance sheet outcomes broadly comparable to Model 3 under the rating-unit allocation approach.
Key considerations	Retains significant duplication and requires regional functions to be divided and duplicated across two standalone organisations.

Transition and implementation risk

Transition assessment is included as a qualitative risk indicator. It is deliberately not converted into estimated dollar values in this appendix.

Model	Transition complexity	Transition cost rating	Implementation risk	Indicative timeline	Relative transition difficulty (1 = easiest)
Model 1 Single Unitary Authority	Very High	Very High	High	5-7 years	3
Model 2 Combined Authority	High	High	Medium-High	3-5 years	1
Model 3 Two sub-regional councils and a Joint Committee	High	High	High	4-6 years	2
Model 4 One Unitary Authority and a City/District Council	Very High	Very High	Very High	5-7 years	4
Model 5 Two Unitary Authorities	Very High	Very High	Very High	5-7 years	5

Key reading: The models with the greatest long-term efficiency gains are not necessarily the easiest to implement. Model 1 delivers the greatest ongoing economies of scale but requires substantial organisational integration. Model 2 provides the most achievable reform pathway from a transition perspective. Models 4 and 5 present the greatest implementation challenges because they require complex allocation or division of assets, liabilities, staff, service responsibilities and governance arrangements between successor organisations.

Debt and assets percentage indicators

Debt and asset analysis is summarised using debt-to-assets percentages and high-level interpretation. These figures are source-derived balance sheet ratios.

Model	Debt-to-assets ratio (%) range	Overall financial resilience	Commentary
Model 1 Single Unitary Authority	9.63%	Very Strong	Delivers the strongest overall financial resilience through a single consolidated balance sheet, maximising borrowing capacity, financial flexibility and resilience to future financial pressures.
Model 2 Combined Authority	8.72% - 9.62%	Strong	Maintains strong financial resilience across the local authorities while benefiting from regional coordination. Separate balance sheets and borrowing capacity mean it does not achieve the same level of resilience as a fully consolidated regional authority.
Model 3 Two Sub-Regional Councils and Joint Committee	9.34% - 10.22%	Strong	Creates two financially sustainable authorities with balanced debt and asset positions, providing a high level of resilience while retaining sub-regional governance.
Model 4 One Unitary Authority and a City/District Council	8.72% - 11.36%	Moderate	Results in the greatest variation in financial resilience between successor organisations, with the Unitary Authority carrying a higher debt burden that is partly offset by a very strong asset base.
Model 5 Two Unitary Authorities	9.34% - 10.22%	Strong	Establishes two financially viable authorities with sustainable balance sheets, although the absence of shared governance and delivery arrangements limits opportunities to further strengthen long-term financial resilience.

Key observations: Model 1 demonstrates the strongest overall financial resilience, supported by a single consolidated regional balance sheet. Model 2 remains strong while retaining local governance but does not achieve the same consolidated resilience as Model 1. Models 3 and 5 remain financially resilient, with debt-to-assets ratios of approximately 9-10%. Model 4 presents the weakest overall financial resilience due to variation between successor organisations, particularly the higher debt burden carried by the Unitary Authority.

Overall comparative assessment

The analysis indicates that increased organisational consolidation generally results in greater scale opportunities and stronger regional financial integration, but also requires higher levels of transition effort, implementation complexity and organisational change.

No single model performs best across every assessment category. Instead, each model reflects a different balance between efficiency gains, transition complexity, financial resilience and governance structure.

- Model 1 provides the highest scale opportunity and strongest consolidated balance sheet position but requires significant organisational transformation.

- Model 2 provides a strong balance between implementation achievability and financial benefits, while largely retaining existing local balance sheet positions.
- Model 3 provides a moderate scale opportunity and balanced financial outcomes across the two sub-regional entities.
- Model 4 achieves high scale opportunities but creates greater variation in financial resilience between successor organisations and involves significant implementation complexity.
- Model 5 provides the lowest scale opportunity and highest degree of ongoing organisational duplication, despite maintaining financially sustainable balance sheet positions.

Model	Scale opportunity	Financial resilience	Transition difficulty	Overall observation
Model 1	Very High	Very Strong	High	Highest efficiency and strongest balance sheet, but significant transformation required.
Model 2	High	Strong	Low	Strong balance of efficiency, resilience and ease of implementation.
Model 3	Moderate	Strong	Moderate	Balanced regional outcome with moderate efficiencies.
Model 4	High	Moderate	Very High	Strong efficiency potential but significant implementation complexity and uneven financial outcomes.
Model 5	Low	Strong	Very High	Financially sustainable but limited efficiency gains and significant duplication.

Key assumptions

Assumption area	Assumption used
Source data	Financial information is based on the 2024/25 Annual Reports of NPDC, TRC, STDC and SDC where available.
Use of percentages	Percentage indicators are preferred in this appendix because several dollar-based savings are indicative estimates or proxy-based assumptions.
Scale opportunity	Scale opportunities are estimated across governance, executive leadership, corporate services, systems, procurement, planning, reporting and support functions.
Staffing basis	Corporate services staffing estimates use TRC corporate services proportions as a benchmark applied across the other councils for consistency.
Steady-state view	Savings percentages represent indicative steady-state annual efficiency opportunities after implementation, not immediate transition-period savings.
Transition costs	Transition costs, implementation effort and timing are assessed separately and are not deducted from scale opportunity percentages.

Assumption area	Assumption used
Debt and asset basis	Debt and asset ratios use Councils' 2024/25 Annual Reports. TRC regional debt and assets are allocated by rating units where required for split-region models.
Service levels	No service-level changes, policy decisions, asset revaluations, debt repayment or asset rationalisation are assumed.

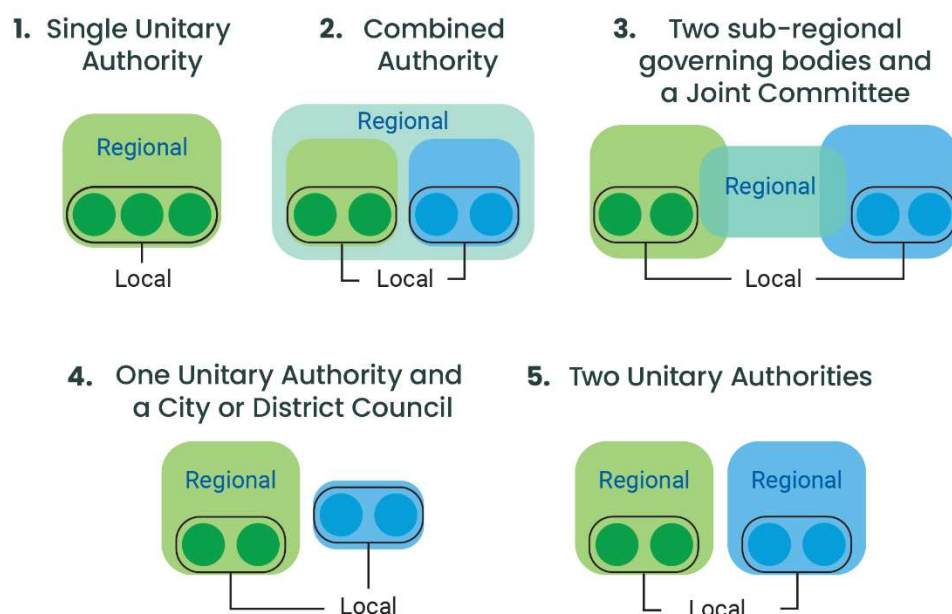
Limitations

- The modelling is indicative and comparative only.
- Percentage estimates should not be interpreted as confirmed savings, budget reductions or detailed business case outputs.
- Several non-staff areas use proxy assumptions and would require validation if the models progressed further.
- Actual outcomes would depend on final governance design, transition approach, representation arrangements, service delivery choices and system architecture.

Appendix D: High-level functional analysis

Assumptions:

- This analysis provides an early functional lens on how New Plymouth District Council (NPDC) activities could be governed under a future Taranaki local government model.
- NPDC has been used as an initial worked example to test where functions may be suited to regional governance and where a local governing voice may need to be retained.
- The analysis considers the governance of activities only. It does not determine future service delivery arrangements, organisational design, staffing, funding, asset ownership or rating arrangements.
- Functions identified as potentially regional generally have technical, regulatory, infrastructure, strategic planning or cross-boundary characteristics.
- Functions identified as needing a local governing voice generally involve place-based priorities, community identity, local relationships, discretionary funding or locally specific assets and funds.
- This analysis assumes that meaningful local voice would need to be deliberately designed into any future model. This material is indicative only. It is intended to support further testing and discussion, rather than predetermine final decisions.



Indicative governance of NPDC functions, from subject matter expert workshop held 30 June 2026.

NPDC Group of Services	NPDC Activity	Better governed regionally	Better governed locally
Core services and activities			
Community Partnerships	Community partnerships	Regional	
	Community engagement		Local
	Community funding		Local
	Housing for the elderly	Regional	

NPDC Group of Services	NPDC Activity	Better governed regionally	Better governed locally
Customer and Regulatory Solutions	Animal control	Regional	
	Building consents	Regional	
	Building monitoring, enforcement and public enquiries (including swimming pool inspections)	Regional	
	District planning	Regional	
	Resource consent application processing and monitoring	Regional	
	Resource management, monitoring, enforcement and public enquiries	Regional	
	Environmental health	Regional	
	Parking	Regional	
Economic Development	Economic development	Regional	
Emergency Management and Business Continuance	Emergency Management and Business Continuance	Regional	
Flood Protection and Control Works	Flood Protection and Control Works	Regional	
Governance	Governance - regional (<i>new</i>)	Regional	
	Governance - local (<i>new</i>)		Local
	Community board discretionary funding		Local
Govett-Brewster Art Gallery/Len Lye Centre	Govett-Brewster Art Gallery/Len Lye Centre	Regional	
Management of Investments and Funding	New Plymouth District Council (Waitara Lands) Act 2018	Regional	
	Airport - Papa Rererangi i Puketapu Ltd	Regional	
	Perpetual Investment Fund (PIF)		Local
	Endowment funds (<i>new</i>)		Local
	Forestry (including joint ventures)		Local
	Voluntary targeted rates schemes	Regional	
Parks and Open Spaces	Urban design and streetscapes	Regional	
	Cemeteries	Regional	
	Crematorium	Regional	
	Public parks and reserves		Local
	Major gardens of regional value (<i>new</i>)	Regional	
	Sports parks	Regional	
	Campgrounds	Regional	
	Public halls	Regional	
	Public toilets	Regional	
	Walkways and shared pathways	Regional	

NPDC Group of Services	NPDC Activity	Better governed regionally	Better governed locally
Puke Ariki and Community Libraries	Museum and iSite Visitor Information Centre	Regional	
	Libraries	Regional	
Stormwater	Stormwater Management	Regional	
Two Waters	Wastewater Treatment	Regional	
	Water Supply	Regional	
Transportation	Transportation	Regional	
Venues and Events	Aquatic Centre and district pools	Regional	
	Community events		Local
	Event venues	Regional	
Waste Management and Minimisation	Kerbside collection	Regional	
	Landfills	Regional	
	Resource recovery facilities	Regional	
	Transfer stations	Regional	
	Waste minimisation	Regional	

Governance of TRC functions, based on data from the 2024/34 TRC Long-Term Plan.

TRC Group of Services	TRC Activity	Better governed regionally	Better governed locally
Core services and activities			
Resource Management	Resource management planning	Regional	
	Resource consents	Regional	
	Compliance monitoring	Regional	
	Pollution incidents and response	Regional	
	State of the environment monitoring	Regional	
	Environmental science investigations	Regional	
Regional Facilities	Regional gardens	Regional	
	Stadium Taranaki	Regional	
Flood and Hazard Management	Emergency management	Regional	
	River and flood risk management	Regional	
Catchment Management	Catchment enhancement	Regional	
	Biodiversity	Regional	
	Biosecurity	Regional	
	Waitara catchment programme	Regional	
	Sustainable land management	Regional	
Transport and Planning Services	Transport and planning services	Regional	
	Harbour navigation and safety	Regional	
Regional Leadership and Governance	Governance	Regional	
	Community engagement	Regional	
	Investment management	Regional	

Appendix E: Summary of regional activities and assets analysis against models

Assumptions:

- This analysis only considers current regional council activity areas and assets. It also does not look at corporate services such as human resources, finance or administration.
- Drafted on the assumption that regional council activity areas are effectively transferred to any new entity and there is no cutting of services in that process. For Model 3, this assumes all are transferred to the council delivering regional functions.
- One assumption made across all field-based activity areas is that appropriately located facilities are provided. For the one council model, it is assumed an appropriate satellite office exists.
- Model 2 is combined with Model 1 on the assumption that all current regional council activity areas would sit at the combined authority level.

Key:

- **Green** = Likely more effective than the status quo
- **Yellow** = Likely the same as status quo
- **Orange** = Likely less effective than the status quo or has notable design problems
- **Red** = Serious design problems and potentially unworkable. For **red** traffic lights, **details have been provided in red**. Details for the other colours are available on request.

Activity or asset	Description	Considerations	Model 1 & 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Notes
Common to all functionality	This row sets out considerations that are relevant to all the regional council functions listed below.	- Economies of scale: Larger entities can spread specialist staff, systems and overheads across a wider ratepayer base. - Governance complexity: Shared or split delivery models can make accountability, decision-making and funding harder to manage. - Voice for regional functions: Regional responsibilities may receive different levels of focus under different models. - Funding: Around 70% of current regional council rates come from New Plymouth District.					
Resource management planning	- Assess current state of the environment, desired future state and environmental pressures. - Prepares and updates regional planning documents to manage natural resources and achieve community aspirations. - Plans manage the effects of activities such as water takes, discharges, coastal marine area activities, and the use of river and lake beds on the environment. - Develops the regional spatial plan and natural environment plan under the new regime. - Runs consultation and hearings processes. - Monitors whether plans are working as intended.	- New planning system requires development of regional-level planning documents including a spatial plan through a single joint spatial planning committee and associated secretariat. - New regime encourages integration of natural environment and land use plan development. - Needs considerable scientific advice into the process for the regional spatial and natural environment plan. - Resource management reform is the stated government priority, and local government reform should minimise disruption. - New planning framework has one act for regional council functions and one for territorial functions. - Largely desk-based.					- Does not easily allow for a single regional spatial plan (refer Head Start criteria). - Two natural environment plans would split environmental management of the region. Having two potentially could also be in breach of proposed Natural Environment Act. - Surface freshwater cannot be effectively managed in any catchment split by the boundary. - Groundwater difficult to manage overall with aquifers spreading over any feasible boundary.

Activity or asset	Description	Considerations	Model 1 & 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Notes
Resource consent processing	- Processes applications for regional resource consents. - Assesses environmental effects and statutory requirements. - Prepares decisions and consent conditions. - Runs hearings as needed. - Administers regional dam safety responsibilities under the Building Act. - Large portion of regional council consenting is replacements for existing consents. - Responds to queries from the community and applicants on resource consents.	- Regional consents become permits under the new system. TA consents remain consents. - Efficient permit processing depends on close integration with science, policy and compliance. - A key opportunity is how the processing of regional permits and district land use consents might be better integrated. - Replacement consents are being deferred by Government to the end of 2027 and potentially the end of 2029, creating resourcing issues. - The new system will focus on more complex permitted activities. How this impacts workloads is uncertain. - Waikato Regional Council currently delivers a number of TRC's dam safety responsibilities.					- Freshwater cannot be effectively managed in any split catchment. - Groundwater difficult to manage overall.
Compliance monitoring	- Checks whether consent holders are meeting consent conditions and rules. - Undertakes routine site inspections and reviews monitoring results. - Targets higher-risk activities for more intensive monitoring and oversight. - Supports enforcement where non-compliance is identified.	- The new regime will require much more permitted activity monitoring. - Regional council consents generally require more intensive monitoring than TA consents. - Requires specialised scientific and enforcement staff. - Government decisions still need to be made on whether this function will be centralised in a national regulator. - Depends on close integration with consents and science. - Strong field-based component.					
Pollution incidents and response	- Receives and triages reports of spills, discharges and other pollution incidents. - Investigates incidents, assesses environmental effects and identifies likely sources. - Coordinates immediate response to contain or reduce harm, including oil spill response. - Records incidents and supports follow-up action where needed.	- Oil spill response requires a rapid and coordinated response. - Strong field-based component.					

Activity or asset	Description	Considerations	Model 1 & 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Notes
State of environment monitoring	- Monitors air, water, land and coastal environments across the region. 115 continuous environmental monitoring stations. - Tracks environmental condition, trends and likely causes of change. - Provides data and reporting to support planning, compliance and public information. - Maintains long-term monitoring so changes can be measured over time.	- Requires considerable scientific expertise to deliver, which is unique from any existing TA function and difficult to recruit. - Expanded expectations for setting environmental limits under the new planning regime are likely to create more demand for monitoring. - Effective modelling requires data inputs from across the region and is already operating at the smallest scale for modelling: regional. - Strong field-based component. - Catchment boundaries are the logical split for environmental monitoring and data. - Taranaki region currently aligns with known biophysical units (e.g. Volcanic Ring Plain, Northern Hill Country and Southern Hill Country). - Requires significant technical infrastructure to support (e.g. specialist software and laboratory).					
Environmental science investigations	- Runs targeted investigations into specific environmental issues. - Builds evidence on causes, risks and likely future change. - Supports work on climate change and emerging issues. - Uses science and mātauranga Māori appropriately in investigations.	Refer state of the environment monitoring.					- Any split catchment is highly problematic to monitor. - Groundwater problematic to monitor. - Does not align with biophysical units.
Sustainable land management	- Works with landowners to develop plans to improve land use, landscape resilience and reduce erosion risk. - Administers the future rollout of Freshwater Farm Plans (a new tool for managing impacts on freshwater from farming). - Provides advice to landowners on land capability and sustainable land management.	- Relationship-based function that depends on trusted, long-term engagement with landowners and catchment groups. - Freshwater Farm Plans will create new work and change the shape of existing programmes. - Requires integration with science, compliance and freshwater policy. - Strong field-based component.					
Catchment enhancement	- Helps landowners put erosion control and riparian works in place. - Uses grant funding to support practical catchment improvement projects. - Assists with riparian planning, planting and fencing. - Provides poplar poles and plants for riparian margins to landowners.	- Relationship-based function that depends on trusted, long-term engagement with landowners and catchment groups. - Nursery in New Plymouth district produces 4000 poplar poles a year. - Contract with A&P provides 80,000 riparian plants a year out of Stratford. - Council holds \$900k per year in STRESS funding from MPI that landowners can apply for erosion control in the hill country.					

Activity or asset	Description	Considerations	Model 1 & 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Notes
Biodiversity	- Monitors and reports on indigenous biodiversity and ecosystem condition. - Administers the voluntary Key Native Ecosystem Programme to support the protection of biodiversity on private land. - Provides grants and advice to protect wetlands and significant habitats.	- Regional councils gain responsibility for terrestrial biodiversity and significant natural areas under the resource management reforms. - Relationship-based function that depends on trusted, long-term engagement with landowners. - Specialist ecological capability is hard to secure. - Has strong links to biosecurity, catchment management and natural resource policy. - Aligns well with key ecological districts (Egmont, North Taranaki, Matemataeonga, and Manawātū Plains and Foxton). - Strong field-based component. - Scale is particularly important for effective management.					
Biosecurity	- Reviews and implements the regional pest management plan. - Controls or eradicates priority pest plants and animals. - Inspects and monitors pest infestations and control areas. - Supports wider predator control and biosecurity partnerships. - Supports response to manage specific pest incursions (e.g. gold clams).	- Pests easily cross boundaries, requiring a consistent approach across areas as much as possible. - Works best when aligned with biodiversity and catchment management. - Strong field-based component. - Larger scale delivers significant benefits for biosecurity. The fewer boundaries, the less risk of biosecurity failures. - For some pest species, once they are established you cannot ever contain them again. - Key service for preserving the rural economy.					District scale not feasible for effective management in Taranaki (i.e. If one council doesn't control a species it would rapidly spread to the other council, especially on the ring plain around the maunga).
Waitara River catchment	- Supports the Waitara River Committee and its administration. - Helps develop and implement funding strategies for Waitara leasehold land income. - Includes Ngāti Maru, Te Atiawa, Ngāti Mutunga, Ngāti Tama and Te Kowhatu Tu Moana Trust.	- Waitara Lands Act provides for TRC to hold funding (currently ~\$25.9m rising to \$30m). - TRC and iwi to set up the Waitara River Committee to administer. - Integrated with the Ngāti Maru Settlement Act and the joint management agreement required with TRC (refer Treaty settlement section).					Cannot be effectively delivered unless the boundary is moved further south than the current SDC-NPDC boundary to align with the Waitara catchment.

Activity or asset	Description	Considerations	Model 1 & 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Notes
Transport planning and services	- Prepares regional transport plans and supporting strategies. - Plans and funds public transport services and related programmes. - Works with partners on better travel choices and network priorities. - Coordinates regional input into national transport funding processes. - Total Mobility service provides subsidised taxis etc for people for disabilities.	- Regional Land Transport Plan sets Taranaki's transport funding priorities. - Regional Public Transport Plan guides design and delivery of public transport in the region. - Majority of services provided in New Plymouth urban area. - Rural services and inter-district services also provided. - Infrastructure ownership and how funding flows to it is a complicated mix of regional council, TAs and operators. - Regional transport planning needs to be well integrated into growth planning.					Does not easily allow for one regional land transport plan. Does not provide optionality to regionalise other transport functions (refer Head Start criteria).
Navigation and safety	- Implements the New Zealand Port and Maritime Safety Code and the relevant bylaw for Port Taranaki and its approaches. - Oversees harbour navigation safety requirements and supports safe vessel movements.	Focused only on Port Taranaki and its approaches where risk is greatest.					
Emergency management	- Funding to Taranaki Emergency Management Office for regional civil defence emergency management planning, coordination and response. - MOU and dedicated software exist so TRC land management staff can provide farm-based intel to TEMO in an emergency.	- Currently delivered regionally through the TEMO office. - Regional coverage needed to provide coordination in a response. - Strong alignment between civil defence functions and natural hazard management for land use.					
River and flood risk management	- Monitors rainfall and river levels and issues flood warnings. - Network of 115 continuous environmental monitoring stations. - Maintains flood monitoring systems and river control assets. - Carries out minor emergency works and ongoing flood and erosion management. - Provides advice on river structures, erosion, drainage and river control projects.	- Major flood protection assets in Waiwhakaiho and Waitara catchments. - Smaller assets in the Hangatāhua, Ōpunake and Waitōtara catchments. - Benefits from alignment with the environmental monitoring activity area due to equipment and sampling and data expertise. - Monitoring needed in the upper, middle and lower reaches of high-risk catchments with strong network resilience and redundancy. - Roles and responsibilities for flood management between regional and district councils can be murky. - Depends on simple and efficient channels of communication to manage flood warnings.					- Cannot be effectively delivered if split along current boundaries due to the Waitara and Hangatāhua catchments. - Less cohesive and resilient flood monitoring and data management across the region. - More complicated reporting and flood warning processes posing a risk to life.

Activity or asset	Description	Considerations	Model 1 & 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Notes
Regional gardens	• Maintains Pukeiti, Tūpare and Hollard Gardens as public regional assets. • Manages day-to-day operations, grounds, buildings and visitor facilities. • Supports public access, events and education. • Runs the Rhododendron Conservation Programme for rare and endangered species.	• Pukeiti and Tūpare in NPDC area. • Hollard in SDC area. • Pukeiti trust deed between TRC and Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust. • Curated collections in the gardens, more aligned to museums than parks. • Formal agreement between TRC and QE2 for Hollard. • Events and venues expertise shared across the three gardens. • Pukeiti shares plant database system with Pukekura. • Risk that horticultural quality and integrity lost if just treated as another park.					
Community engagement	• Only the education part of this activity area is focused on here as a <u>direct community service.</u> • The education programme is only a portion of the budget listed in the adjacent cell. • Works with schools, community groups and the public on environmental education. • Provides funding to museums.	• Provides a \$25k annual grant to South Taranaki Utanganui and \$125k to Puke Ariki. • Envirolink and environmental education programme engages with school classes across the region. • MOUs exist with multiple entities to support the programme.					
Stadium Taranaki	• Provides annual funding to the Taranaki Stadium Trust (TST). • Supports the long-term maintenance and development of Stadium Taranaki. • Funded by a targeted rate.	• 85%-90% of targeted rate services debt. • TST owns the assets and contracts NPDC to operate the Stadium. TST is a council-controlled organisation of TRC. • SDC and STDC contribute less than NPDC. • \$45m in debt. \$40m with LGFA. \$5m in a government loan that needs to be paid back in 5 years.					
Port Taranaki	• Port is a limited company with TRC as 100% shareholder. • Currently budgeted for an \$8m p.a. dividend to offset regional rates.	• Financial headwinds for the Port due to the decline of oil and gas. • While situated in New Plymouth, it is an asset for the whole region and beyond. • Asset on TRC balance sheet which is integrated into current debt covenants (26m x 50 cent shares). • Potential tax considerations on any transfer of shares to a new entity.					
Leasehold properties	• \$24m and 49 leasehold properties around New Plymouth. • 90% commercial, 10% residential. • \$2m of lease income a year.	• Covered by endowment property requirements going back to the 19th century. • Different rules for each property. • Very complicated to transfer ownership, requiring legislation.					

Activity or asset	Description	Considerations	Model 1 & 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Notes
Buildings	- Two main office buildings in Stratford with outbuildings including a laboratory. - Fleet of vehicles (including trailers, quads, side-by-sides and e-bikes).	- Spare space in the administration building for extra staff. But would require some investment to realise. - Wider grounds would have space for future growth if needed.					
Digital assets	- IRIS Classic/Datascape Regulatory: Main system for resource consents, compliance, environmental monitoring, catchment management, biosecurity and biodiversity. - Hilltop and Hydrotel: Drives the environmental data and IOT sensor systems. - LAB (& LAB Mobile): Environmental monitoring, Sampling data, LAB tests, mobile field data. - GIS: All main functional areas use GIS platforms i.e. ESRI. Each main area has their own Apps specific to their business unit. - Data platform and integration layer (Fabric, FME): This houses all data from our systems and the integrations needed between them all. - SharePoint: Connects into all systems for storage of documentation specific to each functional area. - Standard corporate systems: HR, finance, payroll, comms	- Paths where systems must be broken in two (either by activity area or geography) will be very complex. - Migration into and integration with current district council systems will also be very complex. - Complex web of integrations links regulatory systems to be able to make them all work - IT customer services also important consideration, especially for more bespoke or complex systems, data and integrations. - Currently using IRIS Classic with a major upgrade to Datascape Regulatory in progress, implementation 2027. This is complimentary work, with the proposed common systems proposed in the new resource management legislation.					



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu
New Plymouth
District Council

