

A STRATEGY FOR THE FAR NORTH DISTRICT – TE TAI TOKERAU KI TE RAKI

During 2014 and 2015, the Council worked extensively with communities and used a visioning exercise to develop a shared long-term vision for the Far North District. The exercise known as ‘Our Voices – Our Vision’ was well received by communities with the views of nearly 1,200 residents captured through public submissions, attendance at meetings, social media engagement and emails. Its purpose was to create:

- A better future for the Far North;
- A clear statement of what is important to us;
- A platform for better decision-making and action; and
- Momentum for change.

Our Voices – Our Vision led to the adoption of a vision for the district, values by which we will achieve that vision and a set of expectations from the community that outline what they want to see in the Far North of the future.

TE PAERANGI – OUR VISION

He whenua rangatira – A district of sustainable prosperity and wellbeing

Deeply rooted in the history of the Far North District, the expression ‘He whenua rangatira’ was used in He Whakaputanga o Te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tirenī (He Whakaputanga), the Declaration of Independence of the United Tribes of New Zealand. Recognised as New Zealand’s first constitutional document, He Whakaputanga was initially signed by 34 northern chiefs from the Bay of Islands and Hokianga at a meeting with British Resident, James Busby, at Waitangi on the 28th of October 1835.¹

As well as its use in He Whakaputanga, ‘he whenua rangatira’ was understood as the optimal standard of life where, during times of peace, people could utilise the land and resources freely to create prosperity and wellbeing for their community². The concept of ‘he whenua rangatira’ is thought to have arisen from the necessity to maintain large-scale kūmara growing. Proverbs

¹ Eventually He Whakaputanga would have 52 signatories, all but two of them being from the tribes of the North.

² Manuka Henare, Hazel Petrie & Adrienne Puckey. (2009). “He Whenua Rangatira” Northern Landscape Overview (Hokianga, Whangaroa, Bay of Islands, Whangarei, Mahurangi and Gulf Islands) – WAI1040 Inquiry.

stressing that kūmara was the food of peacetime reinforce the notion that ‘whenua rangatira’ were peacetime and peaceful territories³.

In the early nineteenth century, Tāmaki residents and their neighbours shared a concept of an ideal pattern of occupation called whenua rangatira, which was referred to as ‘high grade land’. There would be a network of permanent settlement sites, spread across openly accessible territory and connected by seasonal routes⁴.

Our vision appropriately causes us to reflect on the past, consider its contribution to the present and how it will guide us into an uncertain future. It is a declaration of independence, an assertion of authority and a reminder of the intrinsic connection between the people and the land. Our vision encapsulates the aspirations of the people of the Far North today for a place where people and the whenua work to achieve prosperity and well-being for generations to come, the creation of ‘the most noble of lands’⁵.

³ Ibid

⁴ Ibid

⁵ A direct translation of ‘he whenua rangatira’, ibid

NGĀ TIKANGA – OUR VALUES

These values have guided the development of this strategy and will continue to guide the Council as it works towards the vision.

Tikanga	Values
Te manawatōpu	Unity of purpose and working together
Whanaungatanga	Family and community connecting and caring
Kaitiakitanga	Protection and environmental stewardship
Rangatiratanga	Empowerment, self-determination and self-reliance
Mana tangata	Respect and fairness
Tū tangata	Strong cultural identities
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	Partnership

NGĀ TŪMANAKO – OUR EXPECTATIONS

The community articulated nine expectations through Our Voices – Our Vision for the Far North District they wanted to see in the future. These have been combined into three Strategic Goals for the Sustainable District Strategy.

Ngā Tūmanako	Our Expectations
He wāhi ātaahua	Valuing the outstanding beauty of our District
Oranga taiao, oranga tāngata	Nurturing the environment so it nourishes us
Oranga kāinga	A thriving local economy
Mana i te whenua	The role of tangata whenua is valued and respected
Te ira tangata	Rich cultural heritage and diversity is respected and celebrated
Whānau	A great place for our families to flourish
Tāngata whai ora	Healthy, safe, and purposeful people
He waka hourua	Fit for purpose infrastructure underpinning success
Kōkiri tahi	Empowered communities, working collaboratively