

SmartGrowth Strategy 2023–2073

Online Submission

Name: Tauranga Business Chamber

Submission ID: 48

Request to speak: Yes I would like to speak to my feedback

Select which chapter you'd like to provide feedback on: Transport

We want you to feel confident that we have a plan in place to manage growth. Do you think we're focusing on the right things?

We appreciate that this strategy informs future planning processes such as city plans, social infrastructure planning, transport planning, local plans, and the annual plan and long-term plan. However, the objectives for transport and modal shift are at best, aspirational, but lack a transparent plan on how communities will achieve it. If SmartGrowth has a plan to achieve these targets, then the plan should be more transparent to gain more informed feedback from communities. SmartGrowth is an effective direction setting planning tool. It's weakness is in the delivery by the partners as they face push-back from communities in discussing the detail.

Select which chapter you'd like to provide feedback on: Economic Wellbeing

We want you to feel confident that we have a plan in place to manage growth. Do you think we're focusing on the right things?

Overall, the wider business community likes certainty. While there are matters throughout this strategy that businesses would not support. On balance, and given the dire shortages of housing and employment zones, the business community would support the SmartGrowth partners to focus on delivery and providing certainty to aid business investment. We support that the focus should be less on business attraction; instead, focus on maximising employment density and advancing the innovation and R&D ecosystem to improve the productivity of our existing and natural strengths. We support SmartGrowth's recognition of how interconnected the WBOP subregion is with the upper North Island.

Select which chapter you'd like to provide feedback on: Housing

We want you to feel confident that we have a plan in place to manage growth. Do you think we're focusing on the right things?

Housing is critical for the region staying economically competitive. Based on current projections, the supply and demand trend of local housing varieties is becoming a major issue for businesses (e.g. staff are asking for higher wages to keep up with rising mortgage and rental costs).

Although it's out of scope, we support SmartGrowth recognising that a growing proportion of the WBOP subregion's workforce will be living in the Waikato and commuting on SH29. Travel times from Papamoa/Te Puke into Tauriko and Tauranga's city centre is currently similar to travelling from Matamata/Morrinsville - where rentals and house values are nearly half the price.

Select which chapter you'd like to provide feedback on: Future Development Strategy

We want you to feel confident that we have a plan in place to manage growth. Do you think we're focusing on the right things?

SmartGrowth is currently the best joint local/central government planning tool that is available. It has an established brand that doesn't need to change for the sake of it. The challenges for SmartGrowth have always been with the implementation by the individual partners. This is discovered by how they engage with communities on the detailed plans (e.g. rates, RMA plans, budgets, local infrastructure etc.) and their elected representatives. SmartGrowth has often been leveraged by the usual stakeholder groups as an alternative channel to amplify their voice where the general public does not usually show their views. However, as we've recently seen with TCC's Plan Change 33 in Mount Maunganui.

We understand that this plan will inform future council planning processes such as city plans, social infrastructure planning, transport planning, local plans, and the annual plan and long-term plan. However, some local stakeholder groups may see this strategy as having more legal status. We're not focusing on the detail - this will happen through the appropriate processes. As a joint planning and directional tool, we support the overall direction of this document as it provides some direction to business' longer-term planning.

We are happy to use the Chamber's advocacy voice to Government to improve local infrastructure planning, financing, funding, and speed of delivery challenges, as noted in this document.

Anything else to add?