



north shore community
& social services

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Submission on Auckland Unleashed, the Auckland Spatial Plan Discussion Document by the North Shore Community & Social Services.

We wish to be heard orally in support of this submission at any public hearing if such an opportunity is provided. Please contact Yvonne Powley on yvonne@nscss.org.nz or phone 4864820.

North Shore Community & Social Services Inc (NSCSS) works across five Local Board areas Devonport Takapuna, Kaipatiki, Hibiscus and Bays, Upper Harbour, and Rodney. We also work at a regional level both in the area of community development as well as the provision of community and social services.

NSCSS has a membership base of over 150 community groups on Auckland's North Shore including, arts, environment, health, migrants & refugees, Maori, Pacific, older adults, family services, education, community, youth and disability sectors.

We are part of the establishment group of the **Auckland Community Development Alliance**, a member of the New Zealand Council of Social Services in Wellington, which works closely with Central Government, the New Zealand Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations and ANGOA in the social policy field.

1) Do you think we have the proposed "big picture" ideas right? Give us your suggestions to help Auckland lift its performance.

We applaud the fact that **Auckland Unleashed** places communities and community development at the centre.

Strong communities are essential to the liveability of Auckland in terms of economic, environmental and socio-cultural wellbeing as well as effective local and regional governance.

We support the intent of Council in the **people and quality of life** section. However it is important that 'one size does not fit all'. Diversity and difference must be celebrated and grown and a dominant approach avoided.

Communities do not neatly fit the boundaries imposed by the governance model e.g. local boards. This means we need supporting mechanisms and resources for brokering connections and synergies in the cross-local as well as sub-regional space if we are to be effective in working together.

We need to build on the strengths that community themselves can identify and we favour an asset-based community development approach that looks at the strengths rather than the deficiencies.

We strongly support **reducing inequalities** as a strategic priority. Helping to ensure better health, education, literacy and numeracy, training and employment, particularly in disadvantaged areas, is vital. We would like to see the council reduce the availability of alcohol and gambling outlets. The needs and aspirations of older adults must be actively sought and resourced. We also strongly

support full participation for people with disabilities, particularly in decision-making, and full access to information, communications, transport, buildings and the physical environment. We would like to see the Council become a strong partner in the Family Violence Prevention Network and the Child Focus Network in Auckland North.

2) How can Auckland become more child-friendly, enabling children to reach their full potential?

Creating strong community engagement should begin with children involving them in community participation at an early age. Auckland has alarmingly high rates of child abuse so strong measures need to be taken in prevention. As an example in the Waitakere and Whenuapai catchment areas, 2982 referrals were made to CYF in the July 08/09 year. In Waitemata in 2008/2009 there were 7592 family violence incidents. Children were present in 3690 of these (49%) of which 52% were under the age of five. 2074 incidents of family violence were reported to the police on the North Shore for 2009. More than ever before a multi agency collaborative approach is required focused specifically on the prevention of family violence and child abuse. Through collaborative partnerships agencies can explore developing new approaches to working together, opportunities for collaborative service provision to enhance the capacity of all agencies. It needs Council to support and resource this process.

NSCSS has over the last year supported the Family Violence prevention network and has become aware that work and services in this area are better resourced in other Auckland areas and would like to see the Council extend more resources into this area where there is considerable need.

3) Should the role and services of Auckland schools be widened to become community hubs - parent, whanau, family, village centres – with social services and community facilities associated with children and young people's needs attached?

We think this sounds like a great idea; why reinvent the wheel when many resources are already available in schools. People feel safe in the school environment. North Shore Community & Social Services would be interested in facilitating the development of this concept in Auckland North.

4) Should the national arts and cultural institutions in Auckland be strengthened?

Yes absolutely. The arts and creative sector is acknowledged to be a strong contributor to the economy of Auckland. People choose to do business, live, visit and work in cities that are vibrant and exciting places to be. Arts, culture creative sectors are significant drivers in making world-class cities that are desirable to live in.

5) In developing a more productive, high value economy, what priorities and sectors should the Auckland Plan focus on?

No comment in this submission.

6) What would help Auckland become more business friendly and efficient?

No comment in this submission.

7) How should the Auckland Plan support the development of skills to increase Auckland's labour market participation and productivity?

No comment in this submission.

8) How can we celebrate and further protect our distinctive natural and rural environment through the Auckland Plan?

No comment in this submission.

9) How can the eco city concept be incorporated into the Auckland Plan to support Auckland becoming the world's most liveable city?

We commend the Council priority of Auckland becoming an eco-city and the protection of Auckland's natural environment.

10) How do we accommodate growth while supporting the Mayor's vision of becoming the world's most liveable city? Should the Auckland Plan support a compact city model that focuses growth in centres and corridors, supports public transport and protects rural areas from urban sprawl?

Auckland's housing is under huge pressure and when we have asked community agencies what they see as the biggest issue on the North Shore, housing takes the lead! As Council has suggested we believe maintaining a compact urban development is preferable to allowing urban sprawl. Sprawling development requires people to travel long distances and requires expensive infrastructure such as roads, waste, water and electricity. It isn't good both environmentally and economically. We would like to see more not for profit organisations building affordable housing, providing long-term rental housing and developing alternative ownership and funding models to facilitate security of tenure for both owners and renters. We would like to see more state housing development in Auckland, current state housing sites can be looked at for further intensification. We need to look at innovative ways to reduce house prices making it more affordable for those on low incomes.

11) Are there specific areas of Auckland that you think should be protected from urban development?

There is a real concern in Whangaparaoa and Gulf Harbour that the urban development planned will undermine local businesses and have a severe impact on the local area. The Council needs to be careful with the development of mega businesses and look at the social impact on an area before approving such development. Social impact assessment should be carried out as a necessary part of any development.

We need to preserve our built heritage and cultural landscapes through creating a well-integrated plan that ensures protection of these important areas.

12) What do you see as the most important transport challenges the Auckland Plan should give priority to and why?

We believe it is important to invest in improving our rail, bus and ferry systems and reduce our investment in motorways. We would like to see the Council prioritise completing the CBD rail loop, a rail loop to the airport, and a rail link to the North Shore.

13) Do you think that the council should modify the Regional Land Transport Strategy through the Auckland Plan to get a better alignment with the Mayor's and Councillors' focus on public passenger transportation? Do you have views on how this should be funded?

No comment in this submission.

14) Older Adults

We support the submission put in by Age Concern. As they point out there is very little mentioned about Older People in the document. We support:

- More recognition of Older People in the plan.
- A city where all ages can flourish.
- Priority work to include a regional Positive Ageing Strategy for greater Auckland.
- Application to WHO Global Network of Age Friendly Cities designation.
- An older person's advisory group.

15) Communications and Knowledge Sharing for improved Community Engagement and Democratic Participation

We support the *Village Planning groups* submission about this. In summary:

The submission seeks to improve community engagement and ensure effective communication at all levels across the Council, CCOs and the public.

The draft proposes an integrated contact centre system so that people don't have to worry which department or CCO to contact. Instead people could submit a question or complaint to a single point of contact and receive a call number which they can use to track progress through to resolution.

Public engagement could also be enhanced by allowing the public to subscribe to topics

of interest - so they automatically receive an email, text or tweet when a relevant agenda item came up. Board members and the public should also have access to summary reports providing real data about how the City is tracking.

- Adopt the principle that all information should be publicly accessible without delay
BENEFIT: better access to information will reduce enquiry costs and reduce public cynicism
- Develop a publicly-visible register of community and volunteer groups, village planning forums, special interest groups, town centre groups, community coordinators, social agencies to maximize collaboration, volunteering, and community-led development and engagement.
BENEFIT: help people find community experts and increase community engagement/knowledge
- Identify a full range of topic threads to which citizens and groups can subscribe
BENEFIT: manage costs of information overload and foster greater engagement
- Develop, schedule and regularly report progress on an advanced knowledge management plan with buy-in from staff, CCOs, elected reps, business and community groups
BENEFIT: layered information is explicitly available; links make it easy to find current versions
- Investigate more advanced methods to provide multiple channels including web, email, video (*eg Council and CCO meetings available on line with tagged topics*), social networking/CRM (*eg Twitter, Facebook, etc*) to provide people with 24x7 channels to share ideas about planning, developments and community activities. Multi-channel facilities will support participation by community groups who cannot normally attend meetings. Well-designed sites will foster intelligent discussion allowing people to share, learn, brainstorm and produce new, positive outcomes for their community. Council and CCOs should monitor significant threads of debate as one of their forms of community engagement and provide feedback through these channels.
BENEFITS: Keep costs low by fostering linked volunteer sites which do not require council to take legal responsibility – but encourage council officers to use social networks as a means to maximise communication about valid, accurate information.

If any queries arise from this submission, please contact the NSCSS office. We look forward to consulting with the Council on these issues.

Yours sincerely

Yvonne Powley
Executive Officer