



enterprisingly northland

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Welcome to the September 2007 edition of the Enterprisingly Northland newsletter, keeping you up to date with the activities of Enterprise Northland

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- **New Skills Shortage Initiative**
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The NRCCT Annual Report and AGM Summary

The Northland Regional Council Community Trust (NRCCT), the parent of Enterprise Northland and Destination Northland, recently presented its report for the year to 30 June 2007 at its annual general meeting.

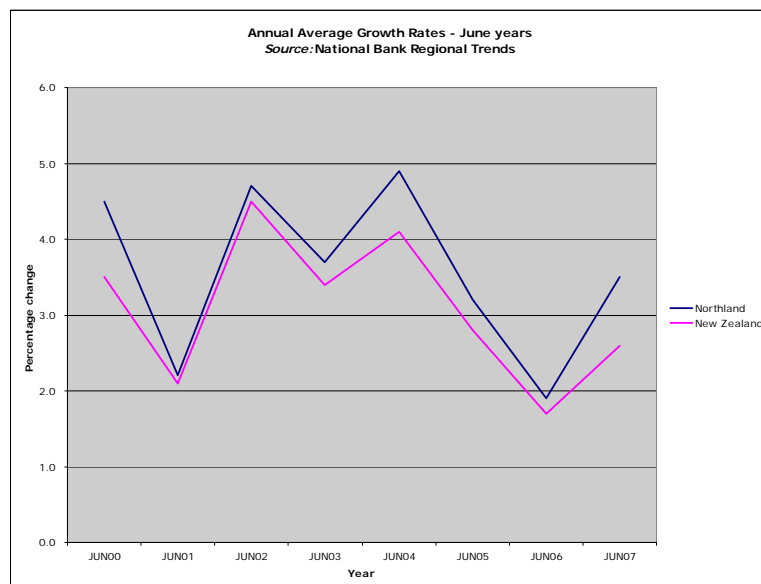
In his opening comments, NRCCT chairman Mike Simm drew attention to the fact that Northland's growth rate has consistently been higher than the national average. Looking back at the quarterly economic reports produced by the National Bank since the beginning of 2000, Northland's annual economic growth rate exceeded the national average in 24 of the 30 reports.

The latest quarterly report, to June 2007, places Northland fourth out of 14 regions, with an annual growth rate of 3.5% compared to a national average of 2.6%.

This is not Northland's ranking in absolute terms but rather the rate at which our economy is growing each year. The reality is that we started from a position well behind many other regions but we are now doing an excellent job of catching up.

Mr Simm also pointed out unique aspects of Northland's structure which have since been replicated by successful regional economic development agencies in other parts of the country:

- Non-political governance, with NRCCT trustees appointed from business and community backgrounds
- The economic development agency (EDA) Enterprise Northland and the regional tourism organisation (RTO) Destination Northland exist under the same governance and operating structure – an approach which creates synergies and efficiencies.



The full report, including future priorities, audited financial statements and detailed analysis of performance against the Statement of Intent, is available on the Enterprise Northland website. Enterprise Northland also reports regularly on its activities and readers of this newsletter will be familiar with many of our key projects. However, reviewing at the progress achieved over the course of a year can provide a different perspective and the highlights from the annual report are summarised below:

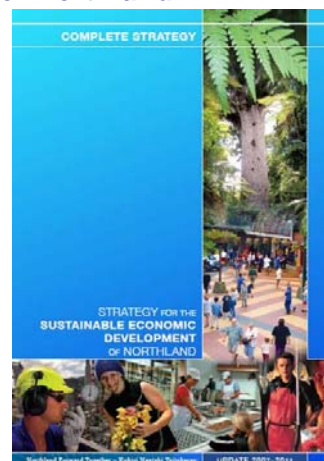
Updated strategy for the sustainable economic development of Northland

This strategy, for the five years to 2011, is the outcome of more than a year's work and is focused on the vision of: "A vibrant economy that creates wealth and jobs, and provides choices and opportunities for people to live, work and invest in Northland, while recognising its unique environment for present and future generations."

The strategy outlines three development priorities, with detailed actions and lead agencies assigned to each. It will be of interest to those from both the private and public sectors who are involved in – or reliant on the performance of – the Northland economy.

A cohesive regional strategy is all the more important because it is a pre-requisite to being eligible for key Government regional development initiatives following the launch of a new policy in April.

A short-form document is available from all Northland Councils and Enterprise Northland, and the full strategy can be downloaded from the Enterprise Northland website.



Marine MRI

Northland has a funding commitment for its second major regional initiative (MRI), a project involving development of marine engineering on the old Whangarei port land, focusing on export opportunities. Enterprise Northland was responsible for facilitating a business planning process with the private sector and completing a business case application which has seen \$2 million in Government funding approved, subject to a number of conditions being met by the private sector partners.

Activate Northland MRI

Northland's first MRI, Activate Northland was a three-year project which has been the biggest-ever initiative to build the capability and lift the performance of Northland's tourism industry and has featured in this newsletter on a number of occasions.

Formal and independent research into the results will be reported next year but overall, the project has almost doubled the forecast targets for revenue generation, employment and inward investment.

Destination Northland Key Results

In the year to June, visitor numbers to Northland increased at a rate of 4.1%, compared with the national average of 2.8%. Northland also increased its market share relative to other New Zealand tourism destinations, a number of which have larger visitor promotion budgets than Destination Northland.

Cape Reinga / Te Rerenga Wairua Project

This project, involving a series of improvements to the visitor experience, has been many years in the making. Work is now underway on Stage One – the development of a new car park and toilets, removal of the existing facilities, and sealing of the last few kilometres of State Highway One. Stage Two will see the construction of a world-class visitor interpretation centre which is scheduled to be open in mid-2009. An enhanced visitor experience means more people will come – visitor numbers are forecast to increase by two-thirds to 200,000 a year – while ensuring the visitation can be managed sustainably and without detracting from the sacredness and uniqueness of the area. The project is a partnership between two local iwi – Te Taumata Ahi Kaa o Ngati Kuri and Te Aupouri (represented by the Aupouri Trust Board) along with the Department of Conservation and Enterprise Northland. Our role has included helping to guide the overall direction of the project as a member of the Project Control Group, assisting in securing funding for the first stage of the project and spearheading the development of the business case for Stage Two.

District Partnerships

During the year, the economic partnership model which was already in place in the Far North and Whangarei was also adopted by Kaipara District, meaning all three districts now have dedicated economic development officers employed in partnership with Enterprise Northland, maximising resources, avoiding duplication and allowing region-wide initiatives to be leveraged in the districts. The Whangarei District Council recently voted to extend its contract with Enterprise Northland for a further three years and a similar process is currently underway with the Far North District Council.

Sector Development Groups

Over the years, Enterprise Northland has played a key role in the formation and co-ordination of a number of sector development groups, which bring businesspeople and other stakeholders together to work on issues of common interest.

This year, the existing Pastoral, Marine Engineering and Tourism development groups were joined by new groups focused on Horticulture and Minerals.

- **Pastoral Development Group.** Pastoral farming is the biggest contributor to the Northland economy and the increased dairy payout means the region's farming sector will provide approximately \$1.3 billion in the current year. Much of the work of the Pastoral Development Group is focused on productivity gains and key projects for the year included the FarmFest celebration, the third of three conferences and progress on making existing research accessible to farmers and researchers
- The **Minerals Industry Group** oversaw a study which found that a range of minerals – including gold, copper, aluminium, coal, lead, mercury, nickel, peat, phosphate and zinc – are potentially present in Northland. Mining is already a \$100 million a year industry for Northland, based around aggregates, limestone and china clay. The Minerals Industry Group brings together representatives of the Northland Regional Council and the Far North and Whangarei District Councils as well as members of the industry.

SafeTrades North

The SafeTrades North health and safety education (HSE) Centre was officially opened at the end of March. The result of collaboration between NorthTec and the private sector, this facility helps to ensure that health and safety training for employees and contractors working on Northland industrial sites is consistently delivered. Enterprise Northland was instrumental in securing part of the funding for the centre.

Community Project Development Officers

Enterprise Northland, with funding from the Ministry of Social Development, has new resources providing communities (including marae) with expert assistance to identify and target significant business opportunities arising from identified investments, thereby increasing prosperity, employment, business ownership and long-term sustainability. This initiative complements and expands on work currently underway in many Northland communities

Institute of Directors

Another initiative designed to help meet the skills needs of the region was the provision of subsidised Institute of Directors courses for those in governance positions in businesses and trusts, a programme which will be expanded in 2007-08.

Education for Enterprise (E4E)

Northland continues to lead the way in E4E programmes and the scope and reach of these expanded again during 2007, with the recent Great Education Property Auction (image right) being a high-profile example. The ASB Community Trust has made funding available for a project to increase Maori participation in E4E programmes.



In Other News:

New Option to Help Overcome Skills Shortage

Northland businesses constrained by a lack of skilled workers now have a new, free tool to help overcome the skills shortage.

Enterprise Northland has formed a 12-month partnership with New Life New Zealand, a company which specialises in recruiting skilled and eligible candidates in the United Kingdom and assisting their move to New Zealand, removing much of the complexity, legwork, cost and risk involved in recruiting staff from overseas. The company already has a presence in the UK, running five seminars a month there.

Northland employers can list their vacancies with New Life New Zealand at no cost and will incur no placement fees.

While some may question why the skills shortage cannot be overcome by training up new workers from within Northland, the reality is that to train people effectively, every industry needs a certain proportion of experienced staff. Northland, particularly Whangarei, is growing at such a rate that we need to look elsewhere to fill the need for workers who are already skilled and qualified.



Employers wishing to access the New Life New Zealand service can register vacancies on www.newlifenz.com or contact Jude at Enterprise Northland on 09 438 5110 or email jude@enterprisenorthland.co.nz

Power to the People

It was pleasing to see Transpower is moving forward in its plans to improve the security of the electricity supply to Northland through Auckland.

The national grid operator announced in late September that it had submitted an investment proposal to the Electricity Commission to spend more than \$500 million on a high-voltage cable running underground between Pakuranga and Albany.

This is in addition to the \$50 million to \$60 million Transpower is already spending on ducts under Fanshawe St and the Northern Busway, for a 220,000-volt cable to be installed by 2013 and with enough room for a duplicate version to follow at some undetermined date. Electricity demand north of the Auckland Harbour Bridge is forecast to grow by up to 21% over the next six years

For further information on any of the topics in this newsletter, you are welcome to call Enterprise Northland on 09 438 5110.

Please also check the website www.enterprisenorthland.co.nz and the Northland regional website www.northlandnz.com

Kokiri Ngatahi Taitokerau – Northland Forward Together

