

A LIVING STRATEGY

Key Results from RGS Monitoring Reports

The Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) was designed to be a living document that would be able to respond as circumstances change. To that end, Chapter 4 of the RGS stated that when the strategy is reviewed, "the results of an effective monitoring programme will be used to assess whether or not the objectives of the strategy are being met and whether changes need to occur" (p73). It indicated that monitoring will be carried out at several levels (including by the Regional Council, territorial authorities and other parties), and will focus on regional growth, social, transport and environmental indicators.

In 2000/01, a monitoring strategy was developed by ARC and Auckland local authorities. This identified an extensive set of indicators that could be monitored over time. An initial monitoring report was produced in June 2002 and was designed to serve as a baseline.

The 2000/01 monitoring strategy suggested three key and distinct types of information that needed to be collected in order to adequately review progress of the RGS. These were:

1. Monitoring the *Characteristics of Growth* - That is, defining how the region is growing – the number of people and their lifestyles, housing, households, businesses and the form of development.
2. Monitoring the *Effects of Growth* - This includes monitoring progress within the 16 RGS outcomes areas.
3. Monitoring the *Implementation of the RGS* - evaluating the implementation efforts of Forum partners. The RGS is dependant on continuing implementation of policy consistent with the RGS vision. The monitoring of this will be based on the five key implementation themes (partnerships and relationships, alignment of policy and funding, long term vision and short term actions, wide and adaptable range of implementation measures, and a living strategy) outlined in the RGS.

In February 2007, a report on broad demographic changes in the region was produced using the latest 2006 Census information. It provides the latest demographic data including population and household characteristics and highlights any major growth changes or trends. This report provides the information for monitoring the 'Characteristics of Growth.'ⁱ

In December 2006 an updated monitoring report was produced on the 'Effects of Growth' in the Auckland Region. This reported on trends and progress towards the 16 Outcome Areas identified in the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS).ⁱⁱ

In addition, capacity studies have been undertaken to estimate how long growth within the Auckland Region could be accommodated under current planning policy. The Capacity for Growth Study has been updated as at February 2007.ⁱⁱⁱ

Monitoring the implementation of the RGS has been the focus of this extensive review process and the final review report will evaluate the implementation efforts based on the five key implementation themes outlined in the RGS.

This updated monitoring information has been compiled together to inform the RGS review process. The main findings are summarised below.

Characteristics of Growth

Growth and development trends

Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ The Auckland Region is the fastest growing and largest region in NZ (12.4% increase from 2001-2006 to reach 1,303,068 people) ⇒ The Auckland Region continues to have the largest population (32.4% of the national population) ⇒ Over half (54%) of the national population growth occurred in the Auckland Region ⇒ About half of the region's growth is attributed to external migration (the proportion of residents in the Auckland region who were born overseas has been steadily increasing in recent years to reach 37% of the region's population) ⇒ The Auckland Region's population is projected to reach 2 million by around 2041 (medium rate of growth) ⇒ Auckland Region's population is younger than other NZ regions, ageing at a slower rate, and has the youngest median ages ⇒ The Auckland Region continues to experience ethnic diversity with less people identifying as NZ European and increasing Asian and Pacific Peoples ethnic groups
Households and Dwellings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Over a quarter of the total dwellings in NZ are in the Auckland Region ⇒ The Auckland Region had the highest rate of growth in dwellings between 2001-2006 (11.2%) to reach a total of 439,080 dwellings ⇒ The Auckland Region is projected to grow to around 700,000 households over the next 20 years ⇒ Multi-unit dwellings currently comprise one quarter of the total number of dwellings in the Auckland Region ⇒ Number and percentage of multi-unit dwellings (two or more attached dwellings) has increased over the past five years, making up around 40% of total growth in dwellings ⇒ Majority of households are one family households, one fifth are one person households ⇒ Household size has remained constant in the Auckland Region (around 3 persons per household) despite national trends of decreasing household size – likely attributed to growth in both one person households and larger households ⇒ Levels of home ownership continue to decrease with just over one third of residents in the Auckland Region renting the dwelling in which they live ⇒ A large proportion (60%) of residents within the Auckland Region have lived in their current homes for less than five years, with just under half living in their current homes for 2 years or less
Business and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Increase in full and part time employment in the Auckland Region ⇒ Decrease in unemployment (6.5% in 1991 to 3.7% in 2006) in the region ⇒ Number of businesses and employees has been steadily increasing over the past five years (4.4% per annum increase – higher than

Development Trends^{iv}

- population and dwelling rate of growth)
- ⇒ Majority of businesses are small to medium enterprises
 - ⇒ The most common occupation group in the Auckland Region is 'Professionals' and 'Managers'
 - ⇒ Auckland region has the highest proportion of Property and Business Services compared with other regions in NZ
 - ⇒ A higher proportion of the Auckland Region's residents had a personal income of over \$50,000 (21.6%) per annum compared to NZ (18.0%)
 - ⇒ Over 58,000 new buildings consented to (since 2001) - 52,000 residential consents, 6,000 commercial
 - ⇒ The majority (85%) of residential development has occurred within the MUL, and around one third of residential development has occurred inside the growth centres (an increase from 14% in 2001 to 35% in 2005) – the majority of this growth has been within the CBD
 - ⇒ Large proportion (43%) of all residential consents over the last five years (2001-2006) has been multi-units consents – making up almost a quarter (24%) of the total housing stock
 - ⇒ Some multi-unit development occurring in high density centres and corridors (an increase from 18% in 2001 to 35% in 2006)
 - ⇒ Residential development continues to occur predominantly on vacant land (40%) and by way of infill (33%)
 - ⇒ Residential development on vacant land has increased more in the last five years than the previous five years – densities (dwellings per hectare) are increasing
 - ⇒ Residential development on business land has increased considerably in the last five years (27% of total development)
 - ⇒ Steady decrease in the regional supply of vacant business zoned land (from just over 3,000 ha in 1996 to just over 1,000 ha in 2006)
 - ⇒ Some incursion of residential into business zoned land but receding in the last few years
 - ⇒ Office activity locating more within some of the high density centres and corridors (particularly in the CBD)
 - ⇒ Dramatic increase in retail activity with a large proportion occurring outside the growth centres
 - ⇒ Majority of manufacturing and wholesale trade activity occurring outside the growth centres
 - ⇒ Redevelopment of individual sites (removal of an existing house and replaced by new dwellings) is an emerging trend and is occurring in high value suburbs

Effects of Growth***Progress towards the stated RGS outcomes*****Air Quality**

Until recently, CO, particles (PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀) and SO₂ concentrations have been generally reducing. These are positive trends, which are likely to have been influenced by reduced levels of sulphur in diesel, and the

	increasing prevalence of modern, low emission vehicles.
Coastal Environment	The Auckland Region's coastline is relatively highly developed particularly in the East Coast (e.g. 88% of the North Shore coastline). There are 247 ha of Marine Farms licensed presently, and applications for a further 7135 ha.
Habitat	The remaining indigenous habitat is largely forest and scrub, with only remnants of coastal water and wetlands remaining. In the Waitakere Ranges, bird populations have responded well to reductions in possum numbers
Rural Amenity	There continues to be strong population growth in rural areas. The majority of lot sizes outside the MUL are small (52% of lots are 0.5ha or less). Continued population growth in rural areas will be assessed in the final report.
Sustainable Use of Resources	Petrol use per capita has levelled off, but Diesel use per capita continues to rise rapidly. Urban Densities have risen between 1991 and 2001.
Water Quality	Results from the past five years show that as an area becomes more developed, fresh water quality drops significantly, however using low impact design principles can reduce this.
Cultural Heritage	The ARC is currently committed to the New Zealand Archaeological Association (NZAA) Site Recording Scheme Upgrade Project in the Auckland region. By 2006, the condition of over 8,000 sites was recorded. The largest number were classified as damaged.
Cultural Identity	Auckland region has experienced increased ethnic diversity in recent years, with a particular increase in proportion of the population who identify as Asian (from 5% in 1991 to 13% in 2001). Manukau City is the most ethnically diverse area.
Housing Choice and Affordability	A higher number of smaller and more intensive forms of housing are being constructed as the region intensifies. Rents continue to increase, as does the proportion of households not owned by the people living in them.
Open Space	Around 16.5% of the total land area of the region is publicly owned open space.
Urban Amenity	Residents generally feel that their neighbourhoods are staying the same or getting better.
Safe, Healthy Communities	Data from the past ten years shows that the number of reported offences has stayed steady, however, the number of offences that are resolved has increased. An estimated one in five persons (or 21% of the population) lived in areas rated 9 or 10 (most deprived) on the NZ Deprivation Index.
Business Opportunities	Estimated regional GDP growth has generally followed the national trend. Services and Heavy Industry are the dominant sectors in the region, and the majority of businesses and workers are in Auckland City. There has been less commercial floor-space built in 2005 than in 2001, but it has been of higher average value.
Employment Choice	Unemployment in the Auckland region has steadily decreased over the past ten years.
Access and Transport Efficiency	The majority of people drove to work on Census Day in 2006, and overall trips to work are getting longer. However, there have been significant increases in the percentage of people using public transport on key entry points to the central isthmus, and surveys have shown that the number of

people who feel that public transport was an option for most of their trips has been increasing steadily.

No information was available to be presented for the Physical and Social Infrastructure Outcome Statements.

Capacity for Growth

Remaining capacity for growth under current policy

Growth Capacity	⇒ Under current District Plans, capacity will be exhausted around 2022 (16 years of growth)
	⇒ Under District Plan capacity plus remaining Sector Agreement Capacity will be exhausted around 2032 (26 years of growth) - does not include capacity planned to be introduced after 2021
	⇒ Capacity from traditional sources, i.e. vacant land and infill, is continuing to decline
	⇒ Under current policy (District Plan) approximately one third of residential capacity is vacant land, one quarter of capacity is by way of infill (including some redevelopment potential)
	⇒ Large proportion of existing capacity is in commercial zones e.g. CBD, CBD fringe, sub-regional centres, town centres
	⇒ Current infill development within residential zoned parts of growth centres may compromise the capacity for higher densities in the future

Implementation of the RGS

Implementation progress as outlined in the RGS

Partnerships and Relationships	MOUs and sector agreements have been developed and formally agreed to and some parties (e.g. MOE, ARTA) have made significant effort to align planning processes. However, resourcing of the RGF has not been sufficient to allow ongoing relationship building and development of MOUs with other parties.
Alignment of Policy and Funding	An agreement to region-wide policy and funding alignment has been developed alongside regional criteria to guide the provision and release of regional development capacity and provision and funding of regionally significant infrastructure. Significant infrastructure projects are in progress (transit, 3 waters, public/social) and planning and funding reviews are underway. However, not all investment in infrastructure is aligned to growth areas and this remains a significant issue to address.
Long Term Vision and Short Term Actions	Alignment of the outcomes of key regional strategies to the RGS vision is being reviewed, particularly within a greater sustainability context. Sector agreements are being implemented at various stages; however the relationship between short term actions and the long term vision are still unclear.
Implementation Mechanisms	Various mechanisms continue to provide some guidance in relation to the RGS outcomes e.g. District Plans, Structure Plans, Sector Agreements, Regional Policy Statement (LGAAA), Regional Land Transport strategy

**A Living
Strategy**

etc. Initiatives such as design guides, urban design panels, property companies and development contributions have been established by some local authorities. It is apparent that more influential mechanisms are required to achieve the goals of the RGS (e.g. alternative funding structures, public sector partnerships with private developers, corridor plans etc.)

Monitoring reports have been produced on the characteristics and effects of growth to give an indication of progress towards the RGS outcomes. The extent to which these results have been used to influence implementation is unclear and therefore an improved monitoring programme is required.

What are the Monitoring Results Telling Us?

The Auckland Region continues to be a fast growing region by national and international standards. The region faces a growing diversity of people in relation to age, ethnicity, household composition and related socio-economic factors. Around half of our growth is a result of external migration and the rest is due to natural growth, particularly in ethnic groups other than European. We are an ageing population, yet we have a much higher proportion of younger residents in relation to the rest of NZ. We have increasingly diverse households with a growing number of one person households as well as more multi-family households. This diversity is spread throughout the region with each city comprised of distinctive population characteristics.

As the population continues to grow and diversify, the region is experiencing a corresponding growth in the number and type of dwellings. The Auckland Region has the highest growth (nationally) in the number of dwellings, particularly in the proportion of new dwellings that are multi-unit housing. The region's residents are 'moving house' more frequently, and home ownership is continuing to decrease.

The Auckland Region is experiencing a rate of growth in numbers of businesses and employees that is higher than the population and dwelling growth rates. There has been an increase in both full and part time employment with a subsequent decrease in unemployment. The Auckland Region has a high proportion of Property and Business Services and those employed as 'Professionals' and 'Managers' but also dominates in the services and heavy industry sectors. The Auckland Region typically has relatively higher income levels (nationally).

The majority of built development within the Auckland Region is new residential dwellings. This development is predominantly occurring within the urban limits and some of this is occurring within the regional strategy's identified growth areas. The proportion of development that is multi-unit housing is increasing and now comprises a quarter of the total housing stock. Most of this multi-unit development is occurring within the urban limits and the identified growth areas - the vast majority in Auckland's CBD. Residential development continues to be predominantly on vacant land and by way of infill, though residential development on business land has increased considerably. Redevelopment of individual sites (removal of an existing house replaced by new dwellings) is an emerging trend, particularly in high value suburbs.

The Auckland Region continues to experience development on business land, both inside and outside the strategy's identified growth areas. Office activity is increasing in these growth areas, whereas retail, manufacturing and wholesale is largely locating outside these areas. There has been a steady decrease in the regional supply of vacant business zoned land that has led to shortages in some sub-regional areas. There continues to be some residential

incursion that has contributed to the decrease in available business zoned land, particularly for certain business sectors, though this trend appears to have receded in recent years.

As the majority of residential development within the Auckland Region continues to occur on vacant land and by way of infill, the remaining capacity of this location for development is continuing to decrease. Current policy (i.e. the District Plan) allows for approximately one third of further development to be on vacant land, one quarter by way of infill, and the remaining majority of capacity in commercial zones. Development in these locations will leave the Auckland Region with around 16 years until capacity is exhausted. The Sector Agreements provide for further capacity that could extend to 26 years.

The Auckland Region's natural environment i.e. air and water quality, the coastal and rural environment and natural habitat, is under continued pressure due to ongoing development – though in general the quality in many of these areas is being protected and at least maintained. Congestion levels are still high and energy use continues to increase, though there has been an increase in the use of alternative forms of energy and significant increases in the usage of public transport within the region.

Development within the Auckland Region has also had an impact on the amenity of the urban environment. Residents continue to feel that their neighbourhoods are at least staying the same or getting better, the region has acquired more public open space, and the number of protected heritage sites around the region has been maintained and in some areas, increased.

These results are able to assess, in part, the effectiveness of the implementation of the Regional Growth Strategy. A key conclusion is that although current policy allows for residential and business development in the identified growth centres and corridors, this is not being realised. The capacity for the region to accommodate future growth is therefore being compromised in terms of what type of development is required for its fast and diversely growing population. It is evident that the region's current policies and planning require much more influence to ensure that growth can be managed sustainably.

The extensive review of implementation progress and resulting challenges is what comprises the majority of this review report.

How can we improve monitoring of the RGS?

The review process has highlighted the imperative for an improved monitoring programme that will not only better assess the effectiveness of implementation, but also ensure that the results are used to inform and influence decision making.

While many of the indicators still stand as appropriate measures of the characteristics and effects of growth; changes and shifts in regional trends, issues and priorities necessitate a review of the indicator set (and of data availability). The review process has highlighted some

key information that requires further analysis, in particular; analysis of the uptake and capacity in the identified growth centres and corridors including the location and amount of redevelopment occurring, and business and employment growth. Further analysis of development in rural and coastal areas would also be useful to assist in understanding the pressures and drivers of development in these areas.

Consistent and regular monitoring has also been raised as an issue throughout the review. Local councils do not necessarily collect and report monitoring information consistently and the intended annual reporting has not been occurring. Coordination of monitoring processes could be better achieved through avenues such as a regional monitoring group comprised of local authorities monitoring representatives within the region.

The lack of targets and benchmarking has been an identified issue and needs to be addressed through the setting of consistent and appropriate targets and benchmarks for all outcomes of the RGS, including specific population, housing and employment targets around identified growth areas.

In addition, there has been limited effort and resource put into the promotion and support of how the Growth Concept in the RGS contributes to improved quality of life for the region and its diverse communities. An improved monitoring programme that is given the right significance and priority in decision making would provide the support for improved implementation of the RGS.

ⁱ ***Report on Initial Results for the Auckland Region***: 2006 Census of Population and Dwellings, Social and Economic Research and Monitoring Team, Auckland Regional Council, February 2007

ⁱⁱ ***Monitoring the Effects of Growth***: Auckland Regional Growth Strategy Monitoring Programme, Social and Economic Research and Monitoring Team, Auckland Regional Council, December 2006

ⁱⁱⁱ ***Capacity for Growth Study***: Auckland Metropolitan Area, Social and Economic Research and Monitoring Team, Auckland Regional Council, June 2007

^{iv} ***Locational Analysis of Residential and Non-residential Building Consents***: Auckland Regional Council, June 2005