

ENVISIONING AN ECONOMIC FUTURE FOR KAPITI - 2031



Kapiti
2031

*A unique blend of local
characteristics
combining into an incubator
for innovative thinking
and lifestyle appreciation*

Contents

- 2. Contents
- 3 - 5. Executive Summary
- 6. Introduction
- 7 - 9. Cross Cutting Themes
- 10. Primary Production
- 11. Manufacturing
- 12. Construction
- 13. Retail and Distribution
- 14. Business Services
- 15. Recreational Services
- 16. Social Services
- 17 - 18. Participants
- 19 - 26. Participants personal comments
- 27 - 28. The Way Forward
- 29. Acknowledgements
- 30. Contacts

Executive Summary

It's 2031 and Kapiti is thriving in a rapidly changing world. Building on the fact that it is a great place to live with a wonderful environment, we have developed and attracted innovative businesses which have created jobs and brought wealth into our community.

It's a far cry from 2011 when there were insufficient jobs in Kapiti, with youth leaving the district and large numbers of people commuting to Wellington each day. Our economy is now much larger, more diversified and therefore less subject to external shocks delivering negative social consequences. We have interesting and rewarding jobs and careers available in the District. It is easier for our community to afford the amenities and infrastructure we desire.

In 2031 we are leaders in sustainability and clean technologies. We have high-tech product and service businesses supplying New Zealand and the world. We are known for our quality produce and value-added food production – with a healthy and sustainable edge. There is much to see and do in Kapiti, which is great for locals and also makes us a top-tier visitor destination. We have a town centre we are proud of, and our villages and retail areas are largely complimentary. We are something of a niche distribution hub, and people commute to Kapiti for employment in corporate and government offices which have based themselves here because of the talented and motivated workforce. Our recreation services sector boasts many amenities, and our social services sector caters very well for the retirement market and the needs of our community. The 'Kapiti' brand and story are well known and anchor us in people's minds. Kapiti is a great place to live and play ... and now also to work.

This document describes one possible vision for the economic future of Kapiti, capturing clearly the benefits that this has for the people who live here. It does not attempt to predict what will actually happen, but it is intended to create discussion – and be a guiding light for the need to create local jobs and bring more wealth into our community. It is a call to action.

"Start with the end in mind." Stephen Covey, author

Our hope is that by starting with the end in mind, we will be able to work out what to do, and start making progress towards a bright and exciting future.

"Nothing if not at first a dream." Carl Sandburg, writer and author

If a bright future for Kapiti interests you, then please read on...

This document was developed in Kapiti from a short project including a workshop attended by a cross-section of Kapiti business people. It is unlikely that any one workshop participant would agree with everything in this document, however it is a result of their collective vision and all participants do share a concern to see their community do well, and a belief that business and the economy have a key role to play in ensuring this happens.

Key benefits to the Kapiti community of the healthy economy envisioned for 2031:

- Substantial growth in number and variety of local jobs, leading to increased employment options at all skill and experience levels.
- Increase in overall quality and pay levels for local employment, particularly as higher and middle paying jobs were added to the economy.
- Dramatically reduced number of commuters, and consequent benefits to individuals of not having to travel to Wellington each day.
- Reduced rates burden on residential ratepayers, because of a higher business rates take.
- Increased funding of community, sporting, cultural and environmental initiatives and facilities from the business sector.
- Community pride in contribution to planet through innovative, sustainable, high tech and clean technology businesses based in Kapiti.
- Reduction in youth unemployment, and in number of young people leaving the community. More families and friends are able to remain together in Kapiti.
- Increased sense of well-being in the community from many more people having worth while local employment.

Key aspects of the Kapiti economy in 2031:

- **Primary Sector** - Bolstered by the recognisable 'Kapiti' brand and our advantageous growing conditions, our primary production sector is focused on meeting local and regional needs as the 'food basket' of the Wellington region, and on producing premium and value-add products which are both sold locally and exported. Otaki has been particularly prominent in the success of this sector.
- **Manufacturing Sector** – Kapiti is recognised nationally for excellence in bespoke manufacturing of products

Executive Summary

mostly associated with a better life for customers and with a strong environmental and sustainable focus. This includes clean technology, arts and crafts, and food production.

- **Construction Sector** - The Kapiti construction sector designs and builds for its community's needs, and is a renowned centre for eco-friendly and sustainable construction. Kapiti's niche skills and designs have been exported right around the globe.
- **Retail and Distribution Sector** - Conversations between business leaders and retail areas led over time to the semi-specialisation of the Kapiti 'villages' into complimentary and mutually supportive themed retail hubs. This led to improved shopping options for locals and the re-emergence of Kapiti as a retail destination.
- **Business Services Sector** - With no real shortage of talented people looking for work in Kapiti, the business service sector grew strongly supporting not just local needs, but also developing and exporting innovative niche services to national and international markets.
- **Recreational Services** - For a district its size, Kapiti has an impressive recreational services sector. The arts, Maori culture and sports all boast well-utilised facilities and the many protected marine, nature and conservation areas in the region provide valued leisure opportunities for residents and visitors of all ages.
- **Social Services Sector** - Kapiti is still seen as a major retirement destination and has benefited from central Government agencies relocating here and the growth of the health industry. The area is known for its success in the joining-up of local employment opportunities with the schools and other training and education providers.

Key factors leading to Kapiti's economic success by 2031:

- **The 'Kapiti' brand and story** - The development in the early 2010's of the Kapiti 'brand' and especially the unique Kapiti 'story' has been a key catalyst.
- **The Kapiti market niche** - While Kapiti businesses provide all manner of products and services, we have found something of a niche and are known for producing innovative, hi-tech, sustainable and eco-friendly products and services.
- **Innovating and 'exporting' businesses** - Moving beyond an economy mostly supporting local needs, Kapiti has developed innovative businesses and business which export services and products beyond Kapiti, both of which bring money into the local economy.
- **Community economic vision** - The emergence of a common vision in the Kapiti community of the tangible benefits of a strong economy, and the need to allow business to "do its thing" and create employment. In turn, business has developed in areas which fit with the community's vision of where Kapiti should be going.
- **Co-operation, synergy and inter-relatedness** - Right across the Kapiti economy, including business sectors, Council and community; the themes of co-operation, synergy and inter relatedness are apparent.
- **Business friendly Council** - The rise of a 'business friendly Council' was crucial to the job growth we have experienced.
- **Infrastructure** - The provision of infrastructure to the Kapiti district has been critical in sending a message

to business that Kapiti is a stable and good place to do business. This includes the dam and other local infrastructure, as well as nationally provided infrastructure such as the new SH1 and ultrafast broadband.

- **Kapiti is a good place to live** - Boil it all down, and a substantial reason for Kapiti's economic success and job growth is that it is a good place to live. This attracts quality and motivated people, who attract quality employers.
- **Business Parks** - The Clean Technology Park in Otaki and the Kapiti Landing airport business park in Paraparaumu have been key in attracting high quality businesses to the area and providing a venue for the growth of these and locally started businesses.
- **Iconic Events** - Building on the continued success of the Kapiti Arts Trail, the district has developed six annual iconic events which are popular with locals and attract visitors for all over New Zealand and beyond, showcasing the best of what Kapiti has to offer.
- **Tourism and Local Patronage** - As Kapiti's recreational and retail sectors developed, they not only attracted visitors to the region; they also attracted strong local patronage which added further to the sense of Kapiti lifestyle.
- **Regional neighbours** - Much of the economic success experienced by Kapiti in the last 20 years up until today in 2031 has been in firm partnership with our neighbours to the north and south, particularly Horowhenua and Porirua.
- **Maori business** - Maori owned businesses are strongly represented in every sector of the Kapiti economy and contribute in a significant way to employment and wealth in the area. Aspects of kaupapa Maori have not just been restricted to Maori owned businesses, but increasingly accepted in the business community.
- **Business Leadership** - The district has a strong and effective Chamber of Commerce and visionary business leadership with a passion to see the Kapiti community healthy and thriving.

Executive Summary

Personal Vision Statements - Many of the workshop participants have provided personal statements, and these have been included verbatim.

Way Forward - This is a visioning document and does not deal at length with what needs to happen next. The recommended 'next steps' are home-grown and relatively simple and should be designed to continue to build leadership and momentum, generate discussion and put in place specific initiatives. Some specific recommendations are:

- **Buy-In** - Wider participation workshops to build the economic vision and develop and implement specific initiatives towards economic development.
- **Guiding Body** - The creation of a guiding body bringing together key stakeholders to over see, drive and co-ordinate the economic development of Kapiti. No one current organisation of group can 'own' economic development:
- **Strategy** - The development and deployment of a simple and practical strategic plan to identify key changes needed in order for economic development to occur. The current 'Business Growth Strategy' held by Nature Coast Enterprise is recommended as a starting point.
- **Council spending** - Council economic development resources and spending should be focused into getting results in the areas identified as most critical in the economic development strategy.
- **Next Steps** – A number of specific initiatives are recommended for putting into place in the next 3-5 years. This list is neither exclusive nor prioritised and merely provides a starting point.
- **This Vision Document** – This document can be used to help 'back-engineer' the key strategies and initiatives needed to take the district forward.



Introduction

Envisioning Economic Futures for Kapiti – 2031.

This booklet is the result of a short project to develop an inspirational vision of the economic future of Kapiti.

Not pretending to be able to predict what will actually happen, what we have aimed to do is tell a story, or paint a picture if you like, of what the Kapiti economy could look like in 2031, twenty years from now.

We have tried to do this in such a way as to help people understand what the commercial sector could look like and how it could contribute tangible benefits to the rest of the community, for example, by creating jobs.

The need to consider the economic future has come about because the District Plan review has started discussion on the following matters:

- Global Change
- Urban Form and Transport
- Infrastructure and essential systems
- Natural Hazards and Managed retreat
- Landscape character and Heritage
- Biodiversity
- Food and Rural productivity

...but still needs to consider the local economy, jobs, and how these matters are inter-related.

Please note:

This vision does not attempt to be a robust analysis or prediction.

While all the participants have contributed, the resulting booklet is a collation of their overall input and not everything will necessarily be agreed by all who attended.

For simple logistical reasons we invited a limited number of people to the workshop, aiming at 4 to 6 people in each workgroup.

While we believe we have invited a talented cross-section of Kapiti commercial leadership and people who are making things

happen at the moment, we also fully acknowledge that there are many other people in Kapiti who could have made a contribution.

While we would have liked to conduct a thorough visioning process across several workshop sessions, we decided this was impractical at this time. We therefore ran a single workshop preceded by pre-reading material and following up by an opportunity to comment on the draft and submit a personal 250 word vision for verbatim inclusion.

If you, the reader, disagree with anything said in this booklet, or feel we have missed something, then that is fine. If you have taken the time to read the booklet and think about these issues, then we thank you and believe we have achieved part of our purpose.

Who knows, perhaps what we have tried to achieve here will be repeated on a bigger scale with wider participation. That would be good.

Assumptions:

In preparing a vision document such as this, there needed to be a series of assumptions which created the context in which the visioning discussion could effectively be held.

These assumptions thus simplified the challenge and were given to participants prior to the workshop. They included sections on; Kapiti population; infrastructure development; retail centres; commercial centres; macro-environmental factors; and Kapiti generally.

Scenario Analysis – was decided to be beyond the scope of the project. Readers may wish to extrapolate their own alternative future scenarios, and if so, a suggested theme is the price of oil. What effect would significant increases in the price of oil between now and 2031 have on these assumptions? What effect would minimal increase in the price of oil have? The assumptions given were aimed at creating what may be called a 'middle of the road' scenario of the future environment within which this vision exists.



Cross-Cutting Economic Themes

Looking at 2031 and considering where things are at, and where they have come from, there are a number of important themes which cut across two or more of the 7 sectors of economic activity. These themes have been identified and brought together in this section.

The 'Kapiti' brand and story... The development in the early 2010's of the Kapiti 'brand' and especially the unique Kapiti 'story' has been a key catalyst.

Striking a positive chord with the community, the Kapiti brand and story define the essence of what Kapiti is, and have been a powerful communicator of our identity and uniqueness in the world, not just to our markets, but to ourselves as well.

Our businesses make strong use in their own marketing of this unique Kapiti banner, and surveys nationwide consistently shown it is widely recognised and a trusted brand.

The Kapiti market niche...

While Kapiti businesses provide all manner of products and services, we have found something of a niche and are known for producing innovative, hi-tech, sustainable and ecofriendly products and services. To an extent this was developed from the strong arts and music culture pre-existing in the district, coupled with the Kapiti perspective of lifestyle and community values alongside economic success. And to an extent also it was developed because Kapiti became aware in the early 2010's that not only did we need to build a healthy economic future for our community, but also that the world was changing; fast. To be successful we had to provide products and services that we anticipated the world would want, and that very broadly put our future lay in high-tech and low carbon products and services.

Many areas with established economies found the rapid change difficult to keep up with, and while New Zealand as a whole is performing well today, Kapiti's relative lack of established industry 20 years ago proved an advantage in that we had literally a blank slate and today we are a shining example to

other smaller districts and cities of what is possible.

Innovative, exporting and support businesses...

Moving beyond mostly supporting local needs, Kapiti has developed innovative businesses and business which export services and products beyond Kapiti, both of which bring money into the local economy.

Up to the late 2000's, the large majority of Kapiti businesses were what you might call 'support' businesses in that they primarily provided support to other businesses or to the public. Looking back at this, we see now how this limited job creation because little new money was being brought into the economy to replace the money Kapiti people were spending outside of Kapiti on 'imported' products and services.

Since that time, we have seen the emergence of 'innovative' businesses across all economic activity sectors, often with entrepreneurial flair, which develop new products and services and market them successfully to the world.

Other businesses have taken 'support' products and services outside of Kapiti serving customers in the Wellington region and further afield.

Both innovative and exporting businesses bring money into the Kapiti economy, creating the need for support businesses, and creating the 'money go-round' which creates layers of employment in a healthy economy. An 'exporting' business sells a service in Wellington (for example) and uses some of the money to pay a Kapiti employee, who shops in a supermarket, which pays the supermarket employee, who goes to a garden centre, which pays a garden centre employee, who has a cup of coffee in a café, etc.

Understanding these distinctions has been crucial because the Kapiti economy would never have grown to where it is today without these innovative and 'exporting' businesses.

Community economic vision...

The community developed an economic vision, and was supportive of the growth of the commercial sector and the role it

plays in creating employment and bringing wealth to the Kapiti community, thus allowing the community to benefit from facilities and amenities which it previously could not afford.

Co-operation, synergy and inter-relatedness...

Right across the Kapiti economy, including business sectors, Council and community; the themes of co-operation, synergy and interrelatedness are apparent. Starting perhaps in the early 2010's with the collaboration between Council, business and the community to facilitate economic growth, these factors became common themes in Kapiti and directly led to superior outcomes in business, but also land use and urban design.

Two key examples are; the interplay between the Clean Tech Park in Otaki and the Primary and Manufacturing sectors; the synergy between food, fashion, retail, the environment and nature, art and culture, attractions and events - all helping to create tourism.

Business friendly Council...

The rise of a 'business friendly Council' was crucial to the job growth we have experienced. In the past, Kapiti was seen as a difficult and expensive place to do business and consequently businesses tended to stay away.

This attitude started at the top with

Cross-Cutting Economic Themes

elected representatives and senior staff, but spread to include all aspects of Council from the District Plan downwards through levels of planning and also right down through the Council's organisation to the culture of staff working on the front lines.

This 'friendliness' does not mean that business gets away with things for its own benefit only, nor that the community is unprotected, but it does mean that a key role of Council is clearly understood to be to facilitate job creation by allowing Kapiti to be a business friendly place in balance with restricting undesirable activities and ensuring compliance to nationally set regulations.

Put simply, as a community we understand that business has a choice where it locates, and that to create the jobs and wealth our community wanted, we had to provide business with an environment more conducive to success than was found elsewhere. Council has done an admirable job in allowing this to happen thus bringing substantial benefits to its community.

Infrastructure..

Remaining on a governmental theme, another cross-cutting area has been the provision of infrastructure to the Kapiti district. Fast internet access, good roading, rail and air transport, water, storm water, sewage, cycle and walk ways, parks and amenities, village development and beautification, protection of the natural environment – all these and more have contributed substantially to the impetus for economic growth and job creation in Kapiti either directly (as in the expressway and airport) or indirectly (as in helping to make Kapiti a good place to live and therefore a place where businesses can find a pool of motivated employees).

Business is risky by nature, and needs to see certainty in its environment – and the investment in infrastructure over the last three decades has had a substantial positive effect on all economic activity areas.

Kapiti is a good place to live...

Boil it all down, and a substantial reason for Kapiti's economic success and job growth is that it is a good place to live. This attracts quality and motivated people, who attract quality employers.

This is Kapiti's greatest strength as it means we have been able to attract and retain a talented and motivated workforce, which is key to business success. Continuing to protect and enhance the Kapiti lifestyle and environment is thus critical.

Business Parks...

The Clean Technology Park in Otaki and the Kapiti Landing airport business park in

Paraparaumu have been key to in attracting high quality businesses to the area and providing a venue for the growth of these and locally started businesses.

The Clean Tech Park has been particularly key in development of the high tech and innovative aspects of the economy, and encouraging co-operation and synergy.

The Kapiti Landing business park has become a major employment area, particularly for business services and distribution. It is a conference centre for the lower North Island, offering a quality hotel and conference facilities combined with access to local attractions and activities. It is also a niche logistics centre and a disaster recovery centre.

Iconic Events...

Building on the continued success of the Kapiti Arts Trail, the district has developed six annual iconic events which are popular with locals and attract visitors for all over New Zealand and beyond, showcasing the best of what Kapiti has to offer. These include Arts and Crafts, sustainability, food and wine, music and golf.

Regional neighbours...

This document describes Kapiti and is a Kapiti-centric document. This has been done with a specific purpose in mind; however it does not mean that our neighbours are irrelevant. Quite the contrary, much of the economic success experienced by Kapiti in the last 20 years up until today in 2031 has been in firm partnership with our neighbours to the north and south, particularly Horowhenua and Porirua.

Many Primary sector businesses don't even notice the line on the map drawn between Kapiti and Horowhenua. For practical business purposes it is largely irrelevant. Several Kapiti based businesses have their manufacturing done in either Levin or Porirua. Horowhenua and Porirua businesses have invested in Kapiti businesses helping Kapiti to grow, and bringing profits back into their own communities.

The economic growth in Kapiti was in some part due to relocations of businesses and organisations from other areas, but overall the contribution of Kapiti to the wider Wellington regional economy far out-weighted any negative aspects of such relocations.

Maori business...

Maori owned businesses are strongly represented in every sector of the Kapiti economy and contribute in a significant way to employment and wealth in the area. Aspects of kaupapa Maori have not just been restricted to Maori owned businesses, but have been widely accepted in the business community because they make good sense. Businesses specialising in providing Maori products and services have likewise grown significantly; from niche manufactured food and other products, through to memorable

Cross-Cutting Economic Themes

and popular tourist experiences.

Business Leadership...

The district has a strong and effective Chamber of Commerce and visionary business leadership with a passion to see the Kapiti community healthy and thriving.

Tourism and Local Patronage...

As Kapiti's recreational and retail sectors developed, they not only attracted visitors to the region, they also attracted strong local patronage which added further to the sense of Kapiti lifestyle.

Attracted by the environment and facilities on offer, Kapiti became a top-tier tourist destination with quality accommodation and attractions, and a variety of cultural and sporting events taking place at any time of the year.

Economic results...

The results and benefits for the Kapiti community have been significant and the following are the key such results which cut across all of the economic activity sectors.

Nearly two decades of above national average entrepreneurialism and business growth have resulted in substantially increased and improved employment options for the residents of Kapiti. This is not just jobs, but a variety of jobs in different sectors, at a variety of pay rates. Overall, more higher-paying jobs have been created and thus the average wage in Kapiti (through local employment) has increased significantly over the last 20 years.

The generation of jobs; and the strong links between Council, business, youth and education and training providers, has also resulted in significantly increased quality and quantity of opportunities for young people in the district. Our children no longer have to leave to find suitable employment.

While Kapiti still has a proportion of workers who commute outside the district for their employment, the large majority of people no longer need to travel. The commuter population is still an important element in Kapiti's make-up, but the overall life style and environmental benefits to people not having to commute for over 2 hours each day have been roundly praised and acknowledged.

The growth of a business and commercial economy increased the local rates take and reduced the burden on residential rate-payers in Kapiti.

The advent of workers commuting to Kapiti for employment in governmental, corporate and smaller businesses also contributed money to the economy via rates, construction and lease of premises, and the spend of the organisations and their employees whilst in the district. Likewise, the growth of business and a commercial economy helped local government, charitable trusts and other organisations to fund many of the infrastructure and lifestyle improvements wanted by Kapiti residents, but which ratepayers and people on largely fixed incomes had previously been unable to afford. Businesses doing well in the growing Kapiti economy were keen to show their support for the community, with sports clubs and community groups benefiting substantially.

Overall, as the economy improved, Kapiti was able to invest in its own future and its lifestyle, which in turn made it a more desirable place to live, fuelling the attraction of talent to the District, and further fuelling

economic growth. This has been described as an upward spiralling cycle for Kapiti residents.



Primary Production

Bolstered by the recognisable 'Kapiti' brand and our advantageous growing conditions, our primary production sector is focused on meeting local and regional needs as the 'food basket' of the Wellington region, and on producing premium and value-add products which are both sold locally and exported, including to the northern hemisphere.

With a reputation for quality and sustainable growing practices, Kapiti food producers are an important part of the local economy, with this industry segment creating 1,089 full time (or equivalent) jobs. Good local growing conditions and proximity to the Wellington market are two important factors in this industry's success. Capitalising on this base, innovative local producers have also developed a series of value added local products with unique points of difference, for example Kapiti broccoli with its additional nutrient value; and other produce with antioxidant health benefits. The 2031 market welcomes the Kapiti approach of "putting the goodness back into our fresh food"

While the bulk of produce is supplied locally, into the Wellington region, and throughout the lower North Island, innovative producers with entrepreneurial flair have also had some success in exporting premium products into the northern hemisphere in their winter (taking advantage of our summer weather and the improvement over the last two decades to New Zealand's 'clean green' image).

Primary production also supplies produce to local manufacturing industries, which value-add the product ensuring a higher sale price that was previously obtained from just selling raw product. The increased revenues from this value-add flow back into the Kapiti economy in the form of additional jobs, higher paying jobs, and returns for intellectual and marketing effort as well as production itself.

Thus while the number of jobs in the primary sector has increased since 2011, the flow-on effect to job creation in other industries has been marked. The manufacturing sector in particular

has benefitted. Several local companies have successfully developed and taken food and beverage products to national and international markets by both growing and manufacturing, and these are now household names throughout New Zealand at least.

Primary production also contributes to the District's tourism by reinforcing aspects of the Kapiti brand – sustainable, fresh, natural and of course 'life and style'. Co-ordination between different industries and the development of an over-arching 'Kapiti' brand benefitted primary production, which was able to also market itself successfully under the brand.

There are three particularly interesting developments that are worth mentioning. The first is in the 'functional foods' area and especially power development as the Kapiti and world economies move more towards a low-carbon structure. The second is in the mutually beneficial interplay between the Clean Technology Park in Otaki and local primary producers. And thirdly, the Kapiti organic producers have continued to go from success to success as this industry truly comes into its own. This sector could perhaps have grown more, but there were potential challenges with land availability during the 2010's and 2020's, and also a lack of infrastructure. Clear and effective local body planning restricted the 'sprawl' of the urban boundary to north Waikanae, and likewise lifestyle block development slowed when compared to previous decades, and higher value per hectare crops were put into the land that was available. Improved roads and Kapiti Airport helped access for both products and market development, and local body investment in infrastructure was also critical.

While much of the success has come from local entrepreneurs, it is worth noting that this sector benefitted from substantial international investment, permitting product development and marketing. This investment was often accompanied by immigration, particularly from South Africa.

Employment in the Primary sector (which includes agriculture

and services to agriculture) was trending slowly downwards in the 1990's and 2000's. However with the increased emphasis on providing local jobs by growing the economy during the 2010's and 2020's, this trend was reversed and this industry sector has seen robust job growth. Employment has increased in this sector from 522 full-time (or equivalent) jobs in 2009 to 634 today in 2031. The Kapiti population is very supportive of its Primary industry, benefitting not just with jobs and interesting career options, but also with high quality local produce brought quickly to market via either retail outlets or the bustling and popular local produce markets (refer Recreational Services sector). Being a 'food basket' (along with neighbouring Horowhenua) for the Wellington region, and being known for sustainable practices, both sit well with the Kapiti identity.



Manufacturing

Recognised nationally for excellence in bespoke manufacturing of products mostly associated with a better life for customers and with a strong environmental and sustainable focus, Kapiti manufacturing has benefited from the emergence in the District over the last 20 years or so, of “briny beach bums.”

While the larger national manufacturers and heavier industries have tended to stay away from the area, the rapid growth of niche and bespoke manufacturing with a focus on innovation, flexibility, sustainability, and collaboration; has been a success story for New Zealand.

The coalescing of the Kapiti community identity, most obviously represented by the Kapiti brand, has proven attractive to talented and innovative people and Kapiti has become something of a life style haven for such people. But life style does not come at the expense of business success, and Kapiti entrepreneurs have found a way to balance the two, and in the process created much good quality employment.

As in other sectors, the easy access to Wellington by road and rail and scheduled flights to nearby towns as well as the major cities, and of course Auckland – New Zealand's major international gateway; have all helped bring wealth and employment to Kapiti.

Particular mention needs to be made

of the role of the Clean Technology Centre in Otaki, which is now a busy commercial and research park and the centre of excellence for ‘clean tech’ development in New Zealand.

The Clean Tech Centre has been instrumental in putting Kapiti on the map and cementing our innovative, forward looking, life and style image. Inventors, researchers and entrepreneurs now come to Otaki from all around New Zealand and beyond, and are provided with a supportive and inspirational environment in which to develop their ideas into commercial products. Investment money has also come in from overseas and around New Zealand and foreign accents are heard in the Clean Tech Park every day.

While some ideas or products have been profitably sold overseas or outside of Kapiti to be a part of larger manufacturing processes, several have been transformed into successful locally manufactured niche products. Kapiti is supplying the world with niche innovative clean tech products, based on kiwi ingenuity and sound business practices. Strong local manufacturing clusters exist in food and beverage (often using products grown in the Kapiti and Horowhenua regions), fashion (Kapiti receiving many visitors who come here for a short excursion which includes shopping) and the arts.

The Arts and Crafts segment is also worth a special mention. Kapiti has a huge number of talented locals operating part-time and cottage based industries, but also a good number of more substantial businesses, including galleries, schools, as well as branded manufacturers. Together the Arts and Crafts sector is a substantial employer and generator of wealth for the region, as well as being a key part of the Kapiti identity, life style and brand. Refer also to the ‘Recreational Services’ and ‘Retail & Distribution’ sections.

Perhaps the biggest benefit for the community has come from the work between business and the schools, local polytechnic campus, and training providers. This is described in the ‘CrossCutting Themes’ section, however it was really the technology exposure in classrooms and practical local industry ‘taster’ programmes that helped to show Kapiti youth that they could do world-class things from Kapiti.

In 1994 the manufacturing sector in Kapiti employed 1,175 full-time (or equivalent) people, yet by 2009 this had reduced to 852, yet today in 2031 the latest figures show 2,867 employed in this sector; and further growth coming.

Surveys show that talent has been moving to live in Kapiti for the last few decades at least. However what is not as well understood beyond Kapiti is that many of the successful innovative products and manufacturing companies have been set up by young

locals; people who have grown up in the area and made the decision to stay here. Many of them are today only in their 20's or 30's and some would have been in nappies when the Clean Tech Centre was first gaining momentum around 2010. **But they have found in Kapiti the support and opportunities they need to be world class, at home.**



Construction

Recovering from the prolonged recession starting in 2007, initially due to local and central Government infrastructure spending, the Kapiti construction sector today designs and builds for its community's needs, and is a renowned centre for eco-friendly and sustainable construction. Kapiti's niche skills and designs have been exported right around the globe.

Kapiti is now a more enabling place for development than in the past due in the great part to the collaboration between business, construction, developers and the Council. A forum was set up which allowed a vision to be cast into the District Plan to give certainty to development allowing all Kapiti's stakeholders to see the future of this great place. The message that this sent was powerful; employers valued the certainty and began to see Kapiti as a serious option.

Some twenty years after this collaboration began in earnest, the results are apparent. Moving away from creating just more of the same old "estate-style" developments, there is now a more integrated village feel to the Kapiti Coast. This village feel is apparent even with further population growth and an increase in medium density housing around the town and village centres.

The growth of the commercial sector has contributed not just employment, but also to the Council's rates take – reducing the burden previously borne by residential ratepayers. This in turn has allowed the construction of recreational and social amenities including the extended swimming pool and a recreation centre (both these facilities now hold international events – refer Recreational Services sector).

As the development focus changed over time, so did the skill make-up of the construction sector; from mostly residential new builds to a more sustainable mix of light commercial, office, medium density residential and low density residential.

On the back of these changes, and given Kapiti's success in clean tech and sustainable 'life and style' innovations, Kapiti is now a construction centre for eco-friendly buildings both residential and smaller commercial. World renowned sustainable expertise is based in Kapiti and exported globally. Infrastructure work is being designed in Kapiti for projects worldwide.

As with all industry sectors in Kapiti, there are strong links from business into schools, and construction is no different, taking a substantial number of school leavers into their first jobs.

The number of people employed by this industry sector has remained constant in

recent years and slightly above the peaks reached in the mid-2000's. From 870 full time (or equivalent) jobs in 1994 climbing to a peak of 2059 in 2008, declining during the lean years, and then climbing back to a sustainable range of between 2,300 and 2,500 for much of the last decade.

The industry is proud of its contribution to the Kapiti community's vision of itself and is confidently moving towards a bright future.



Retail and Distribution

Starting in late 2011, conversations between business leaders and retail areas led over time to the semi-specialisation of the Kapiti 'villages' into complimentary and mutually supportive themed retail hubs. This largely avoided competition amongst retail areas and directly led to improved shopping options for locals and the re-emergence of Kapiti as a retail destination for Wellington region day-trippers.

The Coastlands 'shopping town', augmented by surrounding areas after the Expressway was completed and through traffic removed from local roads, has continued to be the district's primary retail centre, centred on a popular and busy mall with an increased range and number of shops from twenty years ago. The development of the adjacent Town Centre into a civic space with office accommodation, and the steady growth of business in the Kaitawa area, also brought increased foot traffic and the lunch and shopping trade for people who started commuting to Kapiti for employment.

Waikanae township has increased its vibrancy, acting as a local shopping centre, and also as an arts and music hub (refer Recreation Services sector).

Paraparaumu Beach has developed into an attractive beach-side destination acting as a local retail centre, but also with many restaurants, cafes and several boutique arts and fashion shops. It is perhaps best known for its extensive, bustling, pedestrian-friendly Saturday morning market, which attracts people from around the southern half of the North Island and even further afield. The market has expanded from its origins as a produce market and a variety of goods are now also sold, although it still retains its practical core and its role as an outlet and showcase for locally grown and produced foods.

Otaki township is a local retail service centre which is thriving in part due to the increased affluence of the town because of the arrival of jobs over the last two decades, and the development of the Clean Tech Park. Otaki has also retained and strengthened its brand-name and factory outlet shops and these are visited by

passers-by and as a destination.

Raumati Beach shops, besides serving the local residents with immediate needs, are a fashion and boutique shop centre with a unique 'village' flavour.

Accommodation providers have seen increasing patronage as the area has developed economically and as a destination. The emergence of premium accommodation has been particularly noteworthy, as has the development of a quality hotel within a short walk of the world class Paraparaumu Beach Golf Club.

Sitting astride the SH1 Expressway with easy access north and south, and with improved access to the Hutt valley because of Transmission Gully, Kapiti has recently been developing as a distribution hub for the lower north island. Most of this development has occurred in Otaki; however the Kapiti Airport in Paraparaumu has also enabled the development of distribution of niche goods to market, and the movement of people.

Particularly as the Kapiti brand has been defined and strengthened, the retail economic sector has benefitted substantially from 'tourism'. This comprises primarily day trips, short stay visits, and people visiting friends and relatives who live in Kapiti. While the majority of visitors are from surrounding regions within an easy drive, a substantial minority come from further afield. Kapiti has become a place to stop off whilst travelling around the North Island.

Aucklanders and Cantabrians view it as a getaway destination because of the air access. There is an increasing segment of visitors, many of them international, who are spending longer periods in Kapiti to explore more thoroughly what the district has to offer.

In addition to the natural features, wildlife and sporting events in the area which attract visitors in their own right (refer Recreation Services sector), the area has also become a top tier retail destination. The arts and crafts are a major drawcard, as is the strong Maori history and culture of the area. Visitors often come for premium retail experiences such as fashion, food (cafes and restaurants), personal services (such as day spas) as well as a general day out.

This sector is the largest in the Kapiti in 2031 with 5,714 full time (or equivalent) jobs compared to 3,469 in 2009.



Business Services

With no real shortage of talented people looking for work in Kapiti, the business service sector grew strongly supporting not just local needs, but also developing and exporting innovative niche services to national and international markets. The world has been changing rapidly over the last couple of decades, and Kapiti entrepreneurs are making a splash.

Continued globalisation of markets and an increasingly borderless quest for products and services to help the planet meet its changing needs – innovative solutions to pressures of population growth and the need for sustainability – have favoured Kapiti with its ability to attract and retain talent valuing its lifestyle.

Similarly, the development in Kapiti of niche services which can be delivered anywhere on the planet because of advances in Internet technology and communication have seen the 'gold coast' of the 1950's and 60's become the 'silicon coast' of the 2030's. We are home to a handful of such businesses with global names and which contribute significantly to the NZ economy.

Sitting at the north edge of the Wellington region, and not far from the population and industry centres of the Horowhenua, Manawatu and Whanganui regions, has also allowed Kapiti businesses to service other businesses in surrounding areas. While the most successful of these businesses do the majority of their work in Kapiti for their clients, when travel is needed the roading and air transport links are a major advantage. A service person from Kapiti can be onsite in the Hutt Valley to fix a client emergency very quickly.

Auckland is now only an hour away from Kapiti Airport, making it viable to go there and back in a day. Huge opportunities have opened up for the businesses in Kapiti and surrounding districts, because Auckland is nearly as accessible as Wellington.

This sector was also instrumental in developing two other New Zealand leading concepts. Kapiti is a leader with its "Youth Internship" scheme, helping to bridge the gap between school and employment by providing work experience to willing youths from willing employers. 75% of Kapiti school leavers can now be employed in the District and many of them find their first full-time employment through their internship. Another NZ leader is the role of retirees, many of whom have moved permanently into the area only in recent years, to invest money in promising local start-up, research and high growth phase businesses through investment vehicles set-up for this purpose.

While Business Services businesses are located around Kapiti in village centres, the main concentration and employment centre for this sector is in the Kapiti Airport Park and surrounding Kapiti Road and Te Roto Estate areas. The airport development in

particular has proven to be a sparkling success and well over 2,000 people are employed within its boundaries alone across several economic activity sectors.

Continuing its long steady increase over the last four decades and accelerating in recent years, this sector contributed 1,033 full-time (or equivalent) jobs in 1994; 1,924 by 2009, and now employs 3,815 people.

One more noteworthy point is the growing number of corporate and governmental 'back office' and support service centres now operating in Kapiti. With good transport links and communication, and because Kapiti is a desirable place to live with a talented and stable workforce without big city premises costs, several large organisations have shifted elements of their operations here. Many workers in this sector are long-term Kapiti residents, while others relocate here temporarily and help to keep Kapiti fresh by bringing outside perspectives into our community. They then take stories of the Kapiti innovation, openness and life-style onto their other global postings as they climb their corporate ladders, and **surveys have been showing that they rate Kapiti as one of the best places in the world for a posting.**



Recreational Services

For a district its size, Kapiti has an impressive recreational services sector. The arts, Maori culture and sports all boast well-utilised facilities and the many protected marine, nature and conservation areas in the region provide valued leisure opportunities for residents and visitors of all ages.

In particular, established attractions such as Kapiti Island and its marine reserve, Paraparaumu Beach Golf Club, Queen Elizabeth Park, Tararua Forest Park and Southward Car Museum have benefitted from investment. They are connected by effective transport, supported by quality services and have benefitted from the application of world class design in their development.

Waikanae township has become a destination hub for arts and chamber music, also attracting strong local support. While other quality galleries exist, the Mahara Gallery has become a national attraction. Likewise, the Waikanae Music Society auditorium (completed in 2020) has become a built-for-purpose sizeable venue for some of the world's leading Chamber musicians.

The Coastlands Aquatic Centre was completed and extended during the 2010's and now attracts national competitions as well as being a valued community asset and helping a generation of Kapiti children learn to swim. A major recreation centre was completed in the mid 2020's and this now hosts a variety of sporting codes and clubs, as well as being available for community uses and events (the later in tandem with the upgraded Southwards facility).

Development of facilities and connections has also resulted in Kapiti being a centre for niche national events which play to our natural and environmental strengths. These include marathons, half-marathons, cycle races and triathlons. Otaki and Otaki Gorge have become popular destinations for kayaking and adventure activities, and the Otaki race Course has flourished.

Kapiti Airport now delivers recreational golfers, trampers, bowlers, croquet teams and the like from all over NZ staying in our quality accommodation hotel / motels. The airport also delivers community interest groups to the coast (for example; camellia society, bridge clubs, conferences and tournaments).

The Council continues to supply and maintain a popular system of sports fields, play grounds and general parks and reserves.

The development of the 'Kapiti coastal route as a tourist bypass, and the extension of the Paraparaumu board walk and cycleway right along the coast both contributed to the numbers of people dropping off State Highway 1 to take time and enjoy Kapiti. There has been consequent growth in arts and craft industries, craft breweries and wines, all marketed under the 'Kapiti Kraft Experiences' brand. Locals enjoy these attractions as well.

In addition to its retail offerings, manufacturing and Clean Technology Centre, Otaki is now a cultural hub with Te Wananga o Raukawa and The Pipi Trail at its heart.

Our vibrant regional brand and proximity to Wellington have enhanced our attractiveness as a sustainable and contemporary holiday destination resulting in visitors spending both time and money in Kapiti. Now a top tier destination, we showcase our region and its products to Wellingtonians as well as other New Zealanders and

international visitors with a strong 'sense of place'.

Based on our renowned beaches, rivers, mountains, gardens, arts and Maori culture; we have created some iconic annual events that attract both residents and visitors throughout the year.

The pier at Paraparaumu Beach is busy with children fishing, fishing charters departing and people waiting for the Kapiti Island ferry. Locals and international visitors look on, relaxing with a glass of award winning local wine, some from their sea view apartment balconies, having just attended the NZ Open at the Paraparaumu Beach Links Golf Course.

Our recreational services and visitor economy work in partnership with agriculture, horticulture, retail, hospitality, aged care and clean technology. Our recreation and visitor related businesses are productive, creating value-added local experiences that command a premium and are sustainable. We benefit from making training, employment and careers available locally and are able to pay above-minimum wages.

The sector now employs 1,540 full-time (or equivalent) people, compared to 793 in 2009. It has benefited considerably from the growth of the Kapiti economy and the money that this made available in the District.



Social Services

Kapiti is still seen as a major retirement destination and has benefited from central Government agencies relocating here and the growth of the health industry. The area is known for its success in the joining-up of local employment opportunities with the schools and other training and education providers.

Young people coming through school are exposed to a wide variety of local employment possibilities generated by the overall health of the Kapiti economy, and have good options to work locally if they pursue appropriate courses of study and work well.

The partnership between the community, business, local government and education and training providers which was developed in the 2010's has been key in achieving this result. Not all school leavers want to, or should, work locally, but having the option to do so is viewed by many as being a great advantage to bringing up children in Kapiti.

Another facet of the Kapiti community is the move towards wider participation in youth issues. Particularly good working examples of this are in the structured mentoring of young people by elderly, more and better sports facilities as the economy strengthened and money became more available to do such things, and especially the better visibility of vocational options at an earlier stage.

Tertiary education and vocational training providers have flourished and account for most of the job growth in this sub-sector; aside from the teachers and staff employed by the new college in Waikanae.

Kapiti has also seen substantial growth in employment in health services. This was due to a need to service Kapiti's still growing population, and especially as the Wellington region recognised that Kapiti was a destination for retirees and that health services should be located closer to these people thus reducing the need and expense of travel. The icing on the cake for the Kapiti community was the arrival of a private convalescing hospital in the early 2020's, which significantly increased career options for locals.

Likewise the government sector has also seen job growth. This is not due to local government growth (which only increased in proportion to the increase in population) but more to the relocation of several central and local government functions from Wellington, reducing costs and freeing the Wellington CBD for business growth. While many factors contributed to these governmental decisions, one factor which was known to tip the balance in favour of Kapiti was the excellent commuter facilities (Expressway and rail) which up until the mid-2010's were only used to 50% capacity - taking people to the city and back. Early commuters to Kapiti found the empty carriages and roads to be a pleasant contrast, and so 'commuting up the coast' caught on. Most of these governmental buildings are located within walking distance of Kapiti rail stations.

Kapiti has long been a destination for retirees looking for a pleasant climate and attractive environment whilst maintaining proximity to the Wellington region and neighbouring regions to the north. As New Zealand's population continued to age, this trend increased.

New retirement villages created construction work, direct employment and demand for a variety of other things impacting on all sectors of the economy – examples being health services, companion services, transport,

entertainment and stimulation, and tourism through visitors. An increasing number of elderly people are remaining active and seeking volunteer work or employment in some form or other and thus have contributed their skills to the Kapiti community and their endeavours to the Kapiti economy.

New retirement village models were created to cater for those retiring without the financial backing of their own property ownership. These filled a large need in New Zealand and this is still another area in which Kapiti is a national leader.

This sector of the economy has grown from 2,905 full-time (or equivalent) jobs in 2009 to 4,295 today in 2031. Most of this growth has come from the relocation of governmental functions and the growth in the retirement and health industries.

Kapiti has a clear focus on health, well-being, lifestyle and the environment, and has the economy needed to support this.



Participants



Participants

Participants

Introductory speakers

Asha Gajadhar Kapiti Youth Council
Gus van de Roer Marketing Guru

Primary workgroup

Jim Edwards World Veterinary Consultants
Stuart Pritchard Clean Technology Park
Kate Gibbs Stanmore Farms
Barry Clevely Ohau Gravels
Andrew Yung AW Yung

Manufacturing workgroup

Steven Finlay Grow Wellington
Brian Sharpe Infinergy
Angela Buswell Minx Shoes
John Yeoman Electra

Construction workgroup

Paul Turner Landlink
Guy Forrest Aurecon
Mike Welch Firmaterra Holdings
Chris Stone Stones Group
John Page Pritchard Group
Lynette Slee Vista del Sol

Retail and Distribution workgroup

Richard Mansell Coastlands
Ross Leggett Electra
Trudi Uttinger Centreport
Vince Indoe Mitre 10 Mega
James Cootes Kiss and Bake Up

Social Services workgroup

Jeremy Neeve Youth Quest
Damien Banks Whitireia Polytechnic
Eddie Bisdee Kapiti Skills Centre
Joanna Piatek Captured by Friday

Participants (cont')

Business Services workgroup

Jane Stevenson Kapiti Law
Andy Prow Aura Information Security
Sarah McMurray Get the Best Computer Support
Diane Prow Aura Information Security
Stephen Chubb Breadon McCardle Chubb
Simone Vasta Tuatara Brewing

Recreational Services workgroup

Chris Barber Nature Coast Enterprise
Bruce Benseman Nga Manu Nature Reserve
Fiona Luhrs Luhrs & Co
Corran Crispe Beach FM
Mike Slee Vista del Sol
Jack Rikihana

Project manager, workshop facilitator, Vision booklet author

Mark Tement G5 NZ

Project sponsor

Stuart Pritchard Kapiti Action Group

Vintage Kapiti 2031

Gus van de Roer Marketing Guru

Written thoughts for workgroups

Wendy Huston Kapiti Retirement Trust
Noel Robinson Kapiti Airport Business Park
Guy Weaver

There were a number of other people who were unable to attend the workshop, but who nevertheless expressed their support and enthusiasm for this project.

Participants Personal Comments

Workshop Attendees personal visions:

Each workshop attendee was invited to submit a short personal vision or statement for the economic future of Kapiti in 2031.

These represent the personal views of the individuals. Their company or entity name is given purely to help readers understand their context and any views expressed are not necessarily those of the company or entity.

Mark Ternent

It's a mid-December day in 2031 and I am on Paraparaumu Beach at sunrise, walking and taking in the beauty and peace around me as I have been doing for decades. I enjoy the uninterrupted views up and down the beach, across to our island, as well as up towards the hills. There's no noise but the gentle sound of the waves lapping against the shore, and just the fresh smell of the sea, and a faint hint of sand about to be warned by the sun's rays. It's going to be a cracker of a Kapiti day.

My children are not far away, and my grandchildren too – a never ending source of delight for me. I am so happy that they have chosen to live in Kapiti so I can enjoy being here even more.

Like many others, my children work locally and are proud of what they do. They are now in their early thirties and have travelled and seen some of the world; they have easy access to Wellington and Auckland and friends in both those places, yet they enjoy living and working in Kapiti. Their work is world leading and they know that they are contributing towards a cleaner more sustainable planet. Kapiti is well known for this.

Like me, they are proud of what we have achieved in Kapiti and its global leadership in achieving what many other communities are aspiring to – an inclusive and supportive community with a successful balance of work, life and play.

Stuart Pritchard

I have lived in the region most of my life. We have a fantastic temperate climate with an excellent range of soil types to suit our needs, good average rainfall, plus a stunning river that feeds our region to supply good water. We need to have a vision and set framework, pathways and growth for all our infrastructure to ensure we continue to create growth for our children/ youth.

New Technology is the way of the future - Clean Technology Centre NZ at Otaki will deliver great advances in products and services, innovation and value adding to bring large employment opportunities to the region and NZ. Being innovative to be sustainable today will set structures in place for tomorrow resulting in a very low carbon footprint. This will ensure the future development of our region and includes producing our own food, self sustainability with smart grid energy. We must go out and gather together the opportunities for tomorrow while enhancing our environment.

Our council must be commerce friendly and assist the development if we are to create growth (no growth, no jobs) – we need to be more than a coastal service town. We have great resources and people, we just need to act now, move together and go forward.

Our Mission Statement "Create an overall vision - Strategic plan for Commercial to excel and sustainable development growth. Caring for our environment, employment for our youth and people in our region for tomorrow, and create wealth and harmony to KCDC area.

"We won't succeed if we don't try – back the People, not ship them out of our region and overseas, just get on with it - never ventured never gained. [Quote John Todd]

Participants Personal Comments

Sir Noel Robinson

Well its 2031 and we've got the most beautiful sunset over Kapiti Island and I can see the last of the boats coming back with tourists after spending a fantastic day on the island.

What a huge positive change there has been on the Kapiti Coast – it really started 20 years ago when a new economic vision was to promote Kapiti as a Region. Now when everybody lands at Wellington or even Auckland they say we must go to the Kapiti Coast to walk the beautiful beaches, to go out to Kapiti Island, do business in one of New Zealand's most vibrant business communities, visit the amazing parklands such as Queen Elizabeth Park and play golf at one of the highest rated golf courses in the world - Paraparaumu Beach Golf Club - and on top of that it is the most fantastic place to live and work.

Kapiti has become the fastest growing area in New Zealand, and has a vibrant community that provides a unique lifestyle where community values are so important have continued and this has been achieved by:

- having a Council with vision to really push economic growth taking into account the unique natural environment of the Kapiti Coast and the special lifestyles that exist;
- getting the infrastructure right with rail links, the best Regional Airport in New Zealand and having good connections to Wellington CBD through the Sand Dunes Expressway and Transmission Gully;
- having a well educated workforce to fill all the new jobs that have been created on the Coast;
- and one of the most amazing things is that the traffic flow has changed as more people are driving to the Kapiti Coast to get a job rather than driving to Wellington as in the past;
- having a Council that understands economic growth, listens to business and the community to achieve this in a positive way for the benefit of all the people in the region.

Must go now – I'm off crab fishing!

Participants Personal Comments

Asha Gajadhar (Guest Speaker)

Communities can create supportive and enriching environments for young people, lead them to positive outcomes and reduce negative ones. Every community has the capacity to raise its own young people and create an environment rich with support for children to grow into successful young adults.

Young people need to be included and engaged in a wide social environment, from family and peers, to education, employment and community.

Our young people need opportunities to use their assets, strengths and skills by participating in and taking leadership of community activities and also through employment opportunities. Our community as a whole needs to focus on building the skills of our young people so that they feel empowered and independent rather than depending on others. Our young people have under utilised skills that are just waiting to be harnessed and used. Young people grow in roles of responsibility and we, as a community need to give them opportunities to learn and contribute. We need to encourage our young people to participate in planning and running key activities in our community and provide long-term programmes to mentor young talent so that our best and brightest remain in the district. We need to work hard now to create an agenda for change and transformation in our local economy and change the perception of Kapiti to one that offers an attractive business environment, makes it easy for businesses to set up and operate and fosters and supports creativity and innovation.

Kapiti needs to be more supportive of local business and make it easier for businesses to both start up and operate. It is these businesses that make up the local economy, employ the local community and bring new money into the district. Local businesses are at the heart of Kapiti and offer opportunities for our young people so that they do not have to leave the district to find work. In order for our economy to flourish engagement with young people is key; there needs to be greater focus on building a community that inspires young people to act positively and offers opportunities for young people to connect with local businesses. Local businesses need to recognise that our young people will be the future employers, business owners, entrepreneurs, public servants, and teachers of our next generation. It is these young people who are the future of Kapiti.

In 2010 the Kapiti Coast Youth Council undertook a survey of 10% of the youth population; from this survey the Youth Council created an Action Plan to address the needs of young people in the district. The Youth Action Plan is made up of five goals and provides a robust and practical plan forward for young people now and in the future living on the Kapiti Coast. It is all about youth vision and youth voice and shows the Council Youth Council and the Kapiti Coast District Councils commitment on action for youth.

Gus van de Roer (Guest Speaker)

2031 will be a year whereby people will recognise Kapiti as a unique area where innovation and **lifestyle** have come together to form an incubator for new ideas and concepts to create growth for business and the region alike.

A **dynamic**, stimulating and independent economy will therefore go hand in hand with a caring and lifestyle orientated society, reflecting the region's unique strengths and characteristic;

Dynamic, because the region will grow its economy in very specific and characteristic areas that will benefit all constituents.

Caring, because it will do that to enhance the region on human and lifestyle orientated values, promoting its core themes:

'**We're Real** – we do not pretend to be another region'

'**We're Different** – we have a unique sense of place'

'**We're Vibrant** – we use our energy for the right purposes'

'**We're Vital** – our efforts are as essential as the region itself'

'**We're Inclusive** – our only boundaries are those of the region'

These core themes will come together to create an appealing, sustainable and stimulating environment that will attract businesses and individuals to make the region stand out for the right and most appropriate reasons.

Participants Personal Comments

Steven Finlay

Mark Petersen, CEO of Global R&D for Google Energy Ltd boards the plane from his LA base heading directly for Kapiti Landing.

The innovation quality of the tech-ware that could be embedded and rolled out across all global wireless home energy grids comes from a syndicate of technology start-ups coming from the Clean Technology Centre NZ, and he has to check it out personally.

As he approaches, the images of the sparkling island of Kapiti are even more stunning than the 3D conference views he's seen online. As he lands, an all-electric solar clean tech express shuttle collects him from the airport and quietly whisks him the 7 minute journey to the heart of the Clean Technology Park on the new highway with its electric charging lane. He passes Weltec University of Technology with IBM's sponsorship brand proudly visible, seeing the Pacific style eco-village provide sustainable energy to all park users. The latest Honours grads are demonstrating to the local college students how the technology wirelessly controls all the power needs of the local community from their Ipad airbooks. The deal goes smoothly, and by way of celebration the Iwi Commercialisation Kaumatua offer to take Mark across to Kapiti Island, visiting the eco-lodge which uses low impact tidal energy to show the evening performance of Te Rauparaha's story to the waiting Japanese tourists who are also learning to marinade Kahawai in lemon that they have caught while snorkelling that day.

As he leaves, his last glimpse is of the beautiful beach, where families are playing by the shoreline. His lasting impression is of somewhere very unique, as he turns and heads back to the pollution and population laden US. He now thinks the offer of relocation is looking a real possibility, reflecting on the sense of relaxation and self-assurance he perceived from all around, one which is sadly missing on the faces of his own stressed senior management team.

Bruce Benseman

The Kapiti region remains a place of reflection! All of us who live on the Kapiti Coast can reflect back on their decision to live here and be happy that they made the right choice. Open spaces, the hills, rivers, parks, marine and coastal areas, urban areas and decent transport streams all manage to enhance the natural elements of the region.

To quote Fred Dagg – We don't know how lucky we are mate!

Barry Clevely

Kapiti recognised it had a very real opportunity and made a steady transformation into a vibrant economy which complements our amazing natural amenities. A superb coastline, climate and globally identifiable image in the iconic Kapiti Island are a unique combination in the lower North Island.

Progress that retained the balance of the various interest groups, in my opinion, depended on the acceptance that innovative development is critical to provide the amenities and employment vital to today's vibrant economy in 2031.

The Civic leaders in our community encouraged the expenditure of private development capital by supporting visually attractive yet functional developments.

It is perhaps understandable that some residents feared the inevitable change. My observation is that by bureaucracy requiring high standards that could be completed in a timely and cost effective manner, such fears were proved groundless. The combination of improved rail transport, roading and air facilities attracted new residents but even more importantly helped retain our children and friends in our district and further strengthen cultural, sporting and economic activities.

Recognising the attraction of Kapiti to so many of our retired population, the establishment of user friendly facilities that did not impost on the rating structure was important.

Business has shown it can coexist with all ages and sectors of our community. In fact it is essential as it is business that not only creates employment but provides the necessary services needed by our 2031 community.

Participants Personal Comments

Paul Turner

Kapiti has grown to be a region that operates as a group of connected communities, designed and built to international best practice standards and to respect and build on the special natural, historical and cultural character of this place. A place where residents and visitors enjoy the natural environment, safe, clean, caring, healthy, sustainable and accessible neighbourhoods, with a wide variety of lifestyle and housing options and ample cultural and recreational opportunities. The built environment reflects the connected-village concept, the rural production sector produces premium niche produce, industry is world renowned for innovative clean-tech manufacturing, business is vibrant because of a positive proactive culture and there are ample employment opportunities for all ages.

Kapiti, as a 'community of opportunity', encourages business growth and transition, entrepreneurial spirit and innovation, strong leadership, efficient business-friendly local and regional Councils, personal growth and civic pride, all because of the vision that was displayed twenty years ago.

I am delighted to say that as urban designers, my business has been able to play a part in working with landowners, business owners and the community to forge such a neat place over the last two decades.

Those words – 'a neat place' - really define the character that is Kapiti nowadays. It is a phrase that shows that a place is more than just the buildings, hills and streams – it's the people that make a neighbourhood, village and region thrive and grow and be proud of itself.

Richard Mansell

In 2031 Kapiti has combined the best of the old "lifestyle" Kapiti with elements of a new "smart" Kapiti.

My children, who had moved away for education and later on employment, have recently returned to live in the area with their families as I did thirty years ago. They recognised that the small town lifestyle and friendliness was still there but the opportunities for themselves and their own children were now on par with the major centres.

The jobs they left the district for have now relocated to Kapiti and they know that their children will have a greater chance of finding meaningful employment in one of the many smart industries that have opened in the area.

Quality education providers and advanced education providers now use state of the art technology to provide educational opportunities that were not available when they were forced to leave the district.

The first rate and abundant sports and cultural facilities provided by the council have been embraced by the large volunteer network of retirees who willing give their time and the specialist knowledge back to the community they live in. Because of this there is a vast range of activities for themselves and their children to be involved in.

Transport solutions, which had for so long been poor and had created barriers to them moving within and to and from the district, have now been solved. The rail/bus networks enable them to move with ease and safety within the district and the airport provides a fast link to the outside world.

Kapiti has become a great district to LIVE, WORK and PLAY.

Guy Forrest

Kapiti in 2031 is now a city that has developed from a series of interconnected villages into a cohesive community of 60,000 people of all ages, and ethnicity creating a vibrant society which supports both the local and the regional economy.

The airport has developed into a distribution hub supplied by regional transport links via the Wellington Northern Corridor. There has been an expansion of the "clean environmental" industries which is perceived as a national icon that is recognised worldwide similar to the way Silicon Valley is viewed in the world.

The labour force, the majority of which previously travelled to Wellington for employment, now has a thriving local working environment which has reduced the burden on the transport network. Infrastructure is now resilient and robust with the recent completion of the storage dam in the hills. This has given certainty to commercial and residential development providing greater development potential.

The expansion in the commercial area and residential area has created a greater financial viability to the Kapiti Coast City which has financed more recreational and social amenities. The aquatic centre has been expended with a fully international competition size pool; the recreation stadium has held international netball tests and the new hospital provides first class medical services.

The last twenty years has seen a greater community involvement that has focused on how to create a thriving community that meets the aspirations of all stakeholders, being Council, the business community, social services, and regional and central government. Kapiti Coast City is seen as an exciting place to visit and an enabling place for work and development opportunities.

Participants Personal Comments

Jane Stevenson

If I was to ask myself every five years whether I anticipated the changes in my life over that five year period, five years ago, the answer would be hell no, because it is amazing how much life changes in five years. This is equally applicable to community changes and the rate of progress seen in commerce and hence 20 years ago this business community took the bull by the horns and mapped out our collective vision for 2031.

I already knew Kapiti was a great place to live and I wanted it to also be a great place to work with expansive employment opportunities and a great place to establish and run a strong business. I co-owned a solid business back then, but that did not stop me seeing the future growth opportunities for my business and the opportunity to create the environment for others seeking to bring business to the top of the agenda for our fantastic region.

Connectivity was key in this. We needed and have achieved technology advances with high speed internet and region wide coverage and sustainable transport options in, out and around the region. Equally key has been the buy-in of people across the region, in particular our business community to lead and drive this change. Now the community as a whole has adopted our "Kapiti brand", encompassing all the diverse parts of our region from our retirement industry through to our arts and crafts and locally produced fine foods and beverages and they are all proud of what "Kapiti" is. With the community behind our region supporting our local businesses and those businesses enabling so many of us to both live and work here, it is become so easy to promote our clean, green image to the rest of New Zealand and to our international visitors.

Bring on the next 20 years.

Sarah McMurray

It is 2031 the thriving Kapiti/Horowhenua community is making prudent use of our strip of fertile land between the Tararuas and the Tasman.

We are strongly connected to the wider world yet resilient and self-sufficient.

Everyone understands David Suzuki's petri dish analogy and appreciates that we don't have another planet to go to, we're on a deadline to learn to thrive together and if we don't, many of our grandchildren or great-grandchildren will die young and nastily. We are part of the global solution.

Everyone in the district feels valued, responsible and a contributing part of the community regardless of age, gender/sexual orientation, family background, or the particular work or learning they're doing.

We are able to help Wellington in an earthquake. We are working out what to do as the sea rises, ready to deal with any local quakes with associated tsunami, and ready to take advantage if another big quake like the 1855 one causes further uplift.

We are a district in which "world's best practice" is taken as our norm in all the key determinants of a healthy vibrant community: Land Use; Water Use; Food Supply; River and Ground-water protection (including avoidance of soil salination and ground subsidence); Coastal Fisheries and Recreation; Air quality; Housing; Transport (many people walk or cycle to work; local roads are safe efficient and pleasant; we connect quickly to SH1 and fly for business & pleasure from Kapiti Airport); Education, Training and Work (strong interplay between schools/techs/Runanga and employers); Decision-making; Entrepreneurship, Risktaking and Responsibility.

Participants Personal Comments

Diane Prow

As the unwanted traffic thunders by, the Kapiti Scenic Road is clear for you to unperturbedly absorb the wonders that the Kapiti Coast and its climate has to offer. Both residents and visitors from near and far can take this leisurely drive from Paekakariki to Otaki taking in each area's individual character.

The area flourishes from the new road system which brings business in and gives back the towns along its route a main artery to access the wider region. The new pool and all the surrounding sports facilities make it the ideal place to host major sporting events. With good fresh water from the new dams the rivers flourish and the wild life is plentiful. Clean beaches and parklands all promote the clean green kiwi attitude that we all embrace with the new green initiatives that are being encouraged up and down our beautiful Kapiti Coast. The region is prospering from the new fibre link and better cell phone coverage, which draws in not only New Zealand companies but also a large number of international businesses looking to relocate to a region that offers facilities for families both young and old alike.

Tourists and day trippers come to browse the array of boutique shops, check out the outlet centres, and sample the local beers, wines and other locally grown produce. Kids play on the golden sandy beaches whilst grandparents stroll along the seafront or simply sit, watching the world go by at a little café in the sun.

Jim Edwards

I'm enjoying my twilight years here on the World famous Kapiti Coast.

While there are many more people living here now, compared to when I was a teenager visiting the Coast in the 60s, Kapiti is a great place to live. We got our sense of community back once all the traffic passing through was isolated on to the expressway. The local roads are no longer congested and they are safer, so getting around is easy and convenient. We have a good train service to Wellington and Palmerston North and a busy airport. A regular flow of tourists drop in to enjoy all the activities and relaxation that is on offer from the hills to the sea and out to Kapiti Island. Yachting has become popular since the marina and pier were built."

Businesses are thriving in Kapiti. We have the New Zealand "Silicon Valley" with the high technology businesses that have become established here. Our niche products from the local land based industries are known throughout the country and in many overseas markets.

The local secondary and tertiary education is preparing our students to find employment here and we lead the country with the lowest unemployment of young people. Those that go away to university are returning with the skills and expertise, to live and work here, because of the Kapiti lifestyle and its strong economy. Kapiti is looking good and we are ready to pass it on to the next generation.

Stephen Chubb

The Kapiti economy in 2031 is an economy based on knowledge and innovation. The importance of the "Kapiti" brand has been recognized, and economic development that is consistent with the brand and lifestyle oriented values is encouraged and supported.

A significant portion of the local economic output is derived from businesses that innovate and export knowledge rather than widgets or products for mass consumption.

By 2031 business hubs have been created by private investors/entrepreneurs that provide affordable and flexible commercial premises to encourage the development of innovative technology businesses, and as a consequence clusters of such companies have developed. The Council is recognized for its visionary leadership in providing incentives to commercial property owners through rating holidays during the development phase, and its encouragement (through its business partner the Kapiti Chamber of Commerce) of the development of small innovative businesses by providing business support services, training, networking and joint promotion/development opportunities.

The primary production sector of the local economy is focused on producing artisan, heritage, clean and sustainable products. Sustainable and environmentally friendly production methods have been adopted by the best producers, supported by funding initiatives from local and regional authorities.

Local businesses have formed alliances to jointly promote their products and services locally, nationally and globally, targeting consumers who value carefully crafted products and services from the renowned Kapiti Coast.

Participants Personal Comments

Ross Leggett

I live in an eco-friendly development in Waikanae and our twins are at the local Nga Manu College. It has a great reputation and caters well for the growth reinforced by the Kapiti Expressway and Transmission Gully to the South. I use my electric car to travel by expressway to Cleantech in Otaki. There my business designs and manufactures specialised technical equipment that is exported to Australia and Europe. I often travel to my customers overseas and getting in and out is easy with the Kapiti Coast Airport nearby. My company has won prizes for environmental responsibility and I am proud that staff are so active in their local community groups up and down the Kapiti Coast.

My wife and I came to Kapiti from Europe 15 years ago because of its reputation for a natural and friendly lifestyle and for being extremely pro-business. I am also an avid music and art lover and have been overwhelmed by the activity and facilities in Kapiti. The two Art Galleries are fantastic and the acoustics in our Theatre are superb. We have a wonderful life here with easy access north and south if we need it and local facilities that are second to none. I know our children will appreciate the opportunity to work and continue to live here as well.

When we moved to Kapiti I was impressed by the assistance from the Council and the Chamber of Commerce / Economic Development Agency. Over that time I have helped grow a cluster of 3 companies that complement my own business. Together we employ around 65 specialised staff with salaries well above the national average and a can boast a combined export revenue of over \$20 million. In fact, as part of a combined Council and Chamber of Commerce venture I am about to lead 30 Kapiti business people to Europe for the third time to showcase brand Kapiti.

Chris Barber

Looking back from 2031 to 2011 leaves me feeling quick proud.

2011 was a huge year starting with the devastating Christchurch Earthquake, transcending the mammoth Ruby World Cup and concluding with the return of the National-led government, albeit in a hugely uncertain global economy.

The Tourism industry has gone from strength to strength, and continues to be sector that contributes hugely to the New Zealand economy. In 2011 we looked back 20 years and saw the raise of New Zealand's adventure tourism offer supported by the introduction in the 1990's of the 100% Pure New Zealand brand. Kiwi Experience, the popularity of budget campervans and the famous Queenstown Bungy jumping all helped build our profile. Now, 20 years on, we have all got a wee bit older and maybe wiser. More people now are heading for the luxury self-drive options and the South Islands spectacular chair lifts with the awe-inspiring views are proving more popular the Bungy Jumping and Jet Boating combined. The Kapiti Coast continues to be special, thanks to a community that always looks out for itself. Paraparaumu Beach is now a major economic driver with the new pier cementing the relationship with all have with our people, our land and our most famous treasure, Kapiti Island.

Way Forward



This document is merely a start to the thinking and discussions that need to occur for Kapiti to envision and move towards a bright economic future that contributes to the overall health, wealth and general well-being of our community. Unlike larger regions, Kapiti cannot afford a huge effort to develop its economy, and neither do we at this stage wish to pay large sums to outside consultants to give us long reports. The next steps are thus home grown and relatively simple, and should be designed to:

- Continue to generate discussion in the business and wider community, building and refining a commonly held vision for an economic future and the benefits it will bring.
- Continue developing leadership and increased momentum towards achieving that future.
- Put in place specific initiatives to build on the strengths and opportunities we have, creating in Kapiti the seeds for economic development and a supportive environment for business success.

Some specific recommendations are:

- **Buy-In** - Wider participation workshops to build the economic vision and an awareness of the importance of a sound and varied economy to the community. These workshops should also focus on developing and implementing specific initiatives towards economic development.
- **Guiding Body** - The creation of a guiding body bringing together key stakeholders to oversee, drive and co-ordinate the economic development of Kapiti. No one current organisation or group can 'own' economic development:
 - o Council has an important role in creating an environment in which business can thrive and also has resources which can be put towards economic and business development contributing to the development. But Council's core strengths are not in 'business' nor economic development and it cannot create business success.
 - o The business sector collectively understand what needs to be done and has the ability to create a sound economic future through innovation, work and reward, but even with its representative bodies lacks the resources and ability to do this by itself.
 - o Note: this 'guiding body' does not necessarily need to be an independent entity with staff and overheads; it could just be a pan-organisation governance group. But it must have wide support

Way Forward

and the mandate to develop plans and priorities, and the ability to allocate resources.

- **Strategy** - The development and deployment of a simple and practical strategic plan to identify key changes needed in order for economic development to occur. This strategy should be based on research of the common factors in successful economic developments around the world, and adapted for Kapiti. Such a home-grown plan already exists in the Nature Coast Enterprise 'Business Growth Strategy' and this plan should be adopted initially and until it is superseded by something better and with a wider focus, as experience is gained. The plan needs clear goals, milestones, actions assigned, and to be used as a means of keeping action on track.

- **Council spending** - Council economic development resources and spending should be focused into getting results in the areas identified as most critical in the economic development strategy. This means into initiatives that directly contribute to building an enduring competitive advantage for the Kapiti economy. We need to invest most in building the base for a sustainable and successful economic future. We need to invest the least in spending on supporting current day activities that do not create on-going advantage.

- **Next Steps** - Early initiatives which need continuing or putting into place in the next 3-5 years include but are not limited to:

- o **Roadblock removal** – continuing Council's work to remove the current regulatory and consenting dis-incentives to businesses coming to Kapiti, or developing here.

- o **Business leadership forum** – an annual forum of business and community leaders to address specific issues, find solutions, and generally progress the economic development strategy.

- o **Links to Youth and Education** – the creation of an annual business expo or other activity in Kapiti schools as an early step to ensure youth are aware of local employment options, and what subjects they should take in order to be most likely to find local employment or entrepreneurship.

- o **Make Kapiti an option** – develop initiatives and material which make Kapiti an easy option for businesses to consider, and which showcase our district. This to include a website describing Kapiti and what it has to offer business and employers.

- o **Infrastructure** – continue with water project and acquiring land for a dam. Continue to maintain and upgrade roads and other infrastructure.

- o **Back the business parks** – continue and increase backing and marketing for the two business parks – Kapiti Landing and the CleanTech Park.

- o **Continue development of a 'business friendly' Council**

- o **Develop the Kapiti brand** – and encourage all marketing to be under this one banner.



Acknowledgements

Kapiti Action Group

An informal group formed in 2011 with the mission of "contributing to wealth and harmony in the Kapiti area through the creation of an overall strategic plan allowing the Kapiti commercial sector to excel; whilst achieving sustainable development, caring for our environment, and creating jobs and opportunities for our youth and people for tomorrow."

Members: Stuart Pritchard (convener), Bryce Holmes, Wendy Huston, Guy Forrest, Guy Weaver, Mike Olsen, Jack Rikihana, John Yeoman, Mark Edgar, Mike Welch, Paul Turner, Chris Stone, Mark Tement.

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