



Auckland's rise

As New Zealand's largest metropolis braces for unprecedented growth, the race is on to transform the city and its infrastructure into a liveable, sustainable urban paradise.

BY SASHA BORISSENKO

Coined as the world's fastest-growing city, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland is expected to house 40 per cent of the country's population in the next 20 years. It begs the question, are the city's policymakers, innovators, educators, and leaders ready to meet the need?

Last year, New Zealand's population grew by 2.8 per cent, 2.4 per cent higher than any other country in the OECD. According to Massey University Distinguished Professor and leading demographer Paul Spoonley, Auckland is at the precipice of this trend, boasting a growth rate of 2.8 per cent,

making it the fastest-growing city in the world.

"Over the coming decades, Auckland will be the recipient of about 50 per cent of Aotearoa New Zealand's population growth, largely because when we have high inward migration, between 50 and 60 per cent of immigrants settle in Auckland." If these trends continue, 40 per cent of New Zealanders will reside in our largest city in the next two decades.

Then there's Auckland's striking increase in cultural diversity. In 2016, for example, the International Organization for Migration named Auckland as the fourth most diverse city in the world, behind Toronto.

Combining his research and StatsNZ projections, Professor Spoonley says Auckland's Asian community is expected to increase from 17 per cent in 2018 to 44 per cent in the early 2040s.

Massey University's student population echoes these figures; nearly a third of the university's students identify as Asian, 12 per cent are Māori, and 6.5 per cent are Pacific students. Interestingly, although migration rates have increased, fertility rates have dropped overall. The birth rate per woman is now at 1.53 – a replacement rate requires 2.1 births per woman.

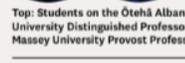
Pointing to Ministry of Education data, Professor Spoonley says there will be 30,000 fewer children in the New Zealand education system in the next 12 years. However, Auckland's inward immigration and younger age profile mean the city will need to accommodate 100,000 youths in the next decades.

"The education sector will need to expand, but it will also have to become more inclusive given the super-diversity of younger New Zealanders."

Students, staff and community expectations of the role and purpose of universities have shifted dramatically in the wake of COVID-19. Demographic shifts, geopolitical instability, changing workplace expectations and student



Top: Students on the Ōtēhā Albany campus. Above left: Massey University Distinguished Professor Paul Spoonley. Above right: Massey University Provost Professor Giselle Byrnes.



preferences for super-flexibility and personalised learning have only exacerbated this.

Massey University Provost Professor Giselle Byrnes says around half of Massey's students study via distance.

"While many of them study in what is often referred to as 'blended' mode – a mixture of on-campus and online teaching and learning – many of them study fully online, allowing them to live outside of major cities, often working full or part time, and tending to other commitments such as families or elite sport."

This blend of online and on-campus learning all speaks to Massey's distinctive mission and purpose, Professor Byrnes adds.

As a research-intensive university, Massey provides students with access to distance learning across Aotearoa New Zealand and beyond, in addition to providing a quality 'on campus' learning experience on a par with that provided at world-class universities.

"This shift also reflects the current desire for all things digital. Just as digital platforms and generative AI impact our preferences with shopping, banking, travel and a range of other services, this is also true for university life. Digital disruption, accelerated by the advent of generative AI, is driving the emergence of new ecosystems for learning and knowledge creation – and setting the stage for immense innovation for New Zealand's next generation of leaders."



Developing for change

Oyster Capital is a company that prides itself on meeting Auckland's growing infrastructural, housing, and commercial needs. Specialising in residential and commercial development projects across the country since 2003, the New Zealand-owned company is driving Spedding Industrial – a large-scale industrial hub in Auckland's northwest region of Whenuapai. Launched to the market late last year, the development has secured \$180 million in sales (sold or under contract) for about 60 per cent of the total developable area, bound by Brigham Creek Road, State Highway 16, and State Highway 18. Civil construction is approximately 60 per cent complete, and once complete and titles issued, it's expected building will kick off in mid-2025.

Director Cameron Wilson says Auckland's rapid surge in population has led to increased demand for infrastructure and development in the city's fringe regions. "Spedding Road is well placed for both north and south bound travel that circumnavigates the Auckland Harbour Bridge and offers unparalleled connectivity to the north-west region, only 5 minutes from Westgate town centre, 14 minutes from Auckland CBD, and 15 minutes to either Takapuna or Albany."

Oyster Capital has focused on Auckland's



Artist's visualization of Spedding Industrial, a large-scale industrial hub in Whenuapai.



Sustainability key to putting Auckland's tourism sector on the map

Just a 40-minute ferry ride between downtown Auckland and Waiheke Island, Fullers360 offers a convenient service for visitors who are eager to experience the world-class art, food and beverage hotspot. Fullers360's Hop-On Hop-Off Explorer Bus also offers a convenient transport option for wine and food aficionados hoping to see what the little-but-remarkable island has to offer, including favourites like Oneroa Village, Onetangi Beach, Batch Winery and Mudbrick.

Led by CEO Mike Horne, Fullers360 is a global leader in maritime decarbonisation with plans to be 100 per cent electric and hydrogen-operated by 2040. "Getting to a destination is all part of the fun, and we want visitors to be able to experience the Haurangi Gulf and Waiheke Island without the carbon footprint. As we see it, embracing technological advancements and clean energy is an exciting part of the overall tourism experience." Fullers360 is set to welcome the operation of four electric ferries to Auckland in the next two years. It is also broadening investment in green technologies, including a world-first electric foiling passenger vessel – the VS-9 – designed and built by New Zealand

With planned critical infrastructure upgrades of \$56 million, Spedding Industrial will install 1.5km of wastewater rising main, and deliver enhanced transport links to Auckland's state highways.

Key infrastructure initiatives will include nine transport upgrades to deliver a "robust, functioning road network surrounding the site, including new pedestrian and cycle links, seamless motorway access, and a critical replacement of the existing Brigham Creek Road bridge".

Committed to preserving the area's natural wetlands, Oyster Capital will also commence riparian planting across 5.3ha of the area along Sinton Stream and Totara Creek. A further 7,488m² of existing natural wetlands will be retained and planted with native vegetation.

Doing the mahi

- Massey's Auckland campus in Albany, known as Ōtēhā, has been going strong for more than 30 years and is home to the state-of-the-art Innovation Complex, on-site accommodation, a recreation centre, free parking, with easy access to motorways, bus routes, shops, and eateries.

- Ōtēhā is the physical hub for the Massey Business School which is ranked in the top 100 global institutions for communications and media studies, and the top 200 for accounting and finance.

- Massey University's School of Built Environment offers the country's only degrees designed to equip students with the tools of the trade at all levels of the construction industry.

• And the Institute of Education exclusively offers accredited programmes to support children and those working within the educator sector, such as educational psychology, speech-language therapy, counselling, teacher education and specialist teaching.

north-west region for 14 years, in an attempt to help future-proof the city, meet the community's growing needs, and contribute to the region's economic prosperity, he says. "Industrial land has become an extremely scarce commodity, especially greenfield sites of scale, offering prospective buyers a rare opportunity to secure a foothold in one of Auckland's fastest growing regions."

"This ensures that there will be substantial green space within the precinct, preserving as much of the natural beauty of the land and its surrounds."

"Spedding industrial is poised to be a high standard, modern industrial precinct with attractive streetscapes, which will offer increased accessibility and maneuverability, as well as covenanted design outcomes."

company, Veseev.

"Foiling is absolutely a part of the vision for us," explains Horne. "The VS-9 will be the first fully electric passenger vessel to operate in Auckland." As early as February 2025, the VS-9 will redefine the passenger experience through enhanced comfort thanks to its tailor-made



Fullers360's Hop-On Hop-Off Explorer Bus also offers a convenient transport option for wine and food aficionados hoping to see what the little-but-remarkable island has to offer...

luxurious cabin interior and smoother rides due to improvements in operational efficiency, Horne says. "Flying on the VS-9's foils and relaxing into its stylish interior is an unmatched feeling. We are thrilled to see the vessel progress further toward taking its first commercial journey on the Waitematā Harbour. Introducing the VS-9 into the Fullers360 fleet and eventually bringing larger electric foiling vessels to life is incredibly exciting for our industry," Horne says. Intended for premium tourism services, Horne says the first VS-9 signifies a defining moment in the global transition to genuine maritime sustainability. "Through our suite of resources and our desire to be net-zero carbon by 2040, we've brought together NetZero Maritime, Fullers360's dedicated decarbonisation team, who are specialists in the adoption of green technology and innovation." As Waiheke continues to be a top destination for local and international travellers, Fullers360's trailblazing commitment to sustainable tourism will also put Auckland's – and the country's – tourism sector on the map. "There's much more to come for our industry, which will help bring green energy to both the tourism sector and commuters alike."

seeking both relaxation and entertainment in a single location. They've not just built a distillery and brewery, they've created a sustainability showcase. No bottled water. It's all filtered and sparkling at right from the tap. The beer? Mostly sold by the glass or jug, saving thousands of bottles from the recycling bin's embrace. But it's their approach to energy that really raises eyebrows. The owners have opted for renewable electricity and efficient steam boilers. Admittedly a huge and expensive investment, but as Mark admits, "there was no other responsible choice." The Heke is many things – ambitious, adventurous and undeniably impressive but above all, it's a testament to embracing sustainability and the simple pleasure of a well-crafted drink. Cheers to that.



The Heke, a distillery-brewery-restaurant-art gallery hybrid on Waiheke, Auckland's "Island of Wine".

Spotlight on The Heke

Waiheke's gastronomic haven offers the perfect getaway for locals and travellers alike.

In the sun-drenched paradise of Waiheke Island, two families have concocted a brew of ambition, sustainability, and just a dash of madness. Waiheke Whisky makers, Mark and Ro Izzard, joined Waiheke brewing folks, Mark and Vivian Hindmarsh, to create The Heke, a place where whisky meets beer, and eco-consciousness collides with the art of a good time.

"We wanted to create something different," Mark says as he explains the opening of The Heke's distillery-brewery-restaurant-art gallery hybrid. Visitors to The Heke find themselves immersed in an atmosphere of discovery, where craft beverages, culinary delights, artistic displays, and child-friendly activities converge to create a truly singular experience.

"We have eight kids between us," Mark says, explaining how this innovative concept acknowledges the complex needs of modern families



Exploring Auckland in sustainable style

EcoZip Adventures has redefined sustainable tourism on Waiheke Island, combining exhilarating zipline experiences with impactful conservation across its 21-ha coastal rainforest site. As a climate-positive-certified business, EcoZip offsets 120 per cent of its emissions and invests in projects that protect Indigenous forests across New Zealand and the Pacific. Partnerships with organisations like Waiheke Resources Trust and Friends of McKenzie Reserve expand their impact through tree-planting, weed and pest control, and ecosystem restoration. Every zipline experience at EcoZip gives visitors to Auckland not only an adventure but also an opportunity to engage in preserving Aotearoa's natural environment.

As New Zealand's first 5 Green Star Hotel, The Hotel Britomart offers guests authentic luxury, while ensuring visitors can sleep easy, knowing every aspect – from construction to daily operations – prioritises sustainability. Throughout the construction, nearly 80 per cent of waste was reused or recycled, and the hotel's design includes smart metering systems that help track and reduce energy and water consumption in real-time. This results in a carbon footprint 50 per cent lower than standard building code requirements. At the heart of The Hotel Britomart's commitment to sustainability is kingi, a restaurant that brings New Zealand's flavours to life with locally sourced, sustainably caught seafood. With a menu featuring seasonal offerings such as Chatham Islands blue cod wings and Kaipara Harbour yellow belly flounder, kingi connects diners to the terroir of New Zealand's coastlines and waters. It doesn't end there. Towels and linens are crafted from organic cotton, and pillows are made from microfibre derived from recycled plastic. With a goal to decrease electricity, water, and gas use by 10 per cent each year, it's no surprise the Auckland hotel took home the Most Sustainable Business award at the NZ Hospitality Awards in 2021.



By 2026, commuters can expect trains to run every seven minutes during peak hours, a significant improvement in frequency that will make rail travel more convenient and attractive.

What to... Eat



What to... Do



What to... See





Auckland's **The Big Foody Tours** connects guests with the best of New Zealand's local produce and culinary scene. Each tour highlights regional growers, artisans, and flavours, giving visitors a taste of Auckland's vibrant food culture through stops at local markets, specialty roasters, and seafood providers.



Power to the Pedal's electric bike tours offer an eco-friendly way to explore Auckland, thanks to its commitment to sustainable tourism. Dedicated to responsible operations, Power to the Pedal uses locally made, eco-friendly bike products, while guests are encouraged to use refillable water bottles, and any carbon footprint that's indirectly created is offset through local native tree planting projects.



Brick Bay Sculpture Trail
Discover a unique fusion of art and nature at Brick Bay Sculpture Trail. Wander through captivating sculptures set in stunning native landscapes, then relax with all-day dining at the Glass House. Open Monday to Friday 10am-4pm and Saturday to Sunday 10am-5pm. Plan for an hour to explore fully.

A bold vision for public transport

At the heart of Auckland's transit transformation is a **daring objective**: to double public transport usage by 2031. This ambitious target aims to increase annual boardings from the projected 70 million this year to a staggering 150 million within just seven years. Such a dramatic increase in ridership would not only ease traffic congestion but also significantly reduce the city's carbon footprint, aligning with broader environmental goals. A key component of this transit revolution is the modernization and expansion of Auckland's rail network. By 2026, commuters can expect trains to run every seven minutes during peak hours, a significant improvement in frequency that will make rail travel more convenient and attractive. It's part of a broader strategy to make trains the preferred mode of transport for longer journeys across the city.



Top: Artist's impression of the Te Waohorotū Station on the CRL. **Left:** Platform level at the new City Rail Link Karanga-a-Hape Station (artist's impression).

The biggest and most transformational development for Auckland is the City Rail Link (CRL). When it's finished, the underground rail connection between Waiitemā (Britomart) Station in downtown Auckland and the Western Line at Mt Eden, will more than double the current rail capacity. On its first day, CRL will carry up to 24,000 passengers per hour during peak times, with the potential to carry even more passengers as demand grows.



Artist's rendering of the new Eastern Busway at Pakūranga.

Buses: Flexibility and Reach

While trains form the backbone of Auckland's future transit system, buses will continue to play a crucial role in providing flexible and widespread coverage. In the east, the Eastern Busway project is set to connect Botany and Pakūranga with Panmure, providing a much-needed transport link that will not only improve connections to the city centre but also enhance local travel options. For those in the western suburbs, improvements are already underway. These include priority bus lanes (the equivalent of giving buses their own red carpet to the city) along the Northwestern Motorway and new interchanges at Lincoln Road and Te Atatu.

The southern part of Auckland isn't being left out either. The electrification of the Southern Rail Line to Pukekohe will bring faster and more frequent services.

Making it easy

Very soon AT will be rolling out new payment options to ride the bus, train, and or ferry using credit cards and mobile wallets but don't throw out your trusty Hop card just yet. It's still the golden ticket to those sweet concessions whether you're a student, senior or someone who likes a good deal.

And then there's the focus on active travel, investing in safe cycling facilities and improved walking infrastructure because this isn't just about getting from point A to point B, it's about fostering a sense of belonging and creating a greener, more connected future for everyone.

The journey from gridlock to go-getter status won't be without its bumps and detours. It will require sustained commitment from officials, ongoing investment, and buy-in from the public. However, if successful, this transit transformation promises to not only ease Auckland's notorious traffic woes but also to enhance the city's livability, boost its economic competitiveness, and set a new standard for sustainable urban transport in New Zealand and beyond.



Totally Taonga

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki recently opened ***Ngā Taonga Tūturu: Treasured Māori Portraits***, which expands ideas on how we view and interact with Māori cultural heritage.

As you step into the newly christened Te Kawau Gallery, named after the visionary Ngāti Whātua chief Aipihai Te Kawau, who presented 3000 acres of land to Governor Hobson in a Tuku whenua, which the gallery resides upon, you're confronted with a juxtaposition of the old and the new. Co-curated by senior curator Māori art, Nathan Pōhio and curator, historical New Zealand art, Dr Jane Davidson-Ladd the exhibition evokes a whare tūpuna, bringing together Gottfried Lindauer's renowned oil paintings of Māori tūpuna with 19th-century taonga whakairo from Auckland Art Gallery's founding Sir George Grey collection.

The exhibition is a response to Director Kirsten Lacy's call to dedicate a space within the gallery to showcase the collection's widely beloved collection of historic Māori portraits, especially those by Lindauer and Goldie, in a new light. Pōhio took the brief and went further by including taonga whakairo from the gallery's collections, asking, "What Māori cultural values move consistently across whakairo into Māori portraiture by European artists?"



Facing page: Gottfried Lindauer, *Te Hira Te Kawau*, 1874, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of Mr H E Partridge, 1915.

Left: installation view, featuring *Te Hapuku*, 1877, Gottfried Lindauer, oil on canvas, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of Mr H E Partridge, 1915, and taonga whakairo (carvings) made by unrecorded ancestors, circa 19th century, gift of Sir George Grey, 1887, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, on loan from Auckland Museum Tāmaki Paengia Hira.

Below left: *Ngā Taonga Tūturu: Treasured Māori Portraits* (installation view), circa 19th century, gift of Sir George Grey, 1887, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, on loan from Auckland Museum Tāmaki Paengia Hira.



Although some elements of these portraits of Māori by Pākehā may seem naive, Pōhio says, "I see the dignity of the whakairo attempted through Lindauer's portraiture; these are ancestors seen on a one-to-one scale with a reverence for the sitters, who gaze out confidently, assured and not victim to an historical Eurocentric idea of Māori as a dying people."

Davidson-Ladd adds that many Māori commissioned portraits from him, commenting that "recent research reveals that Māori were amongst his biggest customers. They paid around £30 for the portraits and were involved in making decisions about how they were portrayed."

Lindauer's paintings in the Auckland Art Gallery collection were originally gifted to the gallery by Henry Partridge, an Auckland businessman, at the start of World War One on the proviso that the people of Auckland raised £10,000 for the Belgium Relief Fund.

When Pōhio first came to Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki in 2022, moving from a curatorial position at Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, he became interested in catalogues of taonga that belong to the Gallery but are on deposit at Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paengia Hira. Scanning through these archives, he saw that the Gallery's collections provided opportunity to look at the

idea of representation from a Māori perspective, and develop an exhibition that brought forward continuities from within te ao Māori that developed in the 19th century between taonga whakairo and oil portraits.

Visiting *Ngā Taonga Tūturu*, you'll notice that the carvings are installed as artworks to recognise and celebrate the artistry of these taonga whakairo rākau and to further emphasise the continuities across mediums. Out of the juxtaposition of taonga whakairo and painting, says Pōhio, "comes creative energy, thought and potential."

"One of the things that we've enjoyed through this process," notes Pōhio, "is establishing or continuing our relationships with descendants of people in the portraits... getting those connections fired up and active again."

Pōhio hopes *Ngā Taonga Tūturu* reflects the philosophy of the taonga whakairo rākau who carved these taonga, and the great and generous 20th century Māori thinkers such as Ta Hiniri Moko Meade, and the many who advocate for and reinforce the importance of placing tikanga Māori and Māori cultural practices, customs and customary thought at the front end of forming and solidifying one's ideas, "letting customary Māori thought inform contemporary Māori curatorial practice."

As a cultural institution, Pōhio believes it is important for Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki to be seen to support Māori advocacy and hopes *Ngā Taonga Tūturu* reflects it in action. He quotes Ta Tipene O'Regan, speaking at Onuku Marae, 2020, "We have now reached a point where we must see ourselves no longer as the damaged and dispossessed victims, but as part of a development of what this nation might yet become. We can now afford to dream."

This editorial feature on the Future of Auckland has proudly been brought to you by our partners Massey University, Oyster Capital, Destination Auckland, Auckland Transport and The Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki.