Ngā Hapori Momoho

Thriving Communities Refresh

Community Engagement Findings Report - February 2021

Auckland Council

Contents

Part 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

1.2 Strategic context

1.3 Project overview

1.4 Engagement approach

Part 2: Community insights

2.1 Top-line findings

2.2 Findings from mana whenua

2.3 Findings from pacific communities

2.4 Findings from targeted communities

Part 3: Next steps

3.1 Conclusions and reflections

3.2 Timeline and next steps

Part 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

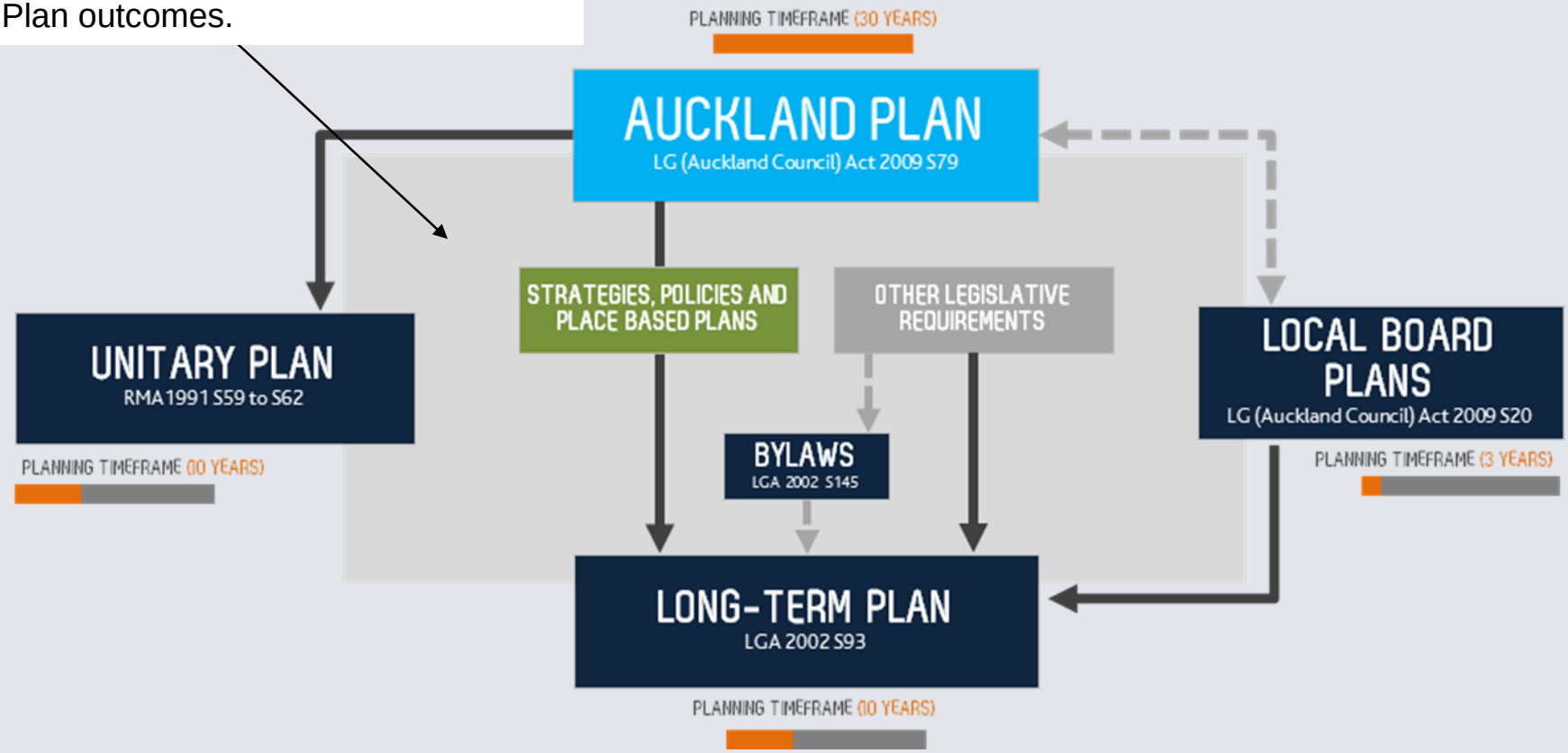
The Thriving Communities Action Plan (2014) is council's core 10-year regional community development plan. It sets the direction for how council will direct its efforts, resources and investment to support communities to thrive.

The Thriving Communities Action Plan (2014) is being updated for 2021-2031 so that it can better reflect Auckland's changing population, align more closely with delivering Auckland Plan 2050 outcomes; and to include a robust monitoring and evaluation plan to ensure we keep on track.

To inform the updated plan, we engaged with diverse communities from across the region, to ensure their voices were heard. This included 65 face to face or online interviews and focus groups. We heard from over 400 community groups and leaders from diverse backgrounds across the region.

1.2 Strategic context

The Thriving Communities Action Plan is a 10-year regional plan which gives effect to Auckland Plan outcomes.



1.3 Project overview

1

Project scoping

This included determining and documenting the parameters of the project and key deliverables.

2

Research and planning

This included producing two literature reviews, designing the community engagement approach and communications plan.

3

Community engagement

Engagement has been divided into tailored streams which have been designed specifically in consultation with appropriate council advisors to target diverse communities.

5

Analysis and reporting

All research and engagement findings will be analysed and a findings report will be presented to our reference groups and shared with local boards.

We are here

6

Plan development

Evidence gathered will be used to inform the drafting of the new plan, implementation and evaluation plan. Council staff will be engaged in workshops to help develop the draft plan and actions.

7

Community engagement – 'closing the loop'

The draft plan will be shared with groups engaged prior to being submitted to the Governing Body.

8

Reporting to Local boards

The draft plan will be presented to local boards for feedback and endorsement before it is submitted to the Governing Body.

9

Submit plan to Governing Body for Public Consultation

The final draft Thriving Communities Plan will be presented to the Auckland Council's Governing Body - the Parks, Arts, Community and Events Committee, for adoption.

1.4 Engagement approach

- An appreciative enquiry approach was selected to help identify strengths rather than weaknesses – and to try to avoid focusing on deficits and problems. We wanted to find out about good practices and identify areas which council could improve or build upon.
- Our engagement approach was informed by key internal council stakeholders, many of whom work directly with communities. We formed both a Thriving Communities Reference Group and a Māori Advisory Group to guide our approach.
- We used a range of methods including one-to-one in-depth interviews, small focus groups and large events to reach diverse range of community groups and leaders. We tailored our questions and approach to suit participants.
- Key discussion questions were used to prompt deep and wide-ranging conversations with participants. We wanted to focus on hearing about their experiences and to allow them to share what they wanted with us rather than seeking prescriptive feedback or limiting conversations to certain areas.
- Auckland has a diverse population with different needs and requirements. Participants were selected to represent a small sample of the following groups (of which many intersected).
    - Māori
    - Pacific people
    - Rainbow
    - Ethnic migrants (including those from Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and Africa)
    - Refugees
    - Young people
    - Rural (including Kumeu, Whenuapai, Warkworth, Franklin and Hauraki Island groups)
    - Older people
    - South Auckland’s communities in need.

Engagement approach cont.

Sample of discussion questions adapted for different formats and participants:

Q1. STRENGTHS AND ENABLERS - What are the key strengths and the important enablers that help your community to thrive, feel included and build resilience in Auckland?

Q2. SUCCESS AND PROGRESS - What does Auckland Council currently do well and what could we do more of to better support your community (particularly those most in need within your communities) to thrive, feel included and build resilience?

Q3. NEW OPPORTUNITIES - What should Auckland Council do differently to support your community to thrive, feel included and build resilience?

Q4. COVID-19 - What have we learnt from COVID-19 about how we can mobilise to support our communities, and about how we can rebuild more resilient communities?

Additional question asked in Māori engagement:

Q5. MANAAKITANGA - How could we work together to manaaki migrants and newcomers to build a more inclusive Tāmaki? How can we work together to build intergenerational connections? How could Auckland Council help to facilitate this?

In addition, we sought to capture key barriers raised by participants.

1.4 Engagement approach cont.

	TARGETED COMMUNITIES	MĀORI COMMUNITIES	PACIFIC COMMUNITIES
PHASE 1	✓ **Document analysis** of 50 previous council consultation documents ✓ Over 25 in depth one on one face to face **interviews** with community leaders and organisations ✓ 6x **focus groups** with over 100 participants	✓ **Document analysis** of 11 previous council consultation documents	✓ We conducted 13 in depth one on one face to face **interviews**
PHASE 2	• 3x **online regional hui**	• 19x mana whenua **interviews** • 2x maatawaka **interviews**	✓ 1x **Fono** event in Otara with over 100 participants
PHASE 3	• Socialising draft plan for further input	• Socialising draft plan for further input	• Socialising draft plan for further input

Part 2: Community engagement findings

2.1 Summary of key messages we heard

1. Celebrate diversity and build cohesion

Celebrate diversity, support greater intercultural connections and cohesion across diverse communities.

2. Strengthen community voices

Strengthen civic participation, particularly empowering youth, democratic decision-making and representation.

3. Promote health and wellbeing

Promote health and wellbeing by increasing support and advocacy for social and health services, reducing harm and enabling people to have active and fulfilling lives – which should be underpinned by a healthy environment.

4. Foster Te Ao Māori

Foster the use of te reo, tikanga (protocols), mātauranga (knowledge) and New Zealand history. Work to strengthen partnerships with tangata whenua as Treaty partners.

5. Address inequities and the high cost of living

Address barriers to inclusion, including reducing inequities including digital inclusion, and find new and innovative ways to help address the high cost of living.

6. Support community events and programmes

Increase the amount of local community events and programmes to support greater community cohesion and wellbeing.

Summary of key messages cont.

7. Promote community-led approaches

Employ community-led approaches that recognise the knowledge, wisdom, and skills of communities and what diverse communities value (such as church and family).

8. Increase employment, social procurement and social enterprise

Provide greater support for social enterprises and employment pathways through employment and procurement practices.

9. Improve relationships, communications and engagement

Focus on building good relationships with communities and improve community engagement and communications tools and practises.

10. Expand place-based approaches

Increase focus and support for place-based approaches. Recognise the importance of whakapapa and connections to place for iwi and hapū.

11. Provide more support for community groups

Improve understanding, access, and availability for of different types of support, grants and funding for communities provided by council and by others.

12. Community venues and facilities

Improve provision and accessibility of community venues and facilities, including libraries, parks and green spaces.

Celebrate diversity and build cohesion

Spirit of insights…

Auckland's diversity is a significant source of strength and something to be celebrated. Auckland's size and diversity makes it possible for many to find a community of interest or identity that reflects them. Some ethnic minority communities want to learn how they could connect more with Māori and with each other. There is a strong willingness and desire from migrants to participate fully in the civic, social and economic life of Auckland – and learning English was seen as the basis for this. Communities felt council could and should do more to celebrate Auckland's diversity and to help build cohesion.

Snapshot of ideas and suggestions…

- Diverse cultures, ethnic groups, ages, genders, sexual orientations should be celebrated, supported, empowered, included and reflected throughout council's approaches/workforce/policies/strategies/programmes/processes and services.
- Help to create more deliberate opportunities for people meet and interact with people they usually wouldn't do from diverse backgrounds through arts, culture, events, programmes, places and spaces.
- Many of Auckland's community venues are being well used by diverse groups, but more could be done to try to build interactions across these groups to support cohesion and build mutual understanding and respect.
- More focus on welcoming newcomers to Auckland and providing guidance and information to help them settle in.
- Council should do better at acknowledging and reflecting Auckland's diverse residents through it's employment practices, capacity building and support, translated communications, engagement and outreach.
- There was a strong desire to be connected, or network, with others. This was mentioned in relation to being connected to neighbours, local mana whenua, other community organisations, or to mentors and other people that can support organisations to succeed.
- Strategic Brokers have been excellent at sharing information and helping to connect people to council and to others, this should definitely be continued.
- Council could lend greater support to the work of others working on diversity and inclusion, for example Inclusive Aotearoa.
- Prioritise small, local and regular events that celebrate and connect people, alongside the larger festivals.
- Increase access to facilities that people can run events and activities from.

Strengthen community voices

Spirit of insights…

There was a strong desire for more opportunities to participate, particularly aimed at empowering youth, and improving democratic and representative decision-making. Many felt council should do more to represent and reflect Auckland's diverse populations.

Snapshot of ideas and suggestions…

- Make use of emerging social media platforms and influencers to connect to young people where they are and in their language.
- Strengthen alignment between Auckland Council's various engagement mechanisms such as Community Advisory Panels, Community Engagement Team and Peoples Panel.
- Develop a clear value proposition for people giving their time, and provide timely feedback to them.
- Build up 'influencers/connectors' who are embedded in community or organisations that can consult on behalf of council.
- Take action following consultation and communicate what has been achieved or people will be less willing to participate.
- Council should build relationships with a wide range of community groups and organisations to support them to consult their communities.
- Do more to reduce language barriers and to provide higher quality translated communications.
- Advisory boards and engagement opportunities to be more intersectional/used to bring different ideas together to build cohesion and provide an opportunity for people to share exchange ideas and perspectives.
- Council engagement should be more purposeful and resulting in clear actions which are accurately and publicly communicated back to communities.
- Increased and more equitable relationships with local boards in which pre-existing relationships are not excluding new initiatives from having a fair chance.
- New methods for communicating about what's on, what council does and offers using methods that diverse communities use and read.
- Council should partner with community groups more to reach and engage with Aucklanders. These relationships and processes should be established and used by all departments needing to engage.

Promote health and wellbeing

Spirit of insights…

Promote health and wellbeing by increasing support and advocacy for social and health services, reducing harm and enabling people to have active and fulfilling lives. This will be underpinned by a healthy environment with adequate venues and facilities that are easily accessible, as well as good transport and housing infrastructure that mean people can get around easily and affordably.

Snapshot of ideas and suggestions…

- Upgrade and enable better utilisation of sports facilities, particularly in South Auckland.
- Do more to increase walking, cycling and public transport use. This should include making e-bikes, e-scooters, public transport options cheaper and providing more cycling and walking infrastructure. Make public transport in rural areas for user-friendly. In certain areas it is a real problem, particularly for youth and elderly, who rely on it for any getting to work/school/healthcare or social connections. This could include increasing Park and Ride facilities in rural areas.
- Be guided by te ao Māori approaches to support health and wellbeing.
- Focus on upgrading sports facilities in South Auckland in consultation with local communities.
- Create more resources such as a ‘secret green places’ map to connect people to their surroundings
- Invite international and national sports teams to come and inspire local communities to increase uptake in sports.
- Provide more free sports programmes targeting diverse communities which could help them come together and build cohesion.

Foster Te Ao Māori

Spirit of insights…

Council has a key role to play in fostering the use of te reo Māori, tikanga (protocols), understanding of mātauranga (knowledge) and New Zealand history, Māori art, and co-governance with Māori in decision making. We heard that council needs to continue to work to strengthen partnerships with tangata whenua as Treaty partners and to understand te ao Māori.

Snapshot of ideas and suggestions…

- Promote the use of te reo Māori through council signage (including street signs), places, place names, mobile apps and websites, and all other council communications.
- Take a proactive approach to commissioning Māori art works, history boards and more.
- Utilise council community centres as hubs for connection and learning of reo, tikanga and mātauranga Māori.
- Council to have and lead brave conversations about Māori and Pākehā shared histories.
- Utilise council grant processes to prompt people to reflect on how they are working under te Tiriti
- Council community centres to offer te reo and Te Tiriti workshops
- Increase Māori representation in elected positions and in decision-making or management roles within council.
- Include more rangatahi on youth boards and in consultations.
- Resource Māori to develop economic opportunities i.e. Māori land for housing
- Establish practical partnerships with Māori to share resources, knowledge and decision-making
- Protect and preserve Māori cultural heritage throughout the rohe

Address inequities and the high cost of living

Spirit of insights…

There are many levels of exclusion and inequities faced by different communities. These are compounded for some. These could include social, economic, or related issues like digital exclusion. We must find new and innovative ways to help address the high cost of living in Auckland – and in particular housing shortages and rising housing costs. High housing prices are disproportionately affecting the health and wellbeing of Māori, Pacific peoples and many marginalised groups and has led to an increase in homelessness, poverty and overcrowding – all of which have enduring and wide ranging effects.

Snapshot of ideas and suggestions…

- Invest in more social housing and build partnerships with other organisations (e.g. churches)
- Remove barriers that currently exist in Auckland's building consent and unitary plan, in order to enable whānau and others to develop appropriate housing solutions rapidly.
- Do more to protect green spaces and important land from being used for housing.
- Ensure new buildings are built in a way that will support well-connected, healthy communities and suit whānau for multiple generations.
- Work collaboratively with other organisations experiencing challenges with people unable to access digital platforms. For example: banks, government departments.
- Participate in (or lead if needed) cross government and cross sector working groups to combat racism, discrimination, the high cost of living, homelessness and housing issues.
- Ensure a lens across all council policy on combatting racism, discrimination and making living affordable for all.
- Take communications to where communities are. Channels such as We Chat; using accessible language; printed copies.
- Housing affects every community, council should be more proactive in providing social housing.
- Be explicit about what council means by discrimination and build protections into policy.

Support community events and programmes

Spirit of insights…

Council's events and programmes are well loved and should be increased to provide more opportunities for communities to come together. A more explicit focus should be on supporting local level events, helping to build connections between diverse communities and more youth focussed programmes. Communities wanted to forge lasting partnerships with council to be able to build up initiatives that communities could rely on. Creating community ties takes years and short-term approaches were seen as constraining.

Snapshot of ideas and suggestions…

- Develop and support more programmes which celebrate and promote te reo Māori and Pacific languages and cultures.
- Develop and support more youth focussed events and programmes, particularly in more vulnerable communities in collaboration with schools and young people themselves. In addition, connecting youth and older people to transfer cultural knowledge and practices.
- Support for events and programmes should be ongoing rather than one off, it takes a long time to gain momentum and to build up trust and support.
- Continue providing large events but also focus on supporting smaller, local and regular events.
- Prioritise regular events that help connect diverse people together as well as encouraging participation. Reoccurring meetings build up trust and relationships been participants rather than just one off events.
- Remove the red tape that prevents communities from self-organising and reduce compliance requirements for funding.
- Provide more 'in-kind' support for groups who may need mentoring, information, networks, venues for free.
- Ensure all events and programmes are accessible for those with disabilities and are whānau friendly.
- Strategic brokers and local boards have a key role in ensuring events and programmes are catering to the makeup of their communities
- Be culturally sensitive when designing events and programmes (e.g. Matariki is a time of rest for Māori, but council keep pushing for them to celebrate)

Promote community-led approaches

Spirit of insights…

Employ community-led approaches that recognise the knowledge, wisdom, and skills of communities and what diverse communities value (such as church and family). Communities told us their strengths were their collective wealth of knowledge, wisdom and capabilities which help them to thrive.

Snapshot of ideas and suggestions…

- Council should recognise the strengths of many communities and to acknowledge many communities have the answers and expertise they need to thrive.
- Communities have their own lived experiences and knowledge to draw on which should be trusted and heard above what council staff or elected members may think.
- Council should use and adequately resource community groups to engage their communities.
- Connection with the Pacific church clergy is important for understanding the Pacific community. Council should work more closely with Pacific church groups.
- In many cultures, authorities such as a local council are not trusted, therefore community leaders themselves should be brought onboard to help diffuse information and messages in behalf of council.
- Council can’t do everything and be everywhere, so should play an enabling role and let communities decide and do for themselves.
- Provide more support aimed at enabling opportunities for tamariki and rangatahi Māori to be able to achieve their goals and aspirations.

Increase employment, social procurement and social enterprise

Spirit of insights…

Provide greater support for social enterprises and employment pathways through procurement and employment practices. Communities were generally happy that council has implemented the living wage and increased its social procurement. There was a desire to see council offering more work experience and short-term employment opportunities or one-off contracts to smaller organisations.

Snapshot of suggestions…

- Reduce barriers to employing individuals and/or part time roles on behalf of council for small community projects.
- Work experience opportunities across council departments should be re-established - for example, working in parks. This used to happen more.
- Council staff often run into problems when trying to hire individuals to do one-off projects, it should be made easier to employ locals for certain short-term roles.
- Promote and fund social innovation and social enterprise hubs.
- Support Connect Auckland's social entrepreneurs.
- Provide clear pathways for social enterprises to enter council's procurement system or database. Currently it's difficult to 'get in' and many communities or organisations don't know they could apply for and win work.
- Promote and enable buying local.
- Council should provide more transparency and information around its procurement system including how contracts are awarded and how people can apply to deliver contracts.
- Provide more employment, skills development and career pathways for our rangatahi Māori.

Improve relationships, communications and engagement

Spirit of insights…

Communities value council's efforts to engage and communicate with them – but they wanted more easy to access information, translations, face to face engagement and support. Effort put in by Strategic Brokers and Local Board staff to build and maintain relationships was well-received and many groups who didn't have good relationships with council, really wanted to establish these and felt excluded.

Snapshot of ideas and suggestions…

- Continue to focus more on building good relationships with diverse communities, particularly small ethnic minority groups who may not already be well resourced, have extensive networks or a good understanding of council and it's work.
- Improve community engagement approaches to ensure they are tailored to the audience. E.g. reduce form filling and give more opportunities for face to face feedback in appropriate languages.
- Use different communications tools and methods to have more success with different communities (e.g. WeChat and other social media channels to seek feedback)
- Much of the information council puts out is inaccessible in many ways: language used; not mobile friendly; expect people to come to council. People need to see themselves reflected in what council does and puts out there.
- Respectful face-to-face talanoa is the culturally appropriate method of engagement with Pasifika communities to build relationships
- Target the groups who do not use council services and identify how they can access the right information or support in order to participate.
- Run general awareness events for small communities who don't know what council offers in terms of community development support.
- Staff needs to improve cultural training or diversity to help with language and cultural barriers.

Expand place-based approaches

Spirit of insights…

Increase focus and support for place-based approaches similar to The Southern Initiative (TSI) and The Western Initiative (TWI). This includes the need to recognise the importance of whakapapa and connections to place for iwi and hapū. Creating wrap around services and community hubs which provide a number of services and information. Social issues require a holistic approach.

Snapshot of ideas and suggestions…

- TSI and TWI do some excellent work which meets the specific needs of the people within their own context.
- Community and social development needs to take a holistic and place-based approach because in order for communities to thrive. There are numerous complex and intersecting social, cultural, economic, environmental issues which need to be addressed.
- Gentrification and the rising cost of housing continues to displace communities – this must be addressed within a place-based approach or efforts will be stymied as people have to move further away.
- For Māori, connections to whenua are vital. Council should do more to protect important land and to promote understanding of local places and local history to residents.
- Communities want to be involved and share responsibility and ownership over regeneration and development in their local areas. Council should facilitate more partnerships to drive social change.
- Place-based approaches can help communities to be self-determining. This is key for Māori who should be co-governors with council.
- Council shouldn't work in silos but aim to be better joined up and aware of the multiple issues, communities, and support available in communities to design the right kind of interventions that communities want and need.
- We want our communities reflected in the design and look of places – e.g. in community centres.
- Pursue more partnerships with mana whenua to ensure greater protection of their whenua and of the environment.
- Provide young people with the tools and mandate to take ownership of particular places to regenerate and maintain.

Provide more support for community groups

Spirit of insights…

Improve understanding, access, and availability for of different types of support, grants and funding for communities provided by council and by others. Encourage grassroots community initiatives and empower communities by making them aware of what's on offer. Council should also focus on connecting people and groups together to help share ideas, learnings and resources.

Snapshot of ideas and suggestions…

- Identify and resource 'community connectors'. People who are embedded within their communities who can pass along information on behalf of council, or encourage engagement with council. Community connectors could help to overcome language barriers, are located where communities are, and can help bridge digital divides.
- Provide match funding and more multiple/regional funding – many groups don't work within one local board area.
- Make micro funding available for small initiatives, events and activations. Applications should be user-friendly and quick. Neighbours Day Aotearoa provides a great example of micro-granting that enables resident-led placemaking with low compliance requirements from council.
- Council typically focuses on telling people what they can't do. Flip this on its head - promote all the things you can do without a permit or other compliance, or even things that challenge the status quo - e.g. Parking Day.
- Incentives for communities to come together to collect rubbish and in return you receive vouchers to spend in local cafes etc. This would connect people to businesses and to one another.
- Help build intergenerational connections through a Social Gym UK model – this helps young people exercise in a way that is of community benefit, e.g. washing windows at an aged care residence.
- Provide much clearer information around what support is available for fledgeling community groups.
- Run mentoring and information sessions to connect community leaders and groups to help cross-pollination of ideas and to promote networking and to reduce duplication.

Community venues and facilities

Spirit of insights…

Improve provision and accessibility of community venues and facilities, including libraries, parks and green spaces. Some communities, particularly refugee or vulnerable communities would like to receive free access to communities venues and facilities as any cost is a barrier to access for them.

Snapshot of ideas and suggestions…

- Refugee and vulnerable communities would like to receive free access to communities venues and facilities as any cost is a barrier for them. Particularly in times of crisis, such as the Christchurch Massacre or when their countries of origin and families are experiencing severe hardship or genocide such as in Rwanda. These groups need safe spaces to come together to support one another.
- Council should continue to invest in the maintenance and upkeep of high quality facilities and venues across the region as some are in need of better care and upgrades.
- Build more Pacific centres, hubs and facilities in areas with high Pacific populations to support better outcomes.
- As the city with the largest Polynesian population in the world, we should see this reflected in the design and availability of venues and facilities targeting Pacific people.
- Community hubs should be established that include a coordination service to help communities access council services and to provide better community engagement and communications. A one stop shop, face to face place is needed for communities to access services and connect with council.
- Under-utilised council venues should be opened up and allowed to be used by communities cheaply.
- Community venues and facilities should be welcoming to all and provide a safe space for people from diverse backgrounds to meet and take part in their communities.

2.2 Insights from mana whenua

Key insights from one-on-one interviews with 19 mana whenua groups of Tāmaki Makaurau

Summary of key messages we heard from Mana Whenua

Establishing partnerships - more opportunities to partner and deliver initiatives with council.

Addressing housing crisis - healthier housing options for older people. Good housing is the beginning of people's wellbeing journey.

Creating sustainable employment - work together to get meaningful employment, for those who have lost their jobs due to Covid-19. e.g. the healthy waters programme partnership and offering jobs to Ngāti Manuhiriri.

Reducing inequalities - redress for the marginalisation, deprivation and inequality impacting whānau.

Fostering economic development and social enterprise - providing opportunities for more Māori enterprise to participate in council contract procurement processes. Supporting social enterprise initiatives among Māori communities and marae.

Protecting the environment - preserving and protecting areas with cultural and environmental significance throughout Tamaki Makaurau.

Summary of key messages we heard from Mana Whenua

Building resilient whānau, hapū and iwi - rebuild whānau after COVID-19 and be resilient for future pandemics and other natural disasters.

Supporting children and young people - build their resilience, their coping for daily challenges, they have a hard time because they are born into the world of tech. Young people have access to info 24/7. Young people need to be taught about good decision making. Positive problem solving.

Manākitanga Māori - employing initiatives such as cultural inductions for migrants, celebrating who we are and growing by sharing our knowledge and experience with manuhiri.

More cultural events - creating more events to celebrate and share our rich and vibrant Māori culture.

Improving technological capacity - helping whānau and communities to adapt to new technologies by providing easier access to Wifi and technological tools in the community.

Improving Māori civic participation - providing easy access for Māori to participate in the local democratic process and have their voices heard by council.

Tikanga Māori and reo - training and educating council staff about tikanga; and reflecting the history of mana whenua through reo and tikanga practice - tika and pono.

Strengths and enablers for mana whenua

Themes:

1. Encouraging people to use health services despite it poorly reflecting the needs of Māori
2. Developing Māori land (including accessing the technical expertise to gain consents and approvals)
3. Addressing the balance between growth and development and managing our cultural resources
4. Protection and enhancement of cultural heritage

"Kaumātua are a key link to Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei whakapapa and stories and have a significant role in the hapū in terms of imparting values, kawa and tikanga. Kaumātua seek access to whānau and resources to support their independence and wellbeing"

"Leveraging the significant expertise and skills of our strategic partners to find solutions that are mutually beneficial"

"We care for the environment and it cares for us via a reciprocal and mutually beneficial relationship. We also respect everyone's perspectives – they provide us with the opportunity to learn and grow"

"

Council's successes and what it should continue/progress

Themes:

1. **Provide opportunities to purchase council assets** - mana whenua recognised opportunities Council has provided to purchase council assets.
2. **Māori outcomes** - at a governance level mana whenua acknowledge council for prioritising Māori Outcomes.
3. **Monitoring and reporting** - mana whenua recognised council's ability to undertake compliance monitoring and measure progress towards achieving Māori outcomes
4. **Technical suppo**rt - at an operational level mana whenua are grateful for help and support with technical expertise they receive to progress initiatives. Mana whenua indicated their appreciation of project managers who let them know what is happening and advising them of things that may be of interest.
5. **Projects, programmes and initiatives** - Some examples of exemplary council projects, programmes and initiatives include:
    - the Auckland Council Youth Programme;
    - Beneath Our Feet;
    - the Kaipara Harbour Remediation Project;
    - working with mana whenua to develop videos describing who they are and where they come from;
    - planting days; and
    - the Hopuhopu Innovation Hub.
6. **Engagement and communications** - mana whenua expressed thanks for the engagement forums that provided the opportunity to share knowledge and ideas.
7. **Education and training** - Council help teach people about Māori culture; and utilise their skills and expertise to progress training programmes, and initiatives.

"Auckland Council certainly has a more strategic approach to issues compared to other local bodies around this country"

"The local boards have a list of projects that are happening and during our catch-ups they have information ready and waiting for us"

Opportunities for Māori communities

Themes:

1. **Enhancing council approach** - create a culture of collaboration and pride; ensure council processes are easy to navigate; take the time to understand communities and advise mana whenua of upcoming opportunities
2. **Creating cultural events and practices** - support cultural events such as Kapa Haka, Matariki and Polyfest; recognise our need to exercise customary practices; create child friendly events
3. **Provide economic development opportunities** - transfer powers and functions relating to resource management to mana whenua. Provide commercial opportunities for partnerships, especially in building affordable housing
4. **Education, training and employment** - support our communities by providing ready access to digital technology and Wifi; helping mana whenua build capacity and capability
5. **Supporting environmental Initiatives** - enhance environmental values. For example, prepare a Climate Change Resilience Plan
6. **Enhancing health and wellbeing** - improve roading safety; support initiatives that help communities understand sustainable living
7. **Ensuring infrastructure reflects Māori needs** - recognise that Māori are dependent on supporting infrastructure and services that enable them to thrive

"Auckland Council need to work with Mana Whenua as true partners – working in partnership to develop strategic direction and strategies"

"Fantastic that Auckland Council has prioritised Māori Outcomes"

"As kaitiaki of the Auckland gateway, we should be enabled to share our identity"

Manaakitanga – How can council play a role in supporting mana whenua to manaaki newcomers to Auckland?

Themes:

1. **Enhance understanding** - employing initiatives such as cultural inductions for migrants, creating opportunities for sharing knowledge; celebrating who we are and growing by sharing our knowledge and experience

2. **Connectedness** - opportunities for people to connect via digital technology

3. **Work as partners** - create a culture of collaboration, entrepreneurship, and working together to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes. Help Māori forge connections with strategic partners.

"Mana whenua have guardianship in a particular place because of their ancestors' relationship to it. From this place we manaaki communities in a way that is specific to each iwi and situation or community"

"Migrants would really benefit from cultural inductions"

"Council taking the lead and recognising that we are a multi-cultural city and organising events to celebrate who we are."

COVID-19 Learnings and Response

Themes:

1. **Cancellation of activities** – the COVID-19 outbreak cancelled events and activities that connected people (e.g. Kapa Haka, Polyfest, Matariki).

2. **Fear of leaving the house -** exacerbating the risk of a COVID-19 outbreak. Whānau recalled being afraid to leave the house; and increasing the risk of an outbreak spreading undetected.

3. **Wellbeing and education** - hindered due to a lack of technology and/or Wifi – whānau and hapū struggled to connect due to lack of digital technology; and ability to use it or lack of Wifi. Lack of digital technology was also detrimental to children's (and others) education and learning.

"Māori activities e.g Kapa Haka have been cancelled for 2020 – 2021. These are extremely important for our Rangatahi. Where has the funding gone?"

"Isolation for Māori and kaumatua were a real issue"

"Some Māori communities were scared to leave the house or receive a test therefore creating a risk"

2.3 Findings from targeted communities

Insights were gathered through 25 interviews and 6 focus groups with diverse communities (including: rainbow, ethnic migrants, refugees, young people, rural, older people, south Auckland and communities in need),

Summary of key messages from targeted communities

Culture and diversity - Diverse cultures and ethnic groups, ages, genders, sexual orientations should be celebrated, supported, empowered, included and reflected throughout the work of council.

Community knowledge, wisdom and skills - Communities have knowledge, wisdom, skills, connections and lived experiences to best serve their communities. They should be empowered and enabled to meet their own needs.

Council engagement, relationships and communications - Communities should be adequately consulted and engaged. Communities also want to be empowered to participate in the decision making process and for council to focus on delivery and implementation. Communities wanted to have a stronger and better working relationship with council. Continuity in key relationships between council and communities should be seamless and appropriately communicated and managed when staff leave. Council's communications should be adapted to meet the needs of Auckland's diverse communities.

Simplified processes - Council systems and processes should be simplified and explained easily (particularly for newcomers).

Community venues and facilities - Council should continue to invest in designing and building high quality community venues and facilities - these should be made more accessible e.g. discounts for certain groups. More investment in providing and maintaining high quality parks and green spaces for recreation and environmental preservation.

Place-making - Urban areas should be improved through better place-making and activations.

Council initiatives, programmes, events and festivals - Communities want more activities which celebrate, unite and strengthen diverse cultures and groups. These should be aimed at deepening bonds within communities and also building bridges across communities.

Summary of key messages from targeted communities

Grants and funding - Council should provide more accessible and secure funding through the local boards and regionally.

Transport and waste - Council should provide more affordable transport options for communities in need. In particular, prioritise transport options for remote or disconnected communities.

Social and civic participation - Communities could be able to participate fully in the social and civic life of the region.

Council roles, strategies, approaches - The roles of council to advocate, co-ordinate, convene and support communities should be reviewed and expanded. Council should focus on community-led development.

Housing and homelessness - Council should use all levers available to find new and innovative solutions to build and enable more housing supply and different housing solutions.

Employment opportunities and social procurement - Council should use its employment and procurement practices to help achieve fairer socio-economic outcomes for people from diverse backgrounds. Minority and vulnerable groups are in need of skills and employment assistance.

Social, health services – Council should play a greater role in advocating to central government for increased investment in social and health services. The complex of health needs and social issues require council to be more innovative and bold in how it responds.

Inequality and high cost of living – Urban sprawl, displacement and homelessness are rife in Auckland as gentrification pushes communities further out to the city fringe making housing costs unaffordable. Council must use all of its powers to come up with innovative ways to address rising inequality and living costs.

Community strengths and enablers

Key themes:

1. **Tāmaki Makaurau's super-diversity –** This is seen as a clear draw card and strength for many communities. In Auckland, groups celebrating diverse ethnicities, cultures, religious beliefs, age groups, genders, and sexual orientations are able to find people who share similar backgrounds, and this provides opportunities to create strong bonds.

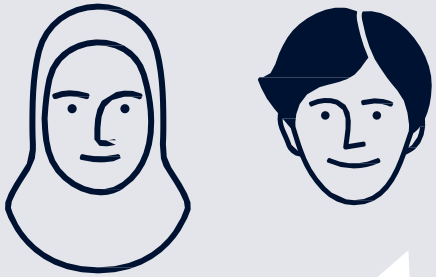
2. **Opportunities to bond around common interests, identities or experiences –** This could be achieved by participating in a class, an organisation, activity or an initiative which helps people to meet others and feel recognised, supported or connected.

3. **Community's own knowledge, wisdom and capabilities –** This include people's collective skillsets, lived experiences which helps them feel embedded and have understanding of their community's needs and solutions. Many already felt that their communities had the answers and expertise they need to do well.

4. **Desire and willingness to participate and integrate into Tāmaki Makaurau –** This includes having a strong commitment to participating in the civic, social and economic life of Auckland. Aucklanders want to learn more about New Zealand, participate in democratic processes, learn English, find appropriate employment, volunteer, share and celebrate different cultures.

5. **Appropriate community spaces and places to meet -** Having access to affordable, appropriate, and reliable places and spaces for coming together was considered as a significant enabler for connecting communities. Venues, facilities or marae enable community groups to thrive.

"One of the key strengths is that it is peer led – when they come in, they see and get looked after by other queer and gender diverse young people"



"My organisation is a connector, enabler and a bridge. We understand the NZ culture and how to explain everything to the new refugees."

Council's successes and what it should continue/progress

Key themes:

1. **Council engagement, relationships and communications –** Communities value council's efforts to engage with them including through democratic processes, advisory panels, events and consultations, they also value forging strong relationships and partnerships with council staff and elected members as well as receiving useful and timely communications.

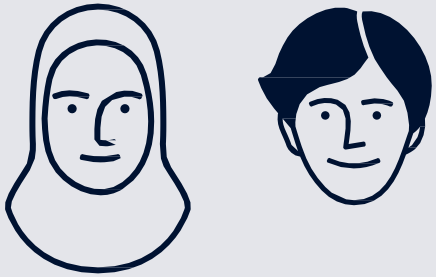
2. **Community venues, facilities, parks, places and spaces –** Many participants appreciate council's venues and facilities and think the progressive pricing system for community groups is good (some thought they should be more affordable to certain groups). Many love their local parks and said council does a good job maintaining them.

3. **Council initiatives, programmes, events and festivals** – People see value in council driven initiatives such as Te Kakano, CABs, Diwali, Lantern Festival etc.

4. **Grants and funding -** Participants who had received some grants or funding over the years were very grateful, and said council should provide more money to local boards for communities and regional activities.

5. **Council services (transport, waste)** – Waste collection and transport are services that council does well. Reliable, accessible and affordable transport are seen as key enablers.

"Council venues are really useful for allowing us to run workshops. Really valuable to be able to operate within community spaces."



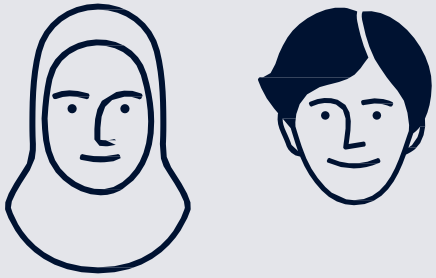
"The Community Empowerment Unit (CEU) workers are amazing, they give us so much information."

New opportunities the council should consider

Key themes:

1. **Building connections -** Deliver more events, programmes and partnerships which provide opportunities for communities to come together.
2. **Youth focussed -** A more explicit focus on youth programmes as well as more celebrations through arts and culture.
3. **Community partnership -** Communities want to forge lasting partnerships with council and build up initiatives that communities can rely on.
4. **Responsive communications, engagement and relationships -** Communities are keen to strengthen relationships with council and efforts to coordinate, build and maintain cross sector activity to tackle complex social issues. Community groups would like to act as paid intermediaries for the community to ensure good engagement**.**
5. **Accessible and appropriate community spaces and places -** Communities told us facilities, venues and spaces help communities thrive and need to be improved and fit for purpose. Spaces need to be more accessible to communities in need and ethnic groups to enable cultural celebrations and events
6. **Improved grants and funding -** Participants identified grants and funding as an area that needs to be improved.
7. **Council's role -** Communities want a clearer understanding of how council works and how its policies and strategies work together. They also wanted council to play a greater role in providing research, statistics, capacity and capability building, advocacy and lobbying of central government, social services and regulations.
8. **Tackling transport, housing and employment issues -** Communities told us they want the council to do more to improve access to public transport, affordable housing and to support greater employment outcomes for minority groups through social procurement.

"The community hubs are well used by diverse groups, e.g. Meditation groups etc. But there is not enough work being done to build connections and interactions between these groups."



""Council could help show community groups the bigger picture and join the links between groups so that we aren't all duplication or trying to work alone."

Barriers faced by communities and community groups

Key themes:

1. **Council processes and systems, grants and funding -** Communities frequently mentioned barriers including understanding council's processes and systems that are also hard to navigate. Limited grants and funding also present as barriers. .

2. **Council relationships, communications and engagement -** Communities told us relationships with council staff, communications and community engagement can be barriers.

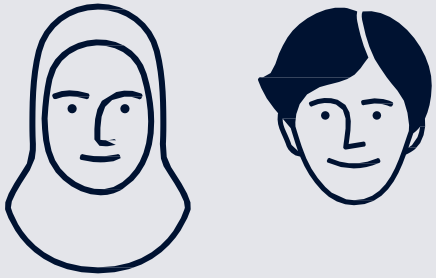
3. **Lack of affordable and public transport and community facilities -** Participants frequently identified access to affordable and reliable transport options was a barrier for their communities. Communities saw the size of Auckland and distances between communities as a barrier.

4. **Lack of social and health services including resettlement services for refugees -** Participants lamented the lack of social services in their local areas. In some cases, they didn't exist, were under resourced or were difficult to get to due to geographical spread.

5. **Lack of employment opportunities, particularly for migrants -** A major challenge identified by ethnic minority groups or those representing migrants was access to employment opportunities, particularly which match skillsets, prior experiences and overseas qualifications.

6. **High cost of living -** Participants mentioned the high cost of living in Auckland, particularly housing and inequality as barriers for communities.

"In events and activities, I try to fly under council's radar because you spend so much time trying to tick all of council's boxes…There must be a way to simplify processes."



"In places where there are not community services and facilities such as a youth hub, then good access to fast and convenient transport is essential."

2.4 Findings from Pacific communities

These insights were gathered through one-on-one interviews and at a large Pacific fono event.

Summary of key messages we heard from Pacific communities:

Culture and diversity – Recognise and celebrate diverse and distinct Pacific cultures.

Faith and family values – Recognise the role of Pacific churches and family as central to Pacific culture.

Council engagement - Increase council engagement with Pacific communities and efforts to increase civic participation and awareness of council. Relationship-building is fundamental when working with Pacific communities. Council's communications methods and messages should be more targeted to Pacific communities

Community venues and facilities - Council should build community hubs in low socio-economic areas and build more facilities targeted at Pacific communities.

Urban places and place-making - Urban design of areas particularly where Pacific communities live should be improved to reflect Pacific culture.

Council initiatives, programmes, events and festivals - Increased support for Pacific events and festivals and specific initiatives for elderly and youth.

Summary of key messages from Pacific communities cont:

Social enterprises - A greater focus on supporting Pacific social enterprises and entrepreneurs.

Housing and cost of living – Focus on efforts to improve housing affordability and cost of living.

Grants and funding - Make grants and funding more accessible to Pacific communities and increase availability of funds.

Social issues - There is a need to tackle social issues such as domestic violence, youth suicide, alcohol and drug abuse.

Healthy living - Continue to deliver high quality waste services to protect the environment and ensure families have access to safe and healthy green space.

Pacific communities' strengths and enablers

Key themes:

1. **Diverse Pacific communities** - Well established groups with 7 distinctive ethnicities and cultural identities.

2. **Church as a cornerstone** - The church is the cornerstone for Pacific communities and is a key strength and enabler in the effort to improve the wellbeing of the families in need.

3. **Community facilities and events** – Council facilities and events help to celebrate Pacific language, culture and communities.

4. **Family-centric -** Interventions should be family-oriented because this is the most important part of the Pasifika culture.

5. **Building-relationships -** The 'Va' (relationship) is paramount for building cohesion and resilience within the Pasifika community.

"The church provides support for families experiencing hardship and can assist council to strengthen Pacific communities"

"(We need) facilities that are easily accessible and affordable to the Pacific community. More local events targeting Pacific communities."

Council's successes and what it should continue/progress

Key themes:

1. **Great libraries and librarians -** Community providers and youth said council libraries are popular places for all ages as there are Pacific events held there and staff understand the Pasifika culture and language.

2. **Good rubbish collection and waste disposal solutions -** The rubbish collection service was identified as being efficient. Waste solutions workshops are empowering Pasifika communities.

3. **Support for social enterprises -** The social enterprising initiatives bring the community together and offer opportunities for Pacific entrepreneurs and young people.

4. **Events and festivals -** Great festivals for the Pacific such as Pasifika and local cultural events.

5. **Direct Pacific community engagement -** Direct engagement with Pacific communities through targeting, fono and outreach enable Pacific people to voice their perspectives and ideas.

"Librarians playing the guitar, table tennis, actively have kids playing and holding activities. I've never seen this anywhere but its working really well for our kids"

"The Pacific Food Hub and Affirming Works Fale Kofi are great examples of successful ventures"

New opportunities

Key themes:

1. **Build new Pasifika community facilities and support more Pasifika events –** Focus on building more facilities in areas with high Pacific populations. Provide more events that celebrate Pasifika language, culture and their community.

2. **Create community hubs -** Include coordination services in hubs to improve people's access to council services and information. Pacific communities need face to face place based access to services.

3. **Deliver programmes designed to support Pasifika youth and elderly –** Tailor made programmes for pacific youth and elders to transfer knowledge, culture and mentoring.

4. **Create a Pacific gateway to South Auckland –** Reflect Pacific communities and culture in South Auckland.

5. **More social housing -** Build more social housing for the homeless and low-income families.

"Programmes for our elders so they can transfer knowledge to Pacific youth. This will strengthen their Pacific identity and place as proud Aucklanders"

"We need a Hawaiian/Polynesian Cultural Centre type of facility in Otara"

"Better housing options, mean better life and less ending up in prison"

Barriers

Key themes:

1. **High cost of living and housing in Auckland –** lack of affordable housing, budgeting services or progressive homeownership schemes.

2. **Ineffective Council communications -** Council communication tools are not reaching the Pasifika communities. This is why Pasifika communities are not involved in many of the council activities and events.

3. **Inaccessible Council grants and funding process –** Complex funding and grants processes act as barriers to access.

4. **Lack of Pasifika civic engagement –** There is a lack of Pacific representation at the decision-making level including elected members.

5. **Social problems in Pasifika communities -** issues include domestic violence, youth suicide, alcohol and drug abuse.

"Pasifika groups don't know how to access council funding"

"Pacific people voting rates are low and not included in key engagements"

"There are no Pasifika workshops or fono that focus on Pasifika awareness about what is happening in Auckland Council"

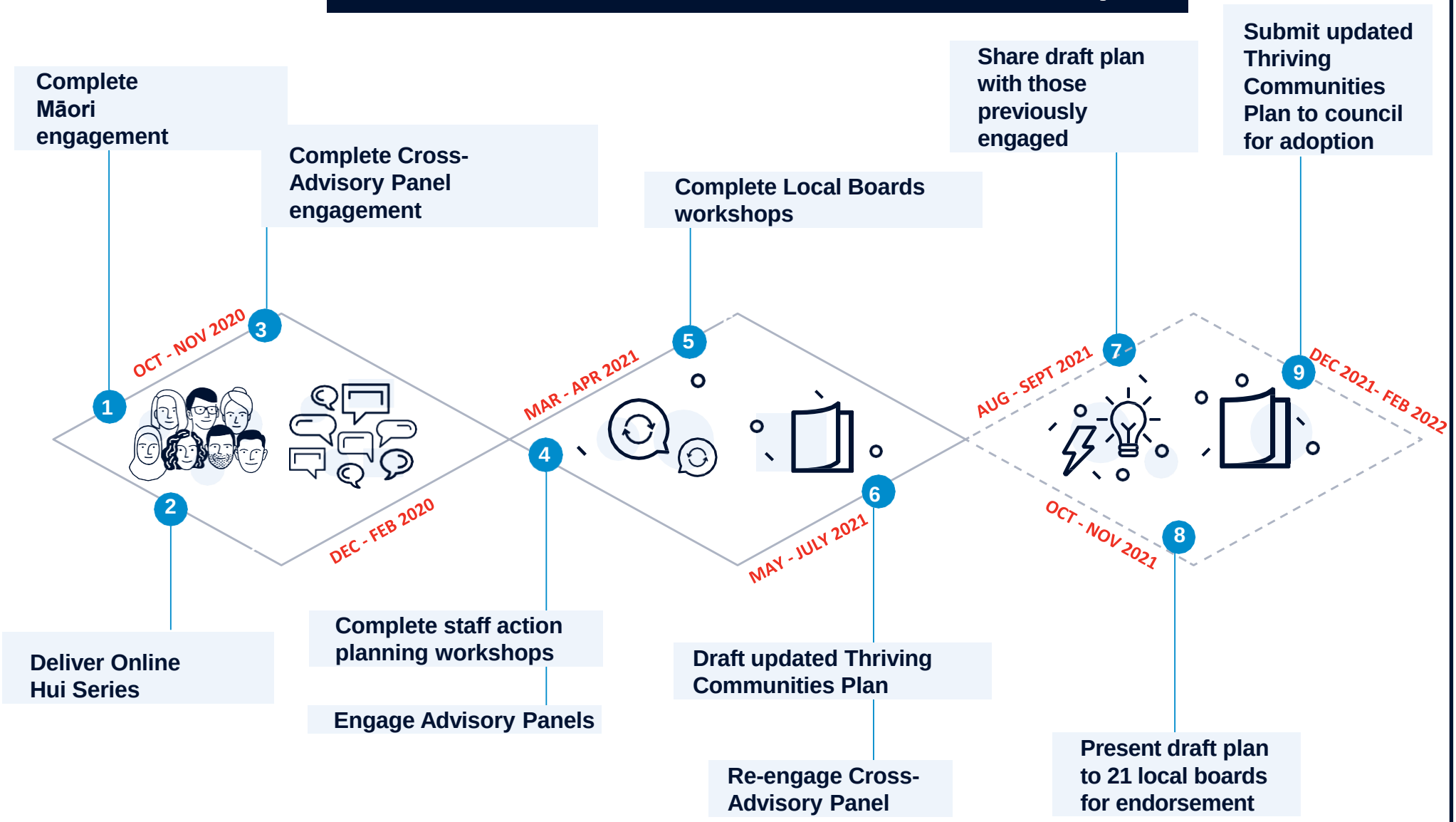
Part 3: Conclusions and next steps

3.1 Conclusions and reflections

- This presentation provides a high level and non-exhaustive summary of community engagement findings. We will use and analyse this set of findings to draft the refreshed Thriving Communities Plan.
- Our engagements aimed to capture a wide range of views and perspectives to help us draft the new plan, rather than a demographical sample.
- Many of the findings are already areas present within the existing Thriving Communities Action Plan (2014), which we will build upon rather than starting from scratch.
- In addition to community insights and findings, we will be drawing on a wide range of sources to help inform the new plan including:
    - Local board workshops and three-year workplans
    - Case studies from best-practice around the world
    - Academic literature and theoretical evidence
    - Demographic data (see our Local Board snapshots for an example)
    - Council staff's advice and input
    - Our cross-Advisory Panel group
    - Previous council consultation insights gathered.

Thank you to the Aucklanders who participated in the community engagement for generously sharing your time and ideas on what matters to you, your whānau and communities.

3.2 Indicative timeline and next steps



Thank you

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Please feel free to contact us by emailing:
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