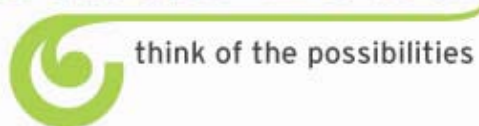


towards 2060



A record of Design the Future workshops held on 25 and 26 March, 2010

# OTARA

## Design the future



Compiled by Valerie Proud on behalf of the Otara community, as a record of Design the Future workshops held on 25 and 26 March 2010.

To access the flipcharts and photos of this and other Design the Future Workshops go to [www.towards2060.org.nz/outputs/](http://www.towards2060.org.nz/outputs/)

Background information used in the design of these workshops can also be found on the Towards 2060 website.

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## Table of Contents

Table of Contents .....	3
Introduction to Towards 2060.....	4
Otara Community .....	5
Community Advocacy Plan .....	6
Otara Ward Map .....	7
The Otara Workshop Output.....	7
Current Big Issues for Otara .....	8
Needs for the Sustainable Future of Otara .....	9
Subsistence / Shelter .....	10
Protection.....	10
Participation.....	10
Leisure / Recreation / 'Idleness' .....	10
Affection.....	11
Understanding.....	11
Creativity.....	11
Identity .....	11
Freedom.....	11
Key Visionary Statements .....	13
Clean and healthy environment.....	14
Spirituality .....	14
Community Hubs .....	14
Self Sufficient.....	14
Affordable Housing.....	14
Economic Vitality .....	14
Zero Waste .....	14
What could be some first steps?.....	15
Possible Priority Sustainability Projects.....	15
Closing Circle .....	15
Implications for Families, Community and Organisations.....	17
Facilitators' Perspective .....	18
Appendix A:    The Natural Step.....	20
Conditions for Sustainability .....	21
The Sustainability Funnel .....	22
The ABCD Model .....	23
Appendix B:    Workshop Participants .....	24

## **Introduction to Towards 2060**

Towards 2060 is a project for the communities of Manukau, facilitated by Manukau City Council, on behalf of its Tomorrow's Manukau partnership, working with community boards.

Through facilitated community workshops called Design the Future, Towards 2060 aims to inform, stimulate and provoke discussion within a community about the long term future; the community's future. The conversation considers: opportunities for social and economic development which recognise the finite nature of global and local natural resources; how to incorporate changes in demographics and technologies; and how consideration of these issues can be incorporated into the planning of local communities.

Ideally the conversations are part of an on-going discussion which continues to examine significant drivers of change, and their potential effects. It is anticipated that these conversations will trigger individual and collective actions to develop living patterns which are sustainable in the longer term.

Towards 2060 was originally intended to be part of the legislated review of community outcomes. With the impending changes to Auckland governance and potential amendments to the Local Government Act (2002) the original purpose of the project has taken a lower profile. However, given this change of governance, now is a good time for communities to consider their own future so that they can better articulate their collective view to the Auckland Council and Local Boards.

In the meantime, the output of the workshops will be available for the policy development of Community Boards, Council and Tomorrow's Manukau partners, to enable them to support community aspirations. It is stressed however that we can only put that information forward; at this stage there can be no certainty it will be used.

It is commonly stated that we can't predict the future. While that is the case, we can look at future trends, including mega-trends which will impact from global to local scales. We know for example that oil is a finite resource and that even the most optimistic reports consider that demand will outstrip supply within a couple of decades. The majority of reports signal a much shorter timeframe. That one change alone will have a dramatic impact on our

social and economic fabric. The real unknown is not that oil will become less readily available as production declines but how we as individuals, communities and nations will respond.

That's the core purpose of the conversations - to consider the future while recognising that our resource base and climate are changing. This will allow us to be proactive in addressing those challenges, building more flexibility and resilience into our lifestyles and becoming less dependent on many of the commodities and services we now take for granted. Opportunities will emerge through that process, often with a localised flavour, to enhance the community and economy.

These conversations are happening in many parts of the world between people and their governments, using a framework known as *The Natural Step* (TNS). The communities of Manukau are now a part of that global network. (See Appendix A for background information on this framework, and the tools used).

## **Otara Community**

Otara is located in Manukau, adjacent to the Tamaki River. The initial settlers, the Aki Taio and Ngati Kahu tribes, greatly prized its rich fertile land. The first European settlers successfully grew crops of wheat, oats and barley. Most of the area was later put into pasture, which was rapidly replaced by urban development, beginning in the 1950's with a state housing project. By 1967 the Otara town centre was developed.

Part of New Zealand's most ethnically diverse and fastest growing city, Otara exemplifies Manukau's demographic trends – high populations of Maori and Pacific peoples, and a high proportion of young people, compared with the rest of the country. This makes for a vibrant and colourful community of numerous cultures, showcased at the Otara Market every Saturday morning.

It is a sharing and caring community that works together; this is seen as a major factor in making it a great place to live, along with its central location, close to the motorway and to Auckland's amenities.

The Otara ward has the youngest of Manukau's populations, with a median age of 24 years, and 40% of residents below 20 years of age. Pacific Peoples make up 68% of Otara residents, followed by 20% Maori, 13% European, and

11 % Asian. The largest proportion of its workers are in elementary occupations, at 28%; it also has the highest level of unemployment, at 7%, leading to a low median personal income of \$19,200 (Source NZ Statistics, 2006 Census). It is a community that struggles with low incomes and inadequate investment in the area.

## **Community Advocacy Plan**

Otara's current community advocacy plan captures information on priorities produced through various planning exercises and surveys, including a vision for its future.

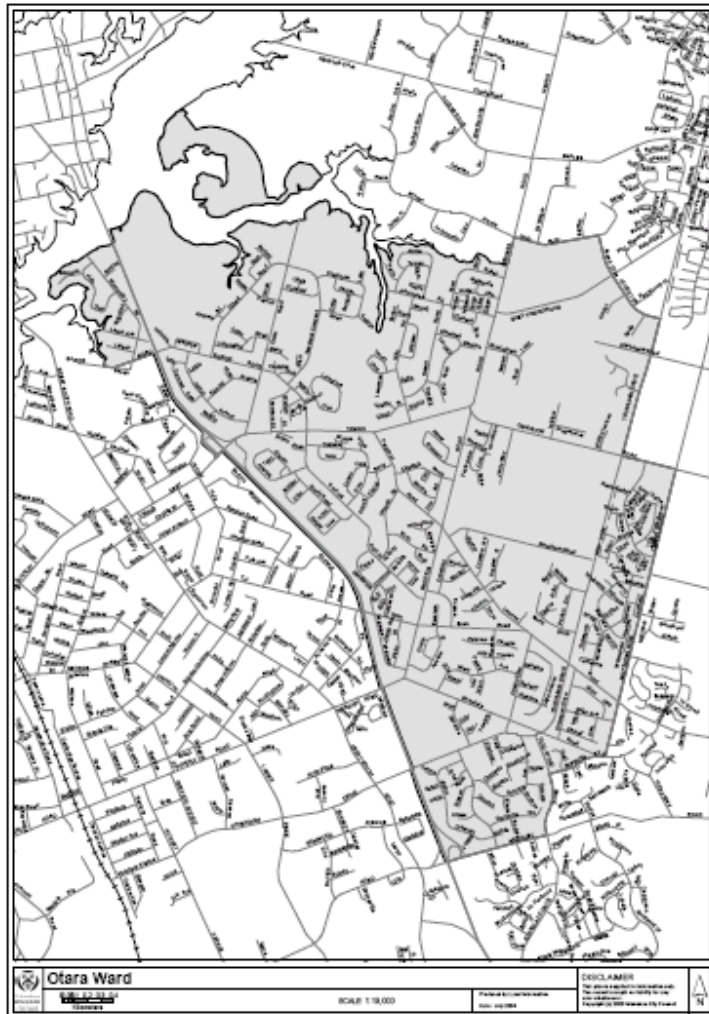
The Otara advocacy plan is due to be updated this year, and will be made available as an input into Local Board Plans of the new Auckland Council. The Towards 2060 workshop output can be used by the Community Board to set the longer – term vision which the Advocacy Plan can in part address.

Towards 2060 conversations and the Natural Step (TNS) tools can assist in helping the community consider the long-term future of the area.



*Figure 1 - Introductions during the Otara Workshop*

## Otara Ward Map



*Figure 2 - the Otara Area*

## The Otara Workshop Output

This report captures the discussions at the Otara Design the Future workshop, held over two days in late March 2010.

The first day of the workshop focused on providing information on future trends, through a combination of presentations, games, information cards, discussion and video. On the following day, participants were asked to consider how that information would relate to Otara, and what actions they might take as a result.

## Current Big Issues for Otara

After opening introductions, the first exercise required the group to consider what they identified as big current issues. They came up with the following:

- Explosive population growth, mainly due to central and local government policies, impacting resources, housing and health, and causing loss of open space to urban and business development and a deteriorating environment (particularly Otara Lake)
- The economy - high unemployment, comparative poverty, and associated social problems such as lack of parenting and other skills, poor health, and a rise in gambling, crime, and a poor reputation for the area
- Pressures from outside Otara and the impact of regional, national and global decisions, including the nature of Otara's historical development
- Mobility and transport issues - dependence on cars for transport, with implications for energy / fuel and affordability, for those most in need of social services such as doctors and hospitals
- Poor participation in higher education, and low skills
- Lack of leadership; need to be more pro-active than reactive
- A loss of continuity of spiritual and cultural values, particularly for immigrant communities, and strongly impacting young people.



*Figure 3 - Photograph from Otara Workshop, showing impact of changes over the years*

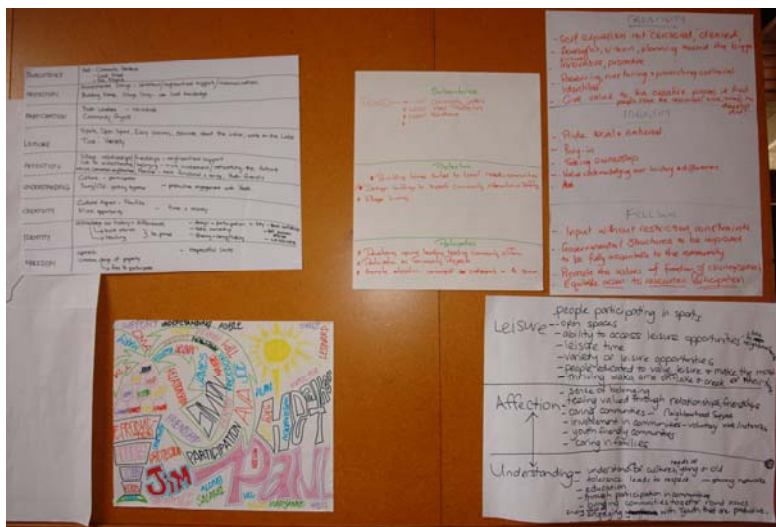


**Figure 4 - Playing the Zoom game to explore systems thinking**

Following this, the group played a simple game called *Zoom* that graphically demonstrates how we often see issues from one perspective only and miss “the big picture”. Key learnings from *Zoom* included:

- Everybody’s view contributes to a bigger picture and we need all the information
- It’s not always easy to see the whole picture
- Telling a full story needs communication and cooperation
- Together, we can do more than any one of us alone

## Needs for the Sustainable Future of Otago



**Figure 5 - Some of the flipcharts from Otago Workshop**

Using the nine fundamental needs identified by the research of Max Neef, the group identified the following as necessary components of a sustainable future for Otara:

### **Subsistence / Shelter**

More localised production of food through community gardens, more trees, local meat production and kai moana, and local food markets. Zero waste, of human, as well as physical resources. Worm-farming and composting, natural storm water-ways, and improved sewerage systems. More use of grey water and water tanks for every home. Affordable housing for all. Meaningful employment opportunities and jobs for all, through job creation.

### **Protection**

Building homes suited to local needs and communities - good planning and design. A new way of designing communities / a return to village living 'hubs', with buildings designed to support community interaction and safety. Clean air, environment and all regulations and district plan provisions in place to ensure this.

### **Participation**

Developing young leaders, to lead community affairs. Encouraging participation in community projects. Include young people / get our young people participating. Promoting interaction amongst individuals in the community, through community hubs - kids are playing, our elderly are integrated into the community, we all know our neighbours, and we are sharing our success stories, and swapping our garden produce.

### **Leisure / Recreation / 'Idleness'**

More green spaces and parks, good facilities for sports and recreation. More role models and sports stars from and for our local youth. Healthy recreation, with walkable community hubs that include our arts centre, gymnasium, library, flea market, and our spiritual and health centres. Ability to access a variety of leisure opportunities close to our neighbourhoods. Otara Lake and creek restored to be suitable for recreation - "thriving waka ama on our lake".

**Affection**

Re-establish our sense of belonging, and being valued - 'village' communities - through strengthened relationships, more connected neighbourhoods, and families. Friendly interactions; neighbourhood support and community hubs, with mentoring, eldership and rites of passage programmes for youth.

**Understanding**

"Unity in our diversity". Understanding different cultures and the needs of young and old. Tolerance leads to respect. Raise awareness of sustainability, through education about a different kind of future. Find productive ways to engage with youth. Share aspirations and dreams for the future, share our knowledge across cultures. Young and old getting together more. Fairness of access to information and internet. Local community courses to include vocational and academic programmes, cultural understanding, and basic accounting, agricultural, cooking and weaving skills through learning by doing.

**Creativity**

Self expression not censored or denied. Foresight, vision, planning towards the bigger picture. Innovative and proactive. Value the creative process, - people need the resources (time, money) to develop this. Youth need aspirations, and commitment to follow their dreams. There are opportunities to learn and acquire skills through our own family and cultural groups. Preserve, nurture and promote our cultural identities - such as Maori and Pacifica languages, arts and cultural skills.

**Identity**

Acknowledge our history, our differences and cultures, share our stories. Enhance respect for and be proud of our culture, and our spirituality. Reclaim our village community identity. Take ownership, keep sharing, caring and talking. Tell our success stories and celebrate.

**Freedom**

Ensure all our kids are happy, busy and safe. Governmental structures to be fully accountable to the community. Promote the values of freedom of choice, and free speech. Equitable access to resources.

Our children are taught the basics of life at an early age, so that they are healthy and free from toxic influences. Be respectful of limits. More creative design of property will mean we are more free to participate. Traditional knowledge of natural weather cycles, for fishing, planting, breeding animals for food, and for natural medicines and health is freely shared. Young people learn by doing.

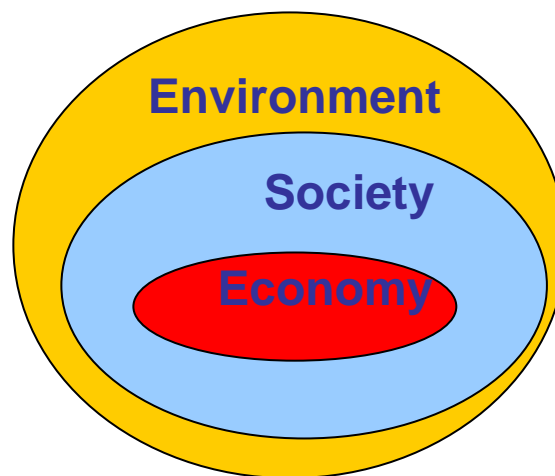
After discussion of these human needs, each group used information cards on future energy and climate trends as a basis for discussion.

A short video on global population growth was shown to indicate one of the key challenges for future development, being the high rate of population growth in the last 100 years to the current level of 6.5 million and still climbing. <http://www.towards2060.org.nz/world-population-growth/>

Some comments after watching the video included:

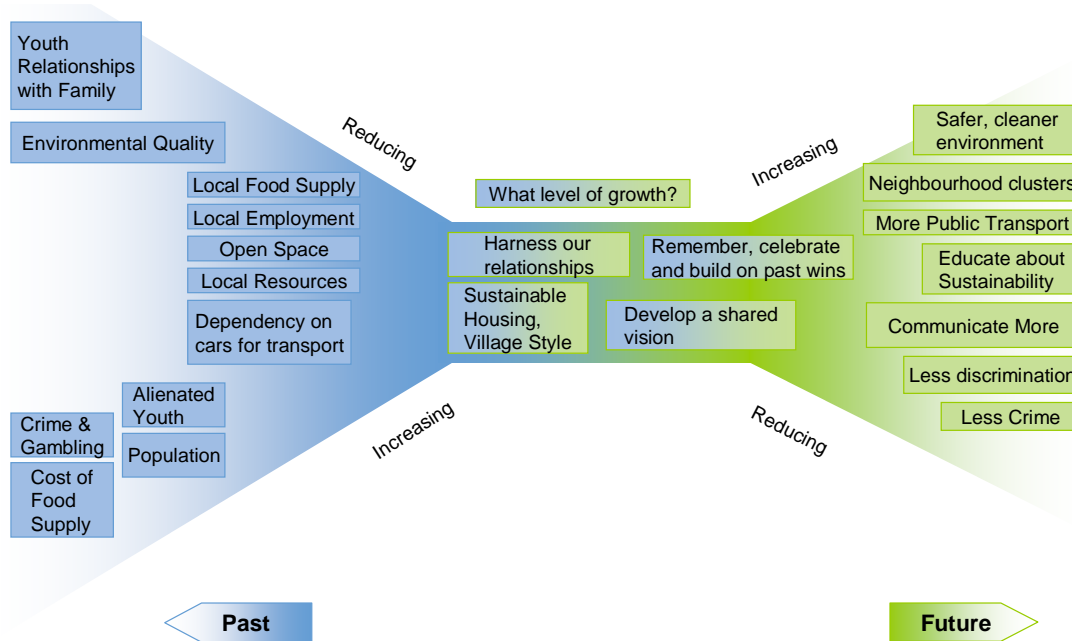
- The explosive growth of human population is quite shocking
- We aren't prepared for fuel running out
- The video only started from year zero AD, whereas the Maori world view goes even further back, to the beginning.
- We are already seeing some of the impacts of growth in Otago

The group then watched a presentation on tools used by The Natural Step which show how the environment supports society, and the economy sits within that. These are strongly inter-dependent, and all impact the way we live.



*Figure 6 - Interaction of environment, society and economy*

The group then discussed how to plan for a better future for Otara, by applying the Natural Step tools. One such tool was the Funnel model. If we put the issues participants raised against the funnel, this pattern emerges for Otara:



*Figure 7 - Applying the Sustainability Funnel to Otara*

## Key Visionary Statements



*Figure 8 - Exploring our ideal vision of a Sustainable Otara*

On the second day, the group recapped aspects of the Natural Step, and the conditions that need to be met to have a sustainable future.

In small groups, participants focused on a sustainable vision of Otara's long-term future. The group considered that its ideal vision would need to be shared, inspiring, and would include the following aspects:

**Clean and healthy environment**

Land, forest and seas, not just for Otara, but throughout Aotearoa.

**Spirituality**

Acknowledging there are diverse beliefs and religions, there was a shared sense that this is an important dimension for the majority of people in Otara.

**Community Hubs**

A strong community spirit, with safe, healthy, comfortable and friendly neighbourhoods with all cultures honoured and understood, strong families, and a village feel.

**Self Sufficient**

More self-sufficiency with a backyard or community garden for every home, producing healthy food locally.

**Affordable Housing**

Everyone housed in affordable, sustainable homes, suited to the needs of each family, in neighbourhood clusters.

**Economic Vitality**

More equitable for all, with meaningful employment opportunities and jobs, through job creation.

**Zero Waste**

Zero waste of physical resources, but also of knowledge, experience and skills - with everyone's contribution valued.

A presentation was then shown of the redevelopment of Hammarby, a suburb of Stockholm in Sweden. The slide sequence is found at:

<http://www.towards2060.org.nz/hammarby-sjostad-in-stockholm-sweden/>

This presentation showed how a large community development was planned to optimize and integrate infrastructure, good social outcomes, and clever use of the local environment and resource use and reuse. While not every detail

is applicable to Otara, the principles based on systems thinking, could be applied to any development.

### **What could be some first steps?**

The group acknowledged that this workshop was a beginning, and that further discussions were needed to progress towards a more sustainable future. First steps could include:

- Further awareness-raising workshops about sustainability challenges.
- Setting up a 'council' of local elders, and youth representatives, to take leadership across cultures, and to progress this kaupapa, share the knowledge, skills and understandings.

### **Possible Priority Sustainability Projects**

Although it was agreed the community needed to determine its own priorities, the following ideas for possible projects were discussed:

- More exploration of economic development for the Otara area, employing local people locally.
- Cleaning up Otara Lake and natural, open waterways, and more planting of trees and gardens.
- A street by street approach to building Otara neighbourhood villages.
- Stricter control of alcohol and gambling.

### **Closing Circle**



*Figure 9 - Summing up the workshop and 'What next?'*

The workshop closed with a discussion of possible next steps, whether as a community, through organisations or as individual family members. Here is a sample of their comments:

- Why aren't there more community leaders in the room?
- How do we build a community that can challenge the status quo?
- I have a brand new moko and I'm wondering what kind of world they're going to grow up in.
- A very interesting day for me. I learned a helluva lot.
- I'm going to go home with a lot of knowledge from today.
- The first time in our community that we're looking at the nitty gritty.
- I can't believe we're about to be duped by the leader of this country over mining on the Coromandel.
- The thing that sticks in my mind is the circle, all the parts linking up, the big picture.
- It was a privilege to be part of this process.
- We all came on different waka but we are all in the same boat.
- This is a beginning, not an end - this is important and now that the seed is planted we need to nurture it to help it grow.
- Local and central government need to be part of this process in the super city.
- We really need to keep learning and talking about this.
- We need to return to our old knowledge, and make wiser use of our resources - 'back to the future'.
- I will take this up with the Otara Network Action Committee.
- This requires a big shift in our way of thinking and acting and we need to share this knowledge with more of our people.
- We are grateful for this opportunity to receive this information and learn what we can do to help protect our long term future.

## **Implications for Families, Community and Organisations**

At the Otara workshop, participants identified individual and family actions they could take to improve their own resilience, such as installing rainwater tanks and solar heating, re-using grey-water, growing household gardens, recycling, and decreasing their use of unsustainable consumables.

However, relatively low rates of home ownership, and the cost of some of these initiatives, are currently limiting factors. For example, while households currently have the right to collect and store rain water for their own use, filtration requirements and devices for backflow prevention, are beyond the reach of many households. Similarly, solar power is unaffordable. There was brief discussion of the role of policy-makers to encourage such initiatives and of the possibility of low-interest loans or subsidies.

The group also identified actions that would require a concerted community effort, such as cleaning up Otara Lake, and tackling social issues such as gambling, but would also require the support of government agencies.

More far-reaching changes to existing land use identified for Otara (for example, clearing some housing areas to reinstate food production; more sustainable housing and buildings; and improvement of public transport), would require planning changes, and may require changes to central and local government policy, and the Spatial Plan in some instances.

Many on the workshop spoke of the power of community and cultural values in raising the pride of their people, as a means of addressing some of the issues the community face. Reshaping housing through the planning and design of affordable, sustainable housing, to meet the needs of extended families was of great interest to this group, and has implications for Auckland Council and Housing New Zealand Corporation in particular.

There are also potential implications for strategies relevant to the future council-controlled organisations (CCOs), such as Watercare Services Limited, and a number of key government agencies.

It was also clearly important to the community that education providers, such as Manukau Institute of Technology, find ways to encourage more local young

people to make use of local education facilities, as education was seen as a primary key to preparation for dealing with long-term sustainability challenges and forces of change.

These brief examples simply highlight the potential for other organisations to respond to the needs of Otara residents. While such developments would require a capital investment, there would be benefits in reduced health costs and improvement in other social indicators.

Further planning exercises will be required in the future to clarify the communities' priorities for action, in the context of these long term aims.

## **Facilitators' Perspective**

The Otara workshop had a late start due to lower numbers than hoped for, but was highlighted by the enthusiasm and willingness of participants to speak passionately and openly on issues of concern to them. As not all participants were present for all sessions over the two days, it was unclear whether there was a coherent understanding among all participants of the Natural Step tools and principles, and how these could be used to test the sustainability of their vision and actions.

Nevertheless, a number of participants already had considerable understanding of both the history of the area, and of the global challenges of the future. While others were less knowledgeable about sustainability, and some individuals seemed to focus on single issues, most if not all understood the need for an integrated and holistic approach across the environmental, social, and economic dimensions of their community.

As a group, there was agreement that a plausible and sustainable future would require a different type of long term vision, followed up with community action, to meet the expected future challenges.

From comments they made, it was clear that those who attended saw this as a beginning of an important community conversation, rather than an end, and some individuals expressed the desire to continue this process, with several specifically committing themselves to take particular actions to progress community discussion and actions.

The analogy of sowing seeds fits well with this community. Effective action towards a positive plausible vision for Otara will require all the enthusiasm

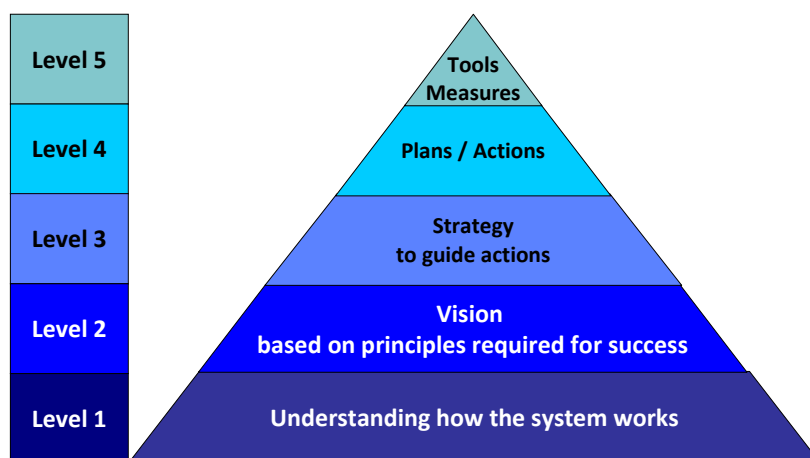
and commitment of participants and their wider communities. The context of changes to Auckland's governance provides an excellent opportunity for the community of Otara to continue this process. Taking the metaphor further, it will be exciting to see what fruits come from these conversations in the months and years to come.

## Appendix A: The Natural Step

Towards 2060 chose *The Natural Step* (TNS) as a framework for considering and achieving a shared understanding of what sustainable development means. While elements of TNS are common to other strategic planning frameworks, TNS deals specifically with sustainable development. It is used extensively by communities and businesses in many countries. Founded in Sweden 20 years ago, it has stood the test of time and formed an international network of accredited practitioners, a small group of whom are based in New Zealand, and are part of Towards 2060.

The TNS framework is based on thinking about the “whole system” or “big picture” before focusing down on a strategy or plan of action. It progresses through a series of five levels to help prioritise actions and ways of assessing their success. A system can be anything from an individual’s lifestyle to a nation’s long-term strategy.

Games like *Zoom* help us visualise a system and the importance of understanding inter-relationships of components within the system. The emphasis is on ensuring the broader context of a problem is fully understood so that in solving one problem, there isn’t an unintended negative impact elsewhere in the system. Considering the whole also helps us put some of the tools for sustainability into perspective. In seeking a solution to a problem, we avoid using tools that are less than optimal for the whole system.



*Figure 10 - Five level framework, developing from big picture to measuring success*

TNS has also developed *system conditions*, "objectives", which, if followed, will ensure that the direction of development is sustainable. System conditions particularly fit in level 2 above but can then be applied to guide strategies and actions. The conditions define what is required to achieve a "sustainable world". They provide a checklist for development and can be used in any planning context to help analyse and prioritise choices. With current technologies and options available to us, the way forward may not fully satisfy all the conditions but still be the best choice at the present time.

## Conditions for Sustainability

### WHAT WE TAKE

Continually reduce and eliminate our dependence on mined metals, minerals and fossil fuels - *extract less, reuse, recycle, use renewable resources*

### WHAT WE MAKE

Continually reduce and eliminate our use of manufactured non-degradable chemicals and substances - *use natural alternatives and recyclable materials*

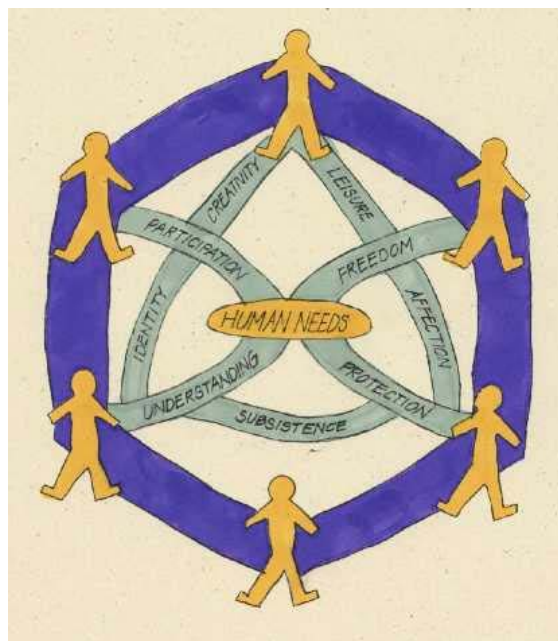
### WHAT WE DESTROY

Continually reduce and eliminate our dependence on activities that cause physical encroachment upon the natural environment - *draw resources from sustainably managed eco-systems, restore nature, protect biodiversity*

### HOW WE SHARE

Ensure that people everywhere are treated fairly and with respect to enable them to meet their needs efficiently – *look after people, share resources fairly*

*Figure 11 - Sustainability conditions to assist in planning processes*

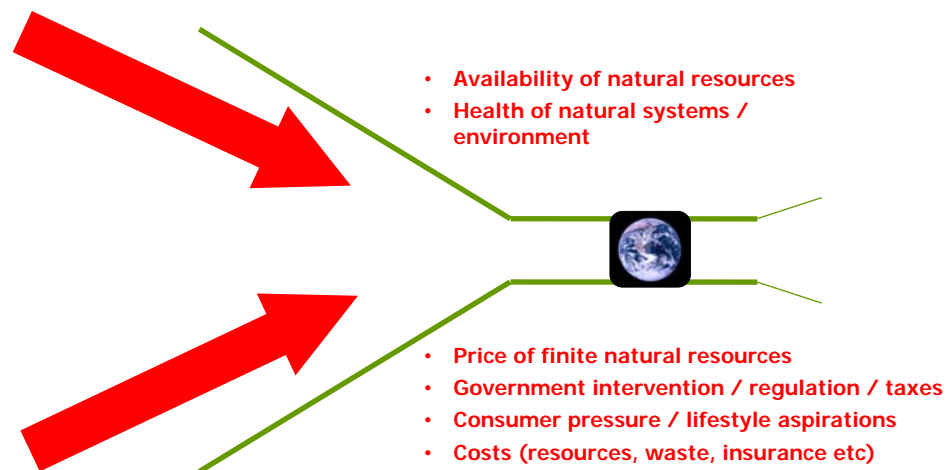


*Figure 12 - Fundamental human needs as identified by the research of Max Neef*

The conversation around the system conditions can be expanded by considering what contributes to the fourth system condition “How we Share”, and understanding basic needs. Based on research by Chilean economist Max Neef, nine inter-connected satisfiers of human needs have been identified. The emphasis becomes how to satisfy those needs in a community, while working towards the first three objectives.

TNS also uses a *tree* as a metaphor. The four conditions, like the roots of a tree, underpin a wide range of services - the ‘branches and leaves’ - within any system, be it an organisation, community or country. They provide a commonality of purpose, ensuring the many parts of the system have a collective definition of success.

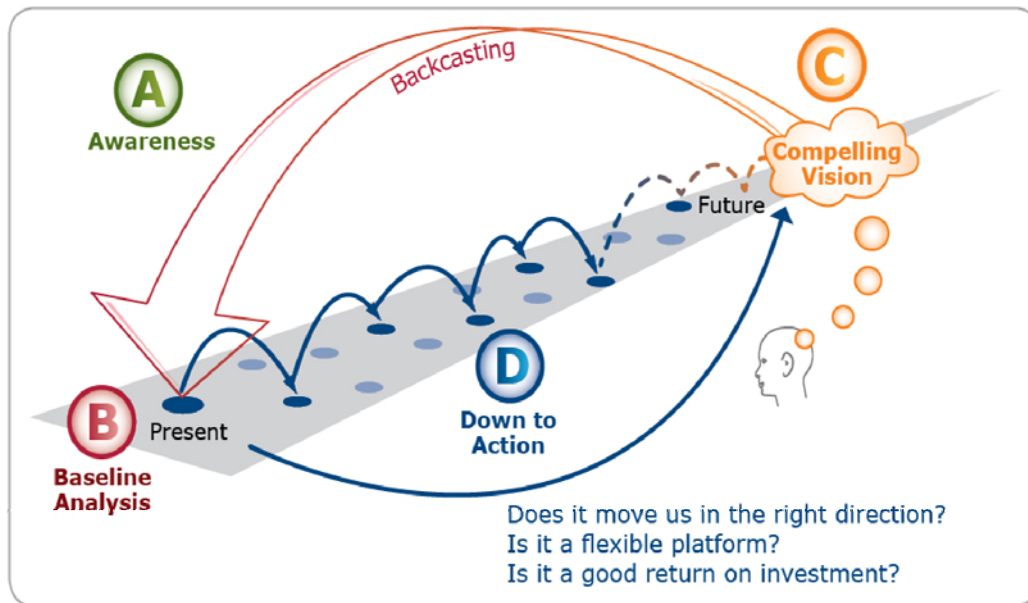
### The Sustainability Funnel



*Figure 13 - The funnel which can be applied to a wide range of current contexts*

TNS uses another metaphor which helps to focus on key issues for a system, the *funnel*. This describes how pressures are increasing as resources are decreasing. It can be applied to a wide range of situations. The end-game is to stop the sides of the funnel colliding; pass through the apex of the funnel and start to open it out the other side. Discussion occurs around the question: what actions are required to make that happen?

## The ABCD Model



*Figure 14 - A planning framework*

Yet another TNS tool is used to start to develop priorities for action with the community. It's known as the *ABCD model*, where A is awareness of the system under discussion and the future challenges or forces that will impact on it; B is the baseline, where the system is now, is it working well, is it resilient in the face of future changes?; C is the vision of the future. In *Towards 2060* we use the year 2060 as a point in time to focus on but it could be any other date sufficiently far in the future to take participants out of the current state and think about what is down that future road.

The preferred future that is envisioned must also be plausible, based on what we believe will be the challenges and opportunities of the future and it must be possible, that is, achievable. It's a practical exercise which needs to consider financial benefits and constraints and ensure there can be flexibility in achieving the vision.

Following the creation of that vision there is a process known as *backcasting* which returns from the vision to the present day and considers what incremental steps and actions (D) are required to create the vision.

The ABCD framework is a simple process but each step is necessary to get the best outcome.

## **Appendix B: Workshop Participants**

Note that not all people attended all sessions.

Adele Hamilton  
Allan Va'aa  
Aloysio Leo  
Tunumafono Ava Fa'amoe  
Gloria Stanford  
Gloria Theodore  
Grey Theodore  
Harold Phillips  
Heather Raudon  
Ina Sape  
Jim Sinclair  
Joe Iosefo  
Junior Munokoa  
Katalina  
Kay Enosa  
Leonard  
Louisa Lavakula  
Lucy Nemani  
Mary Gush  
Makareta Davis  
Pori Williams  
Poutoa Papali'i  
Robyn Allpress  
Rosetta Reti-Simanu  
Richard  
Rev. Salafai Maki  
Sully Paea  
Tipi Arthur  
Tuiono Temata  
Vincent Dickie  
Wyllis Maihi  
**Facilitators were:**  
James Samuel  
Simon Harvey