

The ‘Why’ – Community Aspiration

During the development of this plan, the perspectives of iwi, stakeholders and the communities of Hurunui were taken into consideration to ensure that the aspirations for tourism in the district are reflected in both the vision for the plan, and the future priorities and opportunities identified. During the consultation process, it became very clear that there were a number of shared commonalities for the district that would help to shape the shared vision for the plan.

The shared aspirations are captured beneath the four wellbeings² in the Plan on a Page, but to understand why these aspirations are integral for the success of the plan, and for building a thriving community in the district, it is important to understand the story that they tell for the district. By understanding the story, there is a greater chance of identifying what needs to be developed in the future to bring those stories to life, and achieve the social, cultural, environmental and economic aspirations of wellbeing for local communities.

² The Living Standards <https://www.treasury.govt.nz/information-and-services/nz-economy/higher-living-standards/our-living-standards-framework>



Building Community Wealth and Health

The communities that make up the District of Hurunui are proud of who and what they are and want the ability to ensure they can support their own wellbeing into the future. With an ageing population combined with young families entering the district to take employment in some of the thriving rural industries in Hurunui, there is a desire to ensure that a sense of community and neighbourhood is fostered, and at the same time, planning for the district’s future takes into consideration the facilities that will be needed.

As with many regions throughout Aotearoa, there is an aspiration to enable whanau to return to the district. This would require adequate employment, housing and access to education and training opportunities that can facilitate an increase in population throughout the district.



Empowering People

Perhaps one of the strongest shared aspirations throughout the district was to ensure that communities are empowered as hosts, while they are welcoming the visitor through the connections created with the people and place of Hurunui. There is an expectation from the community that this connection will be fostered by the visitor-sector, and positive benefits from this connection will be seen and felt through local communities.

Many in the district including members of the local rūnanga, indicated that investing in the education of children in the district is of vital importance for the future. This includes, for Māori communities, ensuring that rangatahi have the ability to hear and learn their own histories and whakapapa. There is a national upswell from many iwi throughout Aotearoa to ensure that these stories, traditions, and histories are captured before it is too late.

Another common theme for Hurunui that resonates throughout Aotearoa, is the desire for iwi to be in control of their stories. This includes having the ability to determine what stories are told, who tells them, and how they are told. For this to be achieved, there needs to be a purposeful, meaningful and collaborative approach to consultation with rūnanga in the district by stakeholders.

Respect Our Environments

Hurunui is blessed with a large number of natural assets throughout the district. The communities who call this place home expect that visitors to their place will engage with their natural taonga appropriately and in a managed and controlled manner. Some of these assets are difficult to access, and the communities desire to see that addressed was communicated through the consultation process.

Tourism as a sector has always benefitted from community and the natural environment. The elements of people and place in destinations are often the compelling reason why a particular location is selected as part of an itinerary. There is a degree of expectation among the community that the tourism sector helps to support community and environmental initiatives into the future. This could be done through a variety of different methods but should be collaborative in nature and enable visitors to connect with initiatives that resonate most with them and provide opportunities for meaningful interaction with local residents.



Strong Economic Enabler for The District

As a destination, Hurunui has a significant tourism opportunity to build sustainable economic pathways for individuals, communities and businesses throughout the district either through direct or indirect involvement with the visitor sector. There is a need to ensure that the sector is therefore recognised as the economic enabler it is, and that the benefits flow far and wide into communities.

A powerful tourism sector and industry will provide the district with new and evolving employment and career opportunities. This will require adequate workforce development programmes and pathways as well as working with existing businesses and education providers. There is an opportunity to grow the agritourism sector within the district to deliver sustainable inter-generational businesses for property and landowners, with succession plans to ensure existing experiences have longevity.

To ensure that the supply of experiences and services are in place to support a growing tourism industry, investment throughout the district should be encouraged, and an ethos of Red Carpet not Red Tape should be fostered when reviewing potential investment opportunities.

