

# Urban Development Position

Summary & Key Components

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# Introduction and Context

Good urban form makes a significant contribution to achieving many of Government's transport outcomes and priorities. It contributes to lower carbon emissions, supporting the provision of better travel options, improved social, health and community outcomes, efficient use of land supply, and better value for money. The importance of good urban form is set out in several Waka Kotahi strategy documents, including [Arataki](#), [Keeping Cities Moving](#) and [Toitu te Taiao](#).

Waka Kotahi involvement in urban development processes historically focused on encouraging decisions that maintain the safe and efficient operation of the state highway network, although more recently we have become directly involved in spatial planning processes with a broader focus. Urban development decision-making has become more complex in recent years with the Government playing a much more active role through the creation of Urban Growth Partnerships, new agencies and new planning, decision-making and funding processes. While Waka Kotahi is typically not the primary decision maker in the urban development process, we have a significant interest in these decisions because urban form and development have a major impact on transport outcomes.



# Urban Development Position

*“We actively support, enable and encourage quality, mixed-use, compact urban development that efficiently uses land, reduces travel distances and lowers reliance on private vehicles to enhance people’s lives.”*

The Waka Kotahi Board adopted a strategic position on urban development in 2022. This describes what is important to us regarding the integration of transport and urban development.

Evidence from Aotearoa and globally indicates that a more compact urban form supported by the right diversity of land uses, achieves better community outcomes. This includes a range of transport outcomes – lower travel distances, greater mode share for public transport and active modes, and better places for people to live and thrive.

We are building this into Waka Kotahi operating frameworks including building capability, being a smarter investor, and aiming for more consistent outcomes on urban development issues.



# Urban Development Roles

To support our Urban Development Position, the Waka Kotahi Board has clarified the roles that Waka Kotahi does and should play around urban development. We identified three ways in which we can effectively influence and inform relevant urban planning decisions:

- Leading operational land transport planning input to local urban development so that decision making supports consistent integrated land use and transport planning
- Working with partner Agencies to support ongoing integration between transport and urban development decision-making, from long-term strategy through to delivery
- Including investment conditions where required in urban development packages to facilitate prioritised, sequenced and integrated activity



# Urban Development Principles

Maximise opportunities that **support medium to high density developments that are mixed-use, people-centred** and within a 10-minute walk of frequent or rapid public transport options

## To enable:

- Urban form that **stimulates demand for sustainable travel options** and reduce demand for travel by car
- More compact urban form that supports **great destinations** and **reduces the need to travel**
- Integration of the transport system, through **optimisation of the existing network** and **reallocating road space** to sustainable travel modes and public space that supports the effective movement of people, services and freight
- **Priority investment** for public transport and active modes for people and for low-carbon freight movement

Use an **evidence-led, proactive and collaborative approach** on planning large-scale growth plans, ensuring better alignment of the transport outcomes and partner agency outcomes.

The Urban Development Principles translate the Waka Kotahi Position Statement into practical outcomes for interpretation at a programme and project level, through the Roles that Waka Kotahi plays in urban development matters.

All transport programmes and projects that have an impact on urban development outcomes should seek to apply these Principles through planning, design and investment considerations.

# Further Information

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