



STRATEGIC PLAN FOR PROPERTY

**AT THE SERVICE OF
MISSION**

LIVING NO LONGER FOR OURSELVES BUT FOR CHIRST

**Memorial of Mary, Mother of the Church
May 24th, 2021**

AT THE SERVICE OF MISSION

This element of the Diocesan strategic pastoral plan focuses on property, that is, land and buildings in our parishes. Property is always at the service of mission. It does not determine the mission. We cannot afford to keep property that is not conducive for mission today and in the years to come. Likewise, we cannot afford to not prepare for the mission in the years ahead.

The decisions we make today will enable mission or provide a millstone for mission in years to come.

OUR CHANGING PEOPLE

Hamilton Diocese has changed greatly since it was erected in 1980. In terms of the population living within the Diocesan boundaries we are the second largest Diocese in New Zealand. At the 2018 census the Diocese of Hamilton had a population of 769,970. In 2043 it is expected to be 916,560.

As expected, the projected growth areas are in and around Hamilton and Tauranga.

In the 40+ years since our Diocese's inception we have seen the composition of our parishes change.

	2018	2043
Hamilton City	168,700	224,800
Waikato District	75,200	101,700
	53,900	65,900
TOTAL	297,800	392,400
Tauranga City	134,600	179,500
Western BOP District	49,500	57,900
TOTAL	184,100	237,400
Otorohanga District	10,300	10,850
South Waikato District	24,000	21,700
Waitomo District	9,830	8,760
Taupō District	37,200	39,000
Rotorua District	71,800	72,600
Whakatane District	35,800	35,100
Kawerau District	6,840	5,180
Opotiki District	8,800	6,670
Gisborne District	48,500	49,900
Source : http://nzdotstat.stats.govt.nz/wbos/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=TABLECODE7586		

CHANGING PARISHES TO MEET CHANGING PASTORAL NEEDS

Many of our parishes have seen radical changes. For example Taupō, Gisborne and Mount Maunganui (now Papamoa Coast) moved locations to better suit the changing needs of growing parishes.

The *Who is my Neighbour* plan established Collegial Areas, recognised that parishes need to work together pastorally and to share resources. It also advocated the merging of some parishes. This continues to be an on-going process. In the same way, parish development projects cannot always be looked at through a solely parish lens. This is particularly so in the two expanding major urban areas, namely, Hamilton (including Ngaurawahia, Morrinsville, Cambridge and Te Awamutu) and Tauranga (including the Western Bay of Plenty through to Waihi).

Hamilton City as a whole needs to review and lessen the number and location of its parishes and churches. As part of the review consideration needs to be given to how much use each church gets, especially on a Sunday. Consideration also needs to be given to whether the current churches are fit for purpose in terms of worship space and building community. Furthermore, consideration needs to be given as to whether the current locations of the churches are in the right place for Hamilton in 2071?

Tauranga currently has two parishes. As the Tauranga urban area continues to grow, the urban area as a whole needs to assess whether two parishes are adequate for this growth. It needs to review the number of parishes especially on the Tauranga side of the

harbour as the city spreads along the harbour and Papamoa coast. What provisions need to be made for the future?

The Diocese has over the years made long-term land purchases to enable the building of new Catholic schools. This will need to continue for the growing urban areas though the provision of such schools will be dependent on the availability of tagged Catholic staff. Traditionally primary schools have been alongside a parish church. Our new Suzanne Aubert Catholic School at Papamoa does not have an adjacent parish church although there are plans for a Mass centre. All future school developments must include a plan for a chapel or mass centre. At the same time our Colleges need to review the accessibility of a church or chapel large enough for the regular College Masses. St Bede's College in Christchurch have set a high benchmark of the importance of a regularly used chapel at the heart of the College and the College's life.

Therefore, as part of any future development plans or major maintenance projects in the **two major urban areas**, there must be some assessment of the project within the context of the wider urban area, including location, proximity to other such facilities.

Many parishes throughout the Diocese, particularly in the rural areas, have experienced a decline in population and a decline in the size of families. This has led to the closure of many rural churches. At the same time urban churches have also been rationalised, such as the closure of the Greerton church in Tauranga.

Such changes are reminders that we are a pilgrim Church, and just because a church is in a certain place it doesn't need to be there forever.

For all projects there must also be some assessment of the project's value in regards to the benefits for the spiritual and pastoral needs of the parish going in to the future.

CHANGING NEEDS WITHIN PARISHES

In years past parishes often had a parish hall and these had a lot of use. Many of these were built in the time when hotels had "six o'clock closing" and where local halls were the centre of entertainment in communities. In the same way the parish hall became the centre of the social life of the parish community.

In more recent years there has been a move towards parish centres and making use of enlarged foyers in churches. Often these have been developed while retaining the halls which have been used less frequently. In recent times parishes have moved to dispose of their halls. Te Puke and Taumarunui are two examples of this.

Over the same time the nature of churches has changed. While most churches in the Diocese of Hamilton are more modern they do not have parish centre facilities of more modern churches. Over the years we have seen the employment of parish secretaries, pastoral workers and youth workers but has the provision of adequate parish offices kept pace.

Since the Christchurch earthquakes more stringent building codes have been put in place. More regulatory demands are being placed on the owners of buildings.

Therefore - each parish will complete an inventory of their parish plant including an assessment of the buildings for the

parish and their suitability for the spiritual pastoral mission of the parish. The inventory will include a 10 year maintenance plan and budget for the ongoing maintenance of each building and assessment of the costs of the building, including rates, insurance, power. A template and assistance will be provided by the Diocese.

The presbytery - a sign of parishioners' love for the priesthood and of their care for their priest. Jesus reminds us that the labourer deserves their wages (cf Matthew 10:10). We priests of the Diocese are ever grateful for the support given to us by parishioners in so many ways, and in this context for support from the parish collections that pays out stipends. Additionally the parish makes available a home for the priest.

The presbytery is an asset of the parish and as good stewards the parish needs to care for it and ensure it is of a suitable standard for the priest.

Therefore - each parish should ensure its presbytery meets the Healthy Home Standards. The Parish Finance Council should each year go through the presbytery to see what works are needed to keep the presbytery in a good state of repair and comfort. Those resident in the house should treat it with respect so that it is ready for their successor.

The parish is called to exercise responsible stewardship as a sign of gratitude of the generosity of its parishioners. As we have been left a legacy by the generations who have gone before us, so may we leave future generations a legacy that will help them live the mission in their future time. May all we do and build be at the service of the mission.



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