



Competitive Cities: A Decade of Shifting Fortunes

Spotlight on Hamilton

Household change 2008 vs 2018

↑12%



Household income



↓4%



Mortgage payments



↑19%



Basic expenditure



\$3,297



Annual discretionary income

Agricultural roots, metropolitan manifesto

Hamilton is competing with other smaller cities for growth spilling out of Auckland. It is well placed. Closer than both Tauranga and Whangarei, a national university on its doorstep and the majestic Waikato River sweeping through, Hamilton is an attractive alternative to the hustle and bustle of Auckland.

Discretionary income in Hamilton increased by \$63 per week over the last decade as rising income and falling housing costs more than offset rising basic expenditure.

Keeping pace with competitors may require more however. Hamilton lagged behind Tauranga in employment, business and wage growth over the last decade (Figure 1).

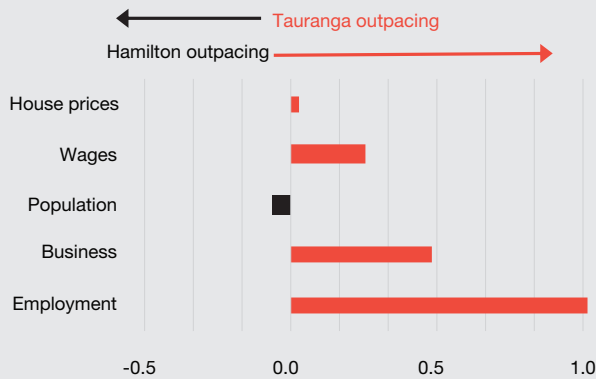
Hamilton's population growth was among the fastest of any city. Hamilton may benefit from a net increase in retirees as well as a small Auckland-bound commuter population looking to avoid housing costs in the City of Sails, but unless dramatic improvements are made to travel times between the two cities, Hamilton needs to look within for economic prosperity.



Implementing Te Waka's new Labour Market Strategy must be a priority for the city



Figure 1: Tauranga vs Hamilton: Net difference in annual growth rates, 2008-2018



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Relatively low land prices, good transport links, and a recognised university are just some of the ingredients that Hamilton can leverage to attract high value businesses and good paying jobs.

With many residents focused on the intolerable living costs north of the Bombay Hills and land intensive businesses looking for options, conditions have swung toward Hamilton. Now is the time for the city to actively pursue growth opportunities, leaning on its favourable geography and investing in a bold new vision of urban prosperity. Hamilton's agricultural roots are a unique building block for a new metropolitan future.

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