

Intensifying Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland: Some Higher-Density Housing Outcomes after the Adoption of the Auckland Unitary Plan of 2016

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Abstract

Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland's housing paradigm has been in a process of transition since the 1990s, following a radical overhaul of planning legislation intended to address the city's continuing growth. Also driven by the imperatives of sustainable urban planning, the city has subsequently adopted a series of resource management policy revisions each designed to intensify the city's urban form by increasing permissible density of housing development. The Auckland Unitary Plan (AUP) is the most significant of these revisions. Since its adoption in 2016, the city has gained more than 50,000 housing units representing all the standard typologies ranging from detached houses to apartments in high-rise buildings. The AUP's purpose is to increase housing supply by reducing regulations without reducing other goals relating to sustainability of urban form. However, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland continues to suffer from a housing shortage. This paper explores some of the data collected in a study of ninety higher-density developments within the Metropolitan Urban Limit completed under the AUP regulations. Its conclusions note the success of quantitative objectives of current policies while questioning other objectives, including the aim to supply affordable housing, and the aspirational proposition that the regulations proposed by the AUP will achieve high standards of design quality.

Keywords: Urban housing, housing intensification, Auckland Unitary Plan, building quality standards

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