

Auckland Strategic Adviser

An efficient and effective transport system for Auckland is critical to ensuring that the gains from the city's growth and scale are realised and that urban development opportunities are unlocked. The Ministry is a key Adviser on Auckland's transport with strategic and policy work that is relevant to Auckland undertaken by policy teams across the Ministry.

The Ministry's work in Auckland is overseen by the Director Auckland who is responsible for specific areas of work as well as providing an integrated view of the Ministry's work in Auckland, placing this within the Auckland context of urban development and the strategic and operational work of other central government and local government agencies.

The Auckland Strategic Adviser will be part of a small team supporting the Director Auckland in this role.

- **Reporting to:** Director Auckland
- **Location:** Auckland

Enabling New Zealanders to flourish – our purpose

Our purpose statement goes beyond describing what our organisation does. It succinctly and powerfully captures the value that we will deliver to New Zealanders.

Flourish: A living organism flourishes when it grows or develops in a healthy or vigorous way, especially as the result of a particularly congenial environment. We think that's what transport should do for New Zealanders.

New Zealanders: New Zealanders are central to what we do. This includes New Zealand Inc, the business sector, and our international connections, but at the heart of all of it is people.

Enabling: We are here to help create the transport ecosystem that will enable society and businesses to flourish, and grow.

How we do things – our values

INVESTED	We are committed and responsible
BOLD	We are courageous, shaping our place in the world
COLLABORATIVE	We are connected and journey with others

What you will do to contribute - key responsibilities

The Auckland Strategic Adviser will play a key role in delivering the Auckland work programme that is managed by the Auckland Strategic Programme Lead and overseen by the the Director Auckland.

The role will take responsibility for specific pieces of work and help shape an integrated view of the Ministry's strategic and policy work in Auckland. The role will be able to place the Ministry's work on transport within the context of Auckland's urban development and the strategic and operational work of central and local government agencies in Auckland.

This role is responsible for:

- Leading key Auckland-focused projects including identifying collaboration points with stakeholders and demonstrating results for Auckland
- Partnering with the Auckland Strategic Programme lead to drive the strategic agenda for Auckland and support delivery of the Auckland work programme
- Being knowledgeable about and be able to effectively articulate Auckland's opportunities, challenges and policy responses to these
- Participating in Wellington-led policy work to provide Auckland context and knowledge
- Managing a programme of environmental scanning of Auckland issues and initiatives
- Developing and reviewing general Auckland briefings for the Minister to ensure quality and an integrated approach
- Providing thought leadership to inform, drive and challenge Ministry thinking on Auckland
- Supporting the Auckland-based team through coaching and mentoring as appropriate
- Contributing to an Auckland stakeholder engagement programme
- Developing relationships with stakeholders and positively contributing to the Ministry's reputation in Auckland
- Participating in the Auckland Policy Office cross government initiatives
- Contributing to creating an open, collaborative and engaging environment in the Auckland office that encourages quality, innovation and ongoing learning and knowledge sharing for Ministry staff
- Synthesising information from a wide variety of domains and applying expert judgement to draw conclusions and develop new insights

Your health, safety and wellbeing

At the Ministry we expect all employees to:

- Work safely and take responsibility for keeping self and colleagues free from harm
- Report incidents and hazards promptly
- Know what to do in the event of an emergency
- Ensure personal health and safety standards are adhered to when at work or offsite when working

Who you will work with to get the job done

Internal	Director Auckland
	Auckland Strategic Programme Lead
	Auckland-based staff
	Wellington teams
	Deputy Chief Executive Strategy & Investment
External	Transport and Associate Minister and their offices
	Auckland Council, Auckland Transport and NZTA (Auckland)
	Auckland Policy Office
	Other Auckland based transport agencies and groups
	Wider Auckland stakeholders

Direct Reports

- Nil

What you will bring specifically

Experience:

Essential:

- Extensive experience in a senior advisory capacity providing strategic, policy and operational advice.
- Experience working across a complex organisation and/or system
- Significant experience within the Auckland environment
- Demonstrated achievement in managing complex projects
- Extensive experience in building high-quality stakeholder relationships
- Proven written and verbal communication, with strong influencing skills
- Excellent organisational skills and the ability to meet deadlines
- Strong intellectual ability, nous and judgement

Desirable

- An understanding of local and international transport trends, approaches and policies
- An understanding of Auckland's urban planning

Capabilities

Honest and courageous

Deliver the hard messages, and makes difficult decisions in a timely manner to advance the longer-term best interests of customers and New Zealand.

Curious

Show curiosity, flexibility, and openness in analysing and integrating ideas, information, and differing perspectives; to make fit-for-purpose decisions.

Self-aware and agile

Leverage self-awareness to improve skills and adapt approach; to strengthen personal capability over time and optimise effectiveness with different situations and people.

Resilience

Show composure, grit, and a sense of perspective when the going gets tough; to help others maintain optimism and focus.

Achieving ambitious goals

Demonstrate achievement, drive, ambition, optimism, and delivery-focus; to make things happen and achieve ambitious outcomes.

Enhancing people performance

Work effectively with others to bring out the best in managers and staff

Engaging others

Connect with people and work effectively with others, building trust and bringing out the best in others.

Managing work priorities

Plan, prioritise, and organise work; to deliver on short and long-term objectives across the breadth of their role.

Decision quality

Makes decisions, based on sound reasoning and the ability to outline and show reasoning as to how this decision was arrived at.

Collaboration

Promotes cooperation, collaboration and flexibility in working with others, contributes as a team member, manages conflict with teams.

Critical Thinking

Uses logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems

Policy expertise

Understands the wider policy sector strategic objectives and can contribute effectively to policy development

Problem solving

Identifies problems and reviews related information to develop and evaluate options and implement solutions

Written and oral expression

Effectively communicates information and ideas

Expectations for Principal Advisers

The expectations outlined below provide a comprehensive outline of what is expected to be a successful Principal Adviser within the Ministry. The intent is to clarify, make visible and clearly communicate expectations for all Principal Advisers across our Policy Groups to ensure common understanding and consistency.



Applying the Expectations

All principal advisers are expected to deliver results and demonstrate cross-Ministry intellectual leadership, people leadership, external leadership and contribute to Ministry shared objectives through their behaviour and involvement in organisational initiatives. Managers of principal advisers have a responsibility to create space for principal advisers to exercise cross-Ministry leadership, just as principal advisers have a responsibility to create opportunities to lead.

A principal adviser may have different relative strengths and areas for development, however they must demonstrate competence across all areas to meet expectations of the role e.g. someone who has strong intellectual, external and delivery leadership but does not demonstrate people leadership does not meet expectations of a principal adviser.

It's accepted that the weighting and impact of the different expectations may vary at different times e.g. depending on work programme and priorities. At times, it may be appropriate to focus more on one or two expectations, however overall there should be a balance and this would be for periods of time, not all of the time.

Derailers and Descriptors

A Detailed Overview of the Principal Adviser Expectations – for Policy roles

Delivery Leadership	
<p>Principal Advisers lead delivery of the most complex, ambiguous, and sensitive areas of work through and with others. Principal Advisers plan and manage programmes of work so that the end product is fit-for-purpose, timely, and high quality. Principal Advisers delegate effectively, build the team for the job, and ensure the team are on track to deliver.</p>	
Descriptors (what good looks like)	Common Derailers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translates strategies, priorities, opportunities and issues into policy outputs/projects/programmes with clear scope and roadmap for delivery. • Applies fit for purpose project/programme frameworks and taking ownership for results and outcomes. • Identifies and anticipates risks and applies appropriate strategies for mitigating risks. • Plans, leads and manages large, complex, risky, high profile or cross-government work to achieve expected results. • Drives delivery – work is robust, practical, solution-focused that meets customer/Ministers needs within appropriate timeframes. • Moves an issue forward where there are significant obstacles or changing circumstances. Is a reliable go to person and resolves difficult situations calmly or supports others to do so. • Shows political nous – is aware of Ministers and Ministry objectives and constraints; able to push the Ministry’s perspective within that context and influence Ministers thinking. • Manages ‘upwards’ – is aware of the needs and interests of their manager and other senior leaders, keeps them informed, and applies good judgement in seeking guidance where necessary. • Stays focussed on outcomes and appropriately allocates time, effort and resource to the things that will have the greatest impact on results. • Achieves through others by effectively commissioning and delegating work with clear a scope and expectations, and maintains appropriate oversight of work. • Engages others in the work and bringing people along; building effective work teams and bringing out the best in people to deliver. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not ‘letting go’ of ‘doing the work’ (e.g. because of discomfort with risk, wanting to hold on to tasks they enjoy doing and do well, or a belief they can complete tasks more quickly or to a higher standard themselves. • Poor delegation - wrong person, wrong task, unclear instructions • Micromanaging others, not giving them room to discover and learn. • Not stepping up and taking ownership for results and outcomes. • Over-relying on a particular methodology/strategies; doesn’t take into account new ideas and innovative practices. • Paralysis by analysis; letting that slow down delivery. • Overly focussed on getting things done; not curious about the perspectives, motivators and needs of others; • Overly focussed on constraints and risks, rather than opportunities. • Not focusing on work that is most critical to achieving objectives; staying with what is most enjoyable and comfortable. • Finding it hard to prioritise, decide what not to do. • Doesn’t take into account the context and is unwilling to deliver the product that is needed at the time.

People and Self-Leadership	
<p>Principal Advisers continuously learn, reflect and adapt their practice to build their own capability. Principal Advisers build capability across teams and the wider Ministry by proactively coaching and identifying opportunities to develop others.</p>	
Descriptors (what good looks like)	Common Derailers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes an active role in supporting/developing staff; works with managers to identify coaching needs across team(s) to ensure a targeted approach. • Takes note of developments, trends or shortfalls in policy practice and actively identifies opportunities for capability improvement. • Is deliberate about their role and interaction, and shifts modes to achieve better outcomes, e.g. knows and balances when to tell vs coach, listen, teach and decide. • Proactively shares knowledge and ideas. • Coaching is solutions-focussed and enabling, and is focused on asking questions to draw insights from the coachee. • Contributes to the performance of the team through providing peer review and quality control (including work the Principal Adviser isn't leading). • Motivates and inspires others – creates energy, shows generosity and helps others to maintain optimism and focus. • Is visible and available to others; is approachable and responsive. • Gives timely, constructive and supportive feedback; will challenge and have courageous and open conversations. • Models desired behaviours and cultivates a positive team culture. • Commits to ongoing learning and professional development (not just the Subject Matter Expert stuff); is self-aware and reflective. • Continually learns by showing curiosity, flexibility and openness to new ideas, information and differing perspectives. • Shows resilience, composure and a sense of perspective when things get tough; • Actively seeks and is open to feedback; responds constructively to criticism and applies learnings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not seeing leading and developing people as a key responsibility of their role. • Acting as the expert; telling rather than coaching people to come up with the insight and answers themselves and not giving them room to discover and learn. • Having a fixed or dismissive mind-set of people's capabilities and potential – believing they're not capable of growth and development to do the work. • Being unapproachable or dismissive; a 'curmudgeon'. • Not having confidence or skills to delegate or not delegating at all –limiting opportunities for others to develop. • Not setting clear expectations or commissioning work in a way that gives people clarity and a common understanding. • Avoiding or being unprepared for difficult conversations and giving critical feedback. • Not providing feedback in a tactful way; being disempowering to others. • Not prioritising or being interested in own development (so it is treated as something to do when there is time, which never happens; staying safe in comfort zone or resistant to change) • Waiting for the mandate to act rather than setting their own ambitious goals or working through difficult issues. • Lacking self-awareness; not asking for, or ignoring feedback. • Being set in their ways; not curious or open to new or innovative ways of working; being resistant and staying in comfort zone.

Intellectual Leadership	
<p>Principal Advisers are central to shaping the direction of advice across the Ministry, and are masters of their craft. They are innovative and strategic thinkers – they are bold and strive to always add value and go beyond the obvious. Principal Advisers foster constructive debate and knowledge sharing, and they actively make linkages. Principal Advisers are attuned to the context, and are politically savvy.</p>	
Descriptors (what good looks like)	Common Derailers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works in partnership with manager(s) to provide strong intellectual leadership in identifying, shaping and leading the work programme in the team and the Ministry. • Fits the role of transport into wider social, economic and environmental context. • Understands and navigates the political environment and context and makes links between the work area transport policy outcomes and government priorities and interests. • Thinks about the next generation of policy challenges in transport, identifies the medium and long-term opportunities, risks and gaps, and the means of seizing, mitigating and filling them. • Is a highly capable policy practitioner – who is skilled at all stages of the policy lifecycle, applies good judgement to determining which techniques to apply, and applies or develops rigorous frameworks. • Has a reputation for adding significant value and is consistently sought out by others for advice. • Develops new solutions to old problems; promotes debate, tackles endemic, entrenched and ‘wicked’ issues. • Proactively anticipates others’ concerns; and supports other staff to navigate ambiguous political situations • Intervenes and adds value by sharing knowledge, linking with others, accurately reading situations and using savvy. • Uses persuasion to tell a clear and compelling narrative that draws others in. • Leads strategic conversations and provides intellectual leadership by bringing new ideas, insights and knowledge. • Critically synthesises information from a wide variety of sources and identifies implications for policy analysis and advice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becoming narrow in thinking or focusing too much on the detail of policy problems. • Being divisive – challenging views across the Ministry but not taking responsibility for resolving them constructively and getting to a solution. • Being wedded to traditional views; over reliance on previous approaches and being closed to new contexts; being overly critical or discouraging of others’ original ideas. • Holding on to information so that people have to come to you. • Being protective of status, contacts and sphere of influence. • Giving the sense that you have all the answers, not taking on board others thoughts, disempowering other staff. • Allowing personal views to drive or overly influence policy advice. • Being passive – waiting to be told and missing opportunities to direct or reframe debate. • Doesn’t respect or utilise other people’s views – dismissive.

External leadership	
<p>Principal Advisers are well-connected outside the Ministry – they are visible, valued and have wide networks. Principal Advisers actively build and share knowledge, collaborate with others, and influence the agenda. Principal Advisers represent the Ministry effectively and are trusted advisers.</p>	
Descriptors (what good looks like)	Common Derailers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds and maintains well-developed and highly effective and trusting relationships with stakeholders; identifies common objectives, builds support and manages risks to delivery. • Represents MoT and “fronts” issues with internal or external audiences in a way that frames positions clearly and persuades effectively. Constantly learns and improves from interactions • Builds political and personal capital and spends it when necessary. • Takes a planned and deliberate approach to identifying stakeholders, leading engagement with agencies and stakeholders, influencing sector agenda. • Draws on multiple relationships to build buy-in, exchange ideas, resources and know how, and resolve conflicts. • Gains insights into customers needs; considering sector and whole of government outcomes alongside Ministry. • Informs, advises and provides authoritative, frank policy advice that recognises the choices and constraints Ministers face. • Applies good judgment in interactions with Ministers and senior stakeholders. • Works cooperatively, develops and uses negotiation and influencing skills to build trust and support. • Is respected and respectful. • Knows how to get things done through informal networks and formal channels. • Will challenge and facilitate courageous and difficult conversations, and confidently represent a view. Remaining composed during difficult interactions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacking confidence and/or an expansive view of their ‘sphere of influence’. • Investing in narrow range of stakeholders at the expense of developing a broader network • Too easily swayed, for example by the most recent person you have talked to. • Unable to preserve relationships through times of disagreement • Relationships regularly breakdown – unable to maintain relationships whilst working through difficult issues. • Undermining the Ministry’s position or interests when not in agreement or aligned to personal preferences. • Being unprepared for interactions; lacking awareness of customer expectations. • Avoiding interactions; overlooking opportunities to work collaboratively with others. • Failing to build effective relationships with key customers; engaging with stakeholders too late or too early. • Not seeing understanding or navigating politics as part of their role; over-reading the political situation or being politically unaware. • Relying too heavily on information networks to progress work.

Collective & Ministry Leadership	
<p>Principal Advisers understand the Ministry’s priorities and objectives, and they work toward accomplishing shared goals. Principal Advisers work in partnership with managers to set and drive the strategic policy agenda.</p> <p>Principal Advisers work together as a leadership cohort to develop organisational capability, and are known for their constructive contributions. They are visible leaders within the Ministry, who inspire others through modelling the Ministry’s values and behaviours.</p>	
Descriptors (what good looks like)	Common Derailers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands the key priorities across the organisation and is able to articulate and represent a shared view of Ministry strategic direction. • Is proactively involved in cross-Ministry initiatives, is curious, and takes up and creates opportunities to learn what’s going on. • Actively part of life at the Ministry – visible across immediate team and work programmes, and the wider Ministry. • Represents the Ministry and talks authoritatively (across the entire Ministry, not just own team). • Contributes to the principal cohort having a reputation for adding significant value and is consistently sought out by others for input. • Is visible as a part of a Principal cohort and through the cohort identifies, shapes and drives initiatives. • Regularly engages with others in their cohort to share knowledge and developments in work programmes and collaborate on pieces of work. • Role models professionalism, actively shapes and supports organisational practices and ways of working. • Proactively makes linkages across projects and provides advice and guidance to others to help shape and influence Ministry results. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not being visible or contributing outside of the team • Not modelling appropriate behaviours or exemplifying our values. • Undermining organisational priorities, direction and practices • Waiting for others to act first. • Don’t see organisational leadership as an expectation of their role. • Not valuing or recognising the work of other teams; the context and priorities they are operating in. • Focusing only on objectives for own area, at the expense of considering whole of Ministry outcomes.