



MEDIA RELEASE

Ruapehu District Council

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NEW ROUND OF RURAL VALLEY PUBLIC MEETINGS ON ROAD NETWORK

Ruapehu District Council's (RDC) roading team is holding another series of public meetings in community halls around the District to provide rural residents the opportunity to meet with Council's key roading network staff and roading contractors GHD Consulting and Inframax.

The first of the meetings is scheduled for the Otunui Hall on Thursday 8 September followed by meetings at the Kaahu Estate Woolshed in the Whangaehu Valley on Thursday 22 September and the Kirikau Hall on Friday 23 September.

RDC Team Leader, Warren Furner, said that Council instigated holding public meetings out in local communities two years ago to improve the communication with residents in Ruapehu's rural valleys who have first hand knowledge of their local roads and are well placed to provide Council with advice on where improvements are required.

"The rural valley road network meetings have been very successful providing Council with feedback on roading 'hot spots' that required urgent remedial attention and assisting to improve the level of service from the land transport team and Council contractors," he said.

"Input from local residents has been invaluable to improving the safety of local rural roads."

"Without local knowledge we are dependent on statistics and information from Police accident reports and as many accidents without injury are never reported to the Police their statistics do not provide a complete picture of where the roading 'hot spots' are."

Mr Furner added that as resources are limited it is invaluable for Council to hear from local residents as to where they think this money can best be spent.

"The New Zealand Transport Authority (NZTA) has recently advised Council that they intend to cut the roading subsidy Ruapehu receives by one percent a year for the next two years as part of the government redirecting resources away from rural roads to urban ones."

"As this will impact on rate levels it is more important than ever that Council has excellent communication with local communities about the best use of the limited roading funds we have available."

Mr Furner noted that local communities could use the public meeting to raise and discuss and road related issue they liked with Council that may benefit the community as a whole.

"The previous meetings were all very well attended and allowed Council to pick-up valuable information and comment," he said.

"Residents of rural valleys should 'keep an eye' on the public notice section of the local papers for up-coming meeting dates and times or can call RDC Contracts Manager, Cook Te Wano, via their local Council office for further information."

DAVID HAMMOND
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

CJH : PRW