

Future Ruapehu

Long Term Plan 2006–16



Future Ruapehu – Long Term Plan 2006-16

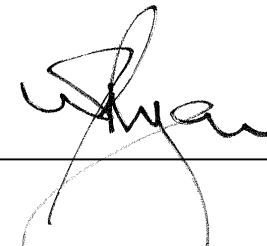
This Plan is Ruapehu District Council's Long Term Plan and has been produced in compliance with section 93 of the Local Government Act 2002.

This Long Term Plan was adopted by Ruapehu District Council on the 30th of June 2006.

Approved for Public Release:

Date: 30 June 2006

Signed:



Chris Ryan
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Statement from the Mayor



Dear Residents and Ratepayers

I am pleased to present on behalf of the Ruapehu District Council (Council) the Future Ruapehu Long Term Plan 2006-16 (LTP).

As the central planning document for Council, the LTP should be of special interest to everyone in the District. It is important to note that the LTP is not only a Council planning document but also a resource to assist community organisations, Central Government and other stakeholders with their planning and direction.

Council must produce a LTP every three years with a minimum of a ten-year focus. As such, this LTP sets out Ruapehu District Council's intended work programme in detail for the next three years, and in general for the following seven.

Going forward, the community will be consulted with on every LTP every three years to update and realign Council activities to meet the community's desired outcomes.

A full list of the revised Community Outcomes developed through the Community Outcomes Consultation Process in 2005 can be found in Part One of the LTP. Community outcomes are the desired long-term goals that have emerged from the public consultation process in which the Community has identified priority outcomes

based around social, economic, environmental and cultural well-beings.

This process has resulted in Council realigning its core activities to reflect shifts in the community's desired long-term goals as expressed in their Community Outcomes.

The realignment of Council's core activities sees the activities now grouped under three headings; Environmental Sustainability, Economic Sustainability and Community Sustainability. There are 11 activities under these three areas of focus.

The process of aligning Community Outcomes with Council activities has highlighted a number of challenges for Council and the communities it represents. There is evidence that our community is changing and growing. Growth in itself represents a challenge for a community such as ours. This LTP recognises and responds to those challenges. It does so by recognising that communities need to invest in themselves if they are to have a future. The community via the Community Outcomes process and other consultations has sent the Council some strong messages around the need to invest in certain strategic areas. This LTP reflects those messages.

Future investment has been structured to give effect to the needs and desires of the community. The following key areas of investment are provided for in the LTP:

- Council is planning to (over time) increase its investment in the facilitation of growth and economic development across the Ruapehu District. The LTP provides for this investment through the Community Development activity that includes the Economic Development and Regional Tourism Organisation Function.

- The Ruapehu District Land Transport Network has been identified as a key priority by the community and is considered critical to future economic sustainability. Council is planning to change its approach to the maintenance of the network by investing in major rehabilitation of assets as opposed to the traditional method of maintaining existing surfaces. This results in a significant investment in area wide pavement treatment.
- The LTP provides for an increased investment in the Leadership Activity to review the Ruapehu District Plan [RDP]. The RDP was identified for review in the LTP 2004-14. Provision has been made to undertake this important review work in the 2006/07, 2007/08 and 2008/09 financial years. The RDP is required to be reviewed within ten years, however both the community and Council have recognised that the RDP requires review now due to the changing nature of our community. The RDP was developed in the early 1990's and our community has changed in many ways since then. It is considered critical to update the RDP to ensure it 'fits' with our District today and into the future.

Further to the strategic investments above the LTP provides for ongoing investment in key infrastructures such as water and sewerage to ensure these assets continue to provide quality

services into the future. A review of Asset Management Plans has highlighted areas of investment needed to ensure the protection of our pristine environment and the ongoing supply of quality service. Indicators of growth points to the need to upgrade some services in the southern parts of our District, particularly water and sewerage services in the Waimarino area.

I encourage you to take this LTP and read it through. In every section of the LTP, the long-term goals of Council are outlined for the next ten years. I am excited about the future potential of the Ruapehu District. This LTP provides avenues for both Council and the Community to work together to achieve and meet this growing potential. We will continue to build on the excellent work that has been achieved so far. The LTP will be reviewed and updated in 2009.



Sue Morris
MAYOR

Statement from the Chief Executive



The LTP builds on the transitional plan developed in 2004 and introduces a number of changes intended to ensure that Council's strategic goals and direction are in-line with the Ruapehu Communities desired long-term goals.

In her introduction to this LTP, the Mayor introduced the notion that the Ruapehu District is changing and that there are indicators of growth. I agree with and support that notion.

As our District changes, Council must respond and change with it. Many of

the changes Council is making are evident in this LTP. The changes can be seen in terms of the structure of Council's activities and how they relate to Community Outcomes, and in terms of areas that Council has decided are in need of strategic investment.

Central to the changes from the LTP 2004-14 is the re-alignment of Council's core activities into three groups of activities.

The realignment of those activities into three groups enables Council to better target Community Outcomes and provides focus on a higher quality of service to the community. The newly realigned activities better reflect the role of local government in the 21st Century.

Underpinning this realignment was the shift in Community Outcomes identified through the Community Outcomes Consultation Process in 2005 [see Part One of the LTP].

Under the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA) Local Authorities must plan for sustainable communities. Part of this process involves identifying Community Outcomes that help guide key programmes and activities for Council and other relevant organisations.

The realignment of activities is reflected in an increased emphasis on Community Development in the LTP that becomes a core Council activity in its own right under Community Sustainability.

The Community Development activity aims to promote the Social and Cultural well-being of the community in the present and for the future. This activity has four functions, Economic Development, Regional Tourism Organisation, Community Support and Agency Services. Council is aware that one of the key ways to achieve social and cultural objectives is by improving the economic opportunities within the District. Council plans to increase the Level of Service provided to the community in the Community Development activity, and leverage improved economic, social and cultural outcomes by facilitating and advocating for a growing and vibrant District economy.

The new alignment of activities also changes the role previously undertaken by the Economic Development function. This function provides further emphasis on non-visitor industry economic development objectives. It will allow resources to be used to facilitate growth in other key industries like forestry, farming and horticulture. It aims to work alongside key agencies and regional partners to achieve its main objectives. The Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) is now a function in its own right. The aim of the RTO is to work alongside players in the industry to achieve its three main objectives, being integrated destination marketing, destination management and business development.

The Community Support function facilitates grant funding directed to groups targeted as providing programmes that meet Community Outcomes.

The Community Development activity also includes Agency Services such as Land Transport New Zealand, New Zealand Post and Registrar General of Births Deaths and Marriages.

Other new activity areas under Community Sustainability are the Community Property activity and the Leadership activity. The Resource Management activity is under Environmental Sustainability.

The Community Property activity ensures that property that is held by Council for the social, cultural, economic or environmental well-being of the community is managed in a sustainable and responsible manner. Community Property includes; Older Persons Housing, Community Housing, Taumarunui Airfield, Ohakune Railway Station, Pukehou Quarry, Taumarunui Saleyards plus a number of other smaller properties.

The purpose of the Resource Management activity is two fold. Firstly, the activity issues Resource Consents to groups and individuals wishing to undertake any activity that falls under controlled, discretionary or non-complying categories in the Ruapehu District Plan. The second function is to ensure that the Resource Consents under the Resource Management Act 1991 are adhered to.

The Leadership activity provides for Council's governance at District and local level, administration of elections, Council advocacy on issues that impact on the Community Outcomes, and planning and policy development to help provide a framework for the community's strategic direction.

The Leadership activity is overseeing the review of the Ruapehu District Plan. This project is a significant commitment for Council

and it will require a substantial investment of both time and money over the next three to four years.

Other significant impacts on the LTP can be seen in the revaluation of properties for rating purposes. The 2004/05 property revaluation has resulted in significantly higher land values and a lesser increase in the value of improvements. While this does not increase the total rate requirement, it does alter the way in which the cost of rates are shared over properties.

In response to the Solid Waste Management Plan (SWaMP) the Solid Waste activity will be subjected to a number of changes. These include the introduction of kerbside recycling, the closure of unattended Transfer Stations and increasing the capacity of attended Transfer Stations.

These changes are all aimed at ensuring that the District stays on target to meet the strategic goal of achieving a target of zero waste by 2015 by progressively reducing the quantities of residual waste entering the District landfill.

Supporting these changes is a communications and education programme to allow the community to make informed choices and move towards zero waste targets.

In the Stormwater activity Council has signalled that it will undertake the maintenance of natural waterways on private properties in urban areas. In the past this maintenance has been the responsibility of the landowner. Unfortunately this has meant that the waterways have not always been maintained causing flooding.

The Land Transport activity has a number of major projects, alongside the ongoing maintenance and renewal programmes.

Council has decided that the Bridge Renewal Programme that was initially programmed over the years 2004/2005 to 2008/2009, will be fast tracked for completion in 2006/07.

Council has also decided that it intends to change its strategy in pavement maintenance, by phasing in area wide pavement treatment work that involves greater initial costs, but lesser whole of life costs. This will mean less long-term maintenance and associated cost savings.

Other key Land Transport activity projects include: Okahukura Saddle Road, Raetihi Pipiriki Road, Dobbs Bluff and Ohakune Mountain Road.

Part four of the LTP contains a number of policies that are required under the Local Government Act 2002. Changes have been made to the Revenue and Finance Policy, and the Rates Remission Policy. The Development Contributions Policy is new and outlines where and how much will be paid to Council in the future by those developing properties within the Ruapehu District.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Ryan', is written over a circular stamp or seal that is partially obscured by the signature.

Chris Ryan
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**REPORT TO THE READERS OF
RUAPEHU DISTRICT COUNCIL'S LONG-TERM COUNCIL
COMMUNITY PLAN FOR THE TEN YEARS COMMENCING
1 JULY 2006**

The Auditor-General is the auditor of Ruapehu District Council (the District Council). The Auditor-General has appointed me, J R Smaill, using the staff and resources of Audit New Zealand, to report on the Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP), on his behalf.

The purpose of an LTCCP, as set out in section 93(6) of the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act), is to:

- describe the activities of the local authority;
- describe the community outcomes of the local authority's district or region;
- provide integrated decision making and co-ordination of the resources of the local authority;
- provide a long term focus for the decisions and activities of the local authority;
- provide a basis for accountability of the local authority to the community; and
- provide an opportunity for participation by the public in decision making processes on activities to be undertaken by the local authority

Opinion

Overall opinion

In our opinion the LTCCP of the District Council dated 30 June 2006 provides a reasonable basis for long term integrated decision-making by the District Council and for participation in decision-making by the public and subsequent accountability to the community about the activities of the District Council.

It is not our responsibility to express an opinion on the merits of any policy content within the LTCCP.

In forming our overall opinion, we considered our opinion on specific matters required by the Act, which is set out below.

Opinion on specific matters required by the Act

The Auditor-General is required by section 94(1) of the Act to report on:

- the extent to which the LTCCP complies with the requirements of the Act;
- the quality of information and assumptions underlying the forecast information provided in the LTCCP; and
- the extent to which the forecast information and performance measures will provide an appropriate framework for the meaningful assessment of the actual levels of service provision.

In terms of our obligation to report on the matters outlined in section 94(1) of the Act, in our opinion:

- the District Council has complied with the requirements of the Act in all material respects demonstrating good practice for a Council of its size and scale within the context of its environment;
- the underlying information used to prepare the LTCCP provides a reasonable basis for the preparation of the forecast information;
- the assumptions set out within the LTCCP are based on best information currently available to the District Council and provide a reasonable and supportable basis for the preparation of the forecast information;
- the forecast information has been properly prepared on the basis of the underlying information and the assumptions adopted and the financial information is presented in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand;
- the extent to which the forecast information and proposed performance measures provide an appropriate framework for the meaningful assessment of the actual levels of service provision reflects good practice for a Council of its size and scale within the context of its environment.

Actual results are likely to be different from the forecast information since anticipated events frequently do not occur as expected and the variation may be material. Accordingly, we express no opinion as to whether the forecasts will be achieved.

Our report was completed on 30 June 2006, and is the date at which our opinion is expressed.

The basis of the opinion is explained below. In addition, we outline the responsibilities of the District Council and the Auditor, and explain our independence.

Basis of opinion

We carried out the audit in accordance with the International Standard on Assurance Engagements 3000 (revised): Assurance Engagements Other Than Audits or Reviews of Historical Financial Information and the Auditor-General's Auditing Standards, which incorporate the New Zealand Auditing Standards. We have examined the forecast financial information in accordance with the International Standard on Assurance Engagements 3400: The Examination of Prospective Financial Information.

We planned and performed our audit to obtain all the information and explanations we considered necessary to obtain reasonable assurance that the LTCCP does not contain material misstatements, and provides a reasonable basis for long term integrated decision-making by the public and the District Council about the activities of the District Council, and for subsequent accountability to the community about the activities of the District Council.

Our procedures included examining on a test basis, evidence supporting assumptions, amounts and other disclosures in the LTCCP, determining compliance with the requirements of the Act, and evaluating the overall adequacy of the presentation of information.

We obtained all the information and explanations we required to support the opinion above.

Responsibilities of the Council and the Auditor

The District Council is responsible for preparing a LTCCP under the Act, by applying the District Council's assumptions and presenting the financial information in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand. The District Council's responsibilities arise from Section 93 of the Act.

We are responsible for expressing an independent opinion on the LTCCP and reporting that opinion to you. This responsibility arises from section 15 of the Public Audit Act 2001 and section 94(1) of the Act.

Independence

When reporting on the LTCCP we followed the independence requirements of the Auditor-General, which incorporate the independence requirements of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of New Zealand.

Other than this report and in conducting the annual audit, we have no relationship with or interests in the District Council.



J R Smail
Audit New Zealand
On behalf of the Auditor-General
Wellington, New Zealand

Matters relating to the electronic presentation of the report to the readers of the Long Term Council Community Plan

This report relates to the Long Term Council Community Plan (the LTCCP) of Ruapehu District Council for the ten years commencing 1 July 2006 included on Ruapehu District Council's web site. The Ruapehu District Council is responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the Ruapehu District Council's web site. We have not been engaged to report on the integrity of the Ruapehu District Council's web site. We accept no responsibility for any changes that may have occurred to the LTCCP since it was initially presented on the web site. The report refers only to the LTCCP named above. It does not provide an opinion on any other information which may have been hyperlinked to/from the LTCCP. If readers of this report are concerned with the inherent risks arising from the electronic data communication they should refer to the published hard copy of the LTCCP approved on the 30 June 2006 and the released audit report dated 30 June 2006 to confirm the information included in the LTCCP presented on this web site. The preparation and dissemination of the LTCCP is governed by New Zealand legislation.

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