



MEDIA RELEASE

Ruapehu District Council

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Date: Friday 25 September 2015

RUAPEHU SEEKS TO PART OF NEXT ROUND OF BROADBAND AND MOBILE INVESTMENT

Ruapehu's Digital Enablement Plan (DEP) that outlines how the district and NZ would benefit from being part of the next round of national broadband and mobile investment has been submitted to government.

The second phase of government's Broadband and mobile infrastructure investment is being managed by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) who will decide what towns and communities are next in line to get investment.

Ruapehu mayor Don Cameron said that developing the DEP has been a major undertaking that has required significant input from Ruapehu communities.

"Council would like to thank everyone who has assisted with council's bid to have Ruapehu included in the next round of national broadband and mobile investment," he said.

"This project has really captured the imagination of many people who have attended public meetings, performed internet speed tests and shared their internet 'war stories' and aspirations for how they would make use of improved broadband and mobile services."

Mayor Cameron said that the DEP was a complex document that needed to achieve a number of objectives including demonstrating how council will be able to support people with getting connected and develop their digital skills so that they can take full advantage of the technology.

"This aspect of the DEP responses is seen as providing some ability to reduce the investment risk by encouraging uptake and for communities and business to gain from full use of the infrastructure."

"The projects council has planned for enabling people and businesses include; skills workshops, connection option workshops, an online and print information hub and free main street Wi-Fi in our main townships."

Mayor Cameron added that in early September MBIE released a long list of 'next largest towns' that missed out on the first stage of the UFB and are eligible for funding under the up-coming investment round.

"The long list included Taumarunui, Ohakune and Raetihi however it should be noted that the selection process for towns is primarily commercial and not all eligible towns of the long list will receive funding."

"The government will be looking to maximise UFB coverage from the funding available and will looking to achieve maximum benefit for NZ from their investment."

"The final decisions on the Rural Broadband Initiative and the Mobile Black Spot Fund will be made once the areas receiving UFB funding are determined."

"Places that will receive fibre installations will be announced in early 2016, the rural and mobile black spot announcement is expected in late 2016."

PETER TILL
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

PT : PRW



Rural communities and businesses will see significant benefits if council's bid for Ruapehu to be part of the next round of government broadband and mobile investment succeeds.