



Draft Long Term Plan Have your say... soon

The closing date for submissions on the Whakatane District's draft Long Term Plan (LTP) – "A Foundation for our Future" – is fast approaching, so get your pens or computers whirring and have your say... soon.

To be considered by Council, submissions must be received in writing, or electronically submitted, no later than 5.00pm on Friday, 13 April. Any submitter who wants to present his or her submission personally should tick the box on the form and indicate when they are able to attend the LTP public hearings, which will be held between May 3 and 9. Council will then consider all of the submissions received at a series of meetings between May 14 and 22 and decide what changes need to be made before the final LTP is formally adopted on June 26.

WHAT'S IT ABOUT?

The draft LTP is a "statement of proposal" which sets out the Council's key policies and activities for the next 10 years. Once adopted, it won't be reviewed till 2015, so if you think any changes are needed, this is the time to make your thoughts known.

Some key aspects of the draft plan include: projected costs and major capital projects for 2012-2022; strict limits on rates increases and borrowing; the level of protection we need from storm events; and how we can encourage economic growth.

Mayor Tony Bonne says there's also a strong focus on the affordability of rates. "In part, that involves taking a careful approach to our day-to-day financial management and ensuring that any



investment we make in infrastructure is actually required to maintain, or where necessary, improve the quality of the essential services the District relies on," Tony says. "We know that under the current rating system, people in some parts of the District struggle to pay their rates bills, so we're also proposing changes which will make rates more affordable for the owners of lower capital value properties. We'd like to encourage groups and individuals with views on the proposed changes, both positive and negative, to make a submission – we want to hear from all sides."

MAKING A SUBMISSION

Easy – just fill out the form on the back cover of the LTP Summary distributed throughout the District. Submission forms are also available at Council offices and libraries, or via the Council website www.whakatane.govt.nz. You can also complete a submission online, with no paper or postage needed.

Councillor Profile Christine Chambers



Born in Blackheath, London, Christine emigrated to Christchurch with her husband Graham and two young children in the late 1960s, before moving to Whakatane

with three children, David, Elizabeth and Justine, in 1972.

From 1978 through to 2004 she was an active partner with Graham in their engineering business. Christine was elected to Council in 1989 and presently chairs the Projects and Services Committee. She is also an accredited commissioner under the Resource Management Act with a Chairman's endorsement.

For the past 10 years, Christine has been involved with the Hepatitis Foundation of NZ as Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

When not enjoying the company of her family, which includes seven grandchildren, her favourite recreational activity is sailing with the Port Ōhope Yacht Club. She also enjoys gardening and walking.

Christine's vision for the community is a sustainable economic base whilst maintaining the natural environment which is so unique to the Whakatane District.

Te Awa o Ohinemataroa hikoi

Following the winding path of Te Awa o Ohinemataroa (the Whakatane River) from Ruatāhuna to Rūātoki is a journey on many levels, as Mayor Tony Bonne, Councillor David Sheaff and Chief Executive Marty Grenfell discovered last month.

The idea of the hikoi came about after a meeting with the Hinepukohurangi Trust in Ruatāhuna late last year and for the Council representatives involved, its primary purpose was learning, understanding and a chance to cement closer relationships.

"For me, it provided that and much more," Tony says. "This was a journey into the heartland of Ngai Tūhoe, where we gained not just an appreciation of a truly majestic landscape, but knowledge of the river's historic importance and the role that history has played in shaping the relationships which continue today. For that, our sincere thanks go to Tūhoe Kaumatua Ron Tahi and also to the hikoi organiser, Joe Doherty."

Three Department of Conservation staff also took part to familiarise themselves both with the walking track and DOC's huts along the route. "Inevitably, the conversation along the way turned into a three-way discussion about how great it would be to introduce more people to this supremely beautiful environment," Tony continues. "I don't think there's any doubt that Te Awa o Ohinemataroa could become a significant adventure and cultural tourism opportunity for Tūhoe and the Whakatane District Council would certainly encourage such a development."

Highlights of the hikoi included a whakatau at Ruatāhuna's historic Mataatua Marae; a welcome onto the remote Ohau ki Te Rangi Marae (two hours walk downriver); and a welcome and overnight stay at Te Putere Marae (a four-hour walk from the road-end at Rūātoki).



Tūhoe Kaumatua Ron Tahi imparts the history of the remote Ohau ki Te Rangi Marae.

NEWS IN BRIEF

AWATARARIKI DEBRIS DETENTION STRUCTURE

The Council has placed any further work on the design and resource consent for the planned Awatarariki ring net debris detention structure on hold until a comprehensive review of the project has been undertaken. Latest engineering advice indicates a significant level of concern about the viability of the project, which was designed to prevent a repeat of the massive debris flow which devastated the western area of Matatā in May 2005.

Chief Executive Marty Grenfell says the review will be undertaken by a highly experienced, independent engineer and progressed as a matter of urgency.

GENERAL MANAGERS APPOINTED

The Council has announced two key appointments to its senior management team, to take effect in June. Tomasz Krawczyk will take up the role of General Manager Infrastructure, while Julian Reweti will become General Manager Community and Economic Development. Julian is well known in the area, having filled in as acting Director, Works and Services at the end of last year. He has an engineering background and is currently Infrastructure Manager for the Whānganui District Council, but brings extensive experience in all aspects of local government leadership. Tomasz is a Kiwi, having emigrated here from Poland in 1981. For the last 15 years, he has been deeply involved in infrastructure renewal programmes in Poland, where he heads that country's second largest engineering consultancy. He also knows Whakatane well and is looking forward to resuming the great Kiwi lifestyle.

GALATEA LTP OPEN DAY

An additional Open Day has been organised in Galatea as part of the consultation process for the District's draft LTP. The open day will take place in the Galatea Hall on Tuesday April 3, starting at 1.00pm. Any local residents who would like the opportunity of talking to Council elected members and staff about the draft LTP are invited to attend.

ANZAC DAY PARADES FOR WEDNESDAY 25 APRIL

A Dawn Service will be held at Wairaka Marae at 6.00am. Participants are asked to form up outside the Sportfishing Club at 5.45am.

A Civic Service will be held at the Whakatane War Memorial Hall at 9.00am. Members and groups wishing to March are asked to form up in the Reception Lounge at 8.30am. The Guest Speaker will be Pam Terry, Retired Major and ex-Theatre Sister during the Vietnam War.