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File ref: OMS 10 02 16
RP

Dear Helen

SUBMISSION TO 2016-17 ANNUAL PLAN

Thank you for your submission to Horizons Regional Council's 2016-17 Annual Plan.

This year we received 94 submissions, all of which were carefully considered by Council. It is always a challenge to balance the diverse concerns and interests in our Region and the submission process is an important one for Councillors to better understand the views of the people they represent.

Your submission to Council's 2016-17 Annual Plan related to:

Economic Growth Study / Accelerate25 Activity

Council resolved to affirm a co-ordination role, working with partner councils, iwi, business and government, around regional growth and prosperity, including the implementation of the Accelerate25 Regional Action Plan.

Council will fund this activity from a mix of reserves (\$130,000) and UAEC (\$100,000). Council recognises the importance of regional growth being sustainable. Council will not replicate the work of economic development agencies that already exist in the Region.

Environmental Reporting and Air Quality Monitoring Activity

Council resolved to note those matters raised by submitters for this activity.

Resource Consent and Pollution Management Activity

A range of submissions were received relating to the consent application to open the Foxton Loop. This process is being co-ordinated via the Horowhenua District Council. Horizons will continue to participate in Loop related discussions.

Horizons have a Compliance Programme to monitor the activities of consent holders in relation to discharge of water and pollution. Staff will continue to work through the One Plan implementation to get farmer's consented. In general, these consents are seeing a reduction in nutrient leaching and other improvements which will maintain or improve water quality in the catchments.

The consent decision for the Hokio Cut is currently under appeal. Further work will be considered once the appeal has been heard. The Levin Landfill consent is

Kairanga

Marton

Palmerston North

Taihape

Taumarunui

Wanganui

Woodville

currently going through a review and the outcome of this will be communicated after the review process has taken place.

Land Management Activity

Council received a number of submissions relating to the Sustainable Land Use Initiative (SLUI). The SLUI initiative is funded through ratepayers, Central Government and by the individual farmers. Council have considered options to speed up the programme during this annual plan process and acknowledge that to do so would also likely require the other funding parties to contribute more.

Council has resolved to continue SLUI with the current resources and to continue the direction of increasing the amount of implementation work completed as a part of the programme with a focus on priority work.

Council resolved that no changes are made to the Land and Water Management Group of Activities in the proposed Annual Plan 2016-17 as a result of the submissions received and that GST is applied consistently across the Annual Plan document.

Passenger Services Activity – Levin to Waikanae Bus Service

Funding has been allocated by Council and the New Zealand Transport Agency for the two year trial. The service is scheduled to commence in January 2017 subject to funding from Greater Wellington Regional Council and an amendment to their Regional Public Transport Plan. Horizons has asked Greater Wellington Regional Council to contribute \$6,500 towards the cost of running the service for the 2016-17 year (half of the local share budgeted cost) via a submission to their Annual Plan. Council note the request to include stops between Levin and Waikanae, this suggestion will be considered when a timetable is developed post funding being secured.

Passenger Services Activity – Regional Rail

Suggestions regarding regional rail opportunities have been considered. A Passenger Rail Working Group has been established consisting of a number of political officials. The Group's purpose is to consider passenger rail options between Palmerston North and Wellington. Other rail opportunities are considered and advocated for by the Regional Transport Committee as they come up. As part of the 2014-15 Regional Land Transport Planning process, a letter to KiwiRail from the Chair was written advocating for greater integration with, and use of, rail as a transport option for the Region. This will continue with the development of industrial nodes throughout the Region, many of which are strategically located adjacent to the existing rail corridor. The importance of rail as an effective transport option is also recognised in the Regional Land Transport Plan under Strategic Priority #2 – Improved Connectivity of Strategic Routes.

Walking and Cycling Infrastructure

Horizons is supportive of the establishment of more walking and cycling infrastructure due to the health benefits it promotes, the safety improvements by taking more vehicles off roads and the tourism and economic benefits that go with having an attractive package of cycling opportunities in our districts and Region. The usual process for development of new cycleway projects is for the District Councils to co-ordinate and fund the project through their Annual Plan.

This then allows for subsidy to be secured from the New Zealand Transport Authority (this is facilitated by the fact that walking and cycling is a strategic priority in the Regional Land Transport Plan). Horizons staff are available in a collaborative role, and as stakeholders where there is Horizons land (typically river berms and stopbanks which are often used for cycleways) to assist with advocating and coordinating such projects.

The submissions referencing the Ashhurst Bridge cycleway crossing is acknowledged. Staff have supported and have been involved in the development of a business case to secure funding from the New Zealand Transport Authority. Unfortunately, the business case did not meet the current requirement for funding. It is hoped that further work in the tourism space, in particular with the Manawatu Gorge, will elevate the importance and need for this project. Horizons will continue to advocate for this project in the mean time.

Second Manawatu River Bridge Crossing

Regarding the submission about a second Manawatu River Bridge downstream of the existing Fitzherbert Bridge, the usual process followed is for the Territorial Authority to fund the business case work through their Annual Plan/Long-Term Plan. To enable the project to be eligible for funding from the New Zealand Transport Authority, it needs to be included in the Regional Land Transport Plan so that it can be added to the National programme. This is done by seeking a variation to the Regional Land Transport Plan through the Regional Transport Committee. With respect to the location of the bridge, the current Joint Transport Study identifies the preferred location of a second bridge upstream of the existing Fitzherbert Bridge. At the time the study was developed in 2010, the preferred residential growth areas for the City were Whakarongo and Aokautere. That bridge location would also allow for continuous movement from south of the river, up Stoney Creek Road through to Bunnythorpe and Feilding. Should a business case be developed, it would need to highlight the problems and solutions a downstream bridge would bring. It would also be beneficial to outline how this bridge location would fit with the Accelerate25 Plan, and what new developments over the past five years have taken place that support a second downstream bridge. This issue has been put forward to the Regional Transport Committee via the Joint Transport Study Governance Group.

General

The submission referencing the data collection project (Qrious) is acknowledged. Council has committed to spend \$8,000 next year towards the project of collecting mobile phone location data to determine possible travel route demand. This contribution was matched and exceeded by Palmerston North City Council. No additional funding for the current project is required.

The submission seeking a reduction in the length of trial for the Palmerston North bus improvements is acknowledged. A two year trial is considered the minimum necessary length to give the trial service its maximum chance of success by building patronage over time. If after a shorter period the trial service is clearly not succeeding the service can be cut to save funding.

Flood Protection And Control Works Group Of Activities

Scheme management generally follows recognized best practice excepting some of the challenges specific schemes face particularly in regard to sedimentation

and consequent loss of flood-carrying capacity. The schemes do provide good social, economic and environmental outcomes; the term band-aids belittles the value the schemes have realized to date for their respective communities.

In addition, Council resolved at its 10 May Strategy & Policy Committee meeting to adopt the changes to river schemes as outlined in the Annual Plan summary 2016-17 brochure, with the exception that the spillway formation and modifications to the Koputaroa No. 1 Pump Station be deferred.

Biosecurity and Biodiversity Activity

Horizons are currently reviewing the Regional Pest Management Plan. All submissions relating to animal or plant pest control will be addressed as part of the Regional Pest Management Plan process. Council has noted the requests for extra resources and support from submitter and will ensure these requests are considered at the appropriate level during the operational planning and future annual planning processes. Council wishes to reassure submitters that overall levels of service for this activity will be retained.

Submissions relating to the use of 1080 have been considered and it has been noted that there are robust processes in place that provide for alternatives to be utilised where appropriate.

Council resolved that no changes are made to the Biosecurity and Biodiversity Management Group of Activities as the Regional Pest Management Plan is still out for deliberations and any changes will be part of the 2017-18 Annual Plan Deliberations; and that Council will consult on the Pest Management 4ha threshold rating when reviewing the Revenue and Financing Policies for the 2018-28 Long-Term Plan.

The 2016-17 Annual Plan is available via our website www.horizons.govt.nz. If you would like a hardcopy or disc version of the Plan, please contact our Customer Services Team on freephone 0508 800 800.

Yours sincerely



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Horizons Regional Council