

2001/02 Annual Plan

Vol. II

Managers' Comments

Annual Plan Submissions

Note: Those submitters identified in bold type have expressed a desire to be heard in support of their submissions.

1. Norm Morgan	Acquisition of TranzMetro, Kick start funding, Water integration, effectiveness of submission process
2. Steve Ritchie	Bus service for Robson Street and McManaway Grove , Stokes Valley
3. Nicola Harvey	Acquisition of TranzMetro, Kick start funding, Water integration, Marine conservation project for Lyall Bay
4. Alan Waller	Rates increases, upgrade to Petone Railway Station
5. John Davis	Acquisition of TranzMetro, Water integration, MMP for local government, Emergency management
6. Wellington City Council	Floodplain management funding policy
7. Kapiti Coast Grey Power Assn Inc	Annual Plan presentation, acquisition of TranzMetro, Kick start funding, rates, operating expenditure, financial management, land management, Parks and Forests, Investment in democracy,
8. John Mcalister	Acquisition of TranzMetro, Kick Start funding, Water integration, water supply in the Wairarapa
9. Hutt 2000 Limited	Installation of security cameras in Bunny Street Lower Hutt
10. Walk Wellington	Inclusion of walking in Regional Land Transport Strategy
11. Hugh Barr	Acquisition of TranzMetro, Kick Start funding, Water integration. public access to Water collection areas

12. Porirua City Council	Bulk Water levy, Transparency of Transport rate, support for Friends of Maara Roa, environmental management and Biodiversity
13. Keep Otaki Beautiful	Otaki Bus Shelter
14. Barney Scully	Cobham Drive Waterfront/Foreshore
15. Upper Hutt City Council	Acquisition of TranzMetro, Water Integration, Hutt River Floodplain Management
16. Wairarapa Green Issues Network	Acquisition of TransMetro, Rick start funding, environmental education, rail services, biodiversity
17. Tawa Progressive and Ratepayers Assn Inc	Suburban rail network, western corridor, water integration
18. Hutt Valley District Health Board	Environmental management performance indicators, Regional water supply
19 Queen Elizabeth II National Trust	Care groups, sustainable land Management, pest management, biodiversity, Wairarapa Wetland Park
20. Upper Otaki River landowners	Erosion in Otaki River
21. Wellington Labour Local Body Committee	Relationship with Iwi, Environmental management, regional transport, acquisition of TranzMetro, regional Water supply, Land management, flood protection, Parks and Forests, Regional Stadium, investments, investing in democracy
22. Mayor John Terris	Security in Bunny Street Lower Hutt
23. NZ Historic Places Trust	Rimutaka Incline, heritage

24. Cycle Aware Wellington		Regional cycling strategy, cycle path maps, carriage of cycles on public transport
25. Chris Horne		Regional Land Transport Strategy, Kyoto Protocol
26. Tararua Club	Tramping	Annual plan presentation, investments, environmental management, regional transport, regional water supply, land management, Parks & Forests, Regional Stadium, financial tables
27. Wellington Museum	Tramway	Railway station north of MacKay's Crossing
28. Wellington Society	Botanical	Land management, biodiversity, Akura Nursery, environmental education
29. Kathy Spiers		Access to Paraparaumu station
30. Te Runanga Te Ati Awa ki Whakarongotai		Catchment management in Waikanae River, Queen Elizabeth Park
31. Tawa Community Board		Park and rides
32. Philip Tomlinson		Rates, public transport, Kick start funding, water integration
33. Normandale Residents Assn		Environment management, Regional Transport, regional water supply, flood protection, Parks and Forests
34. Waiwhetu Working Group	Stream	Waiwhetu Stream Action Plan
35. Wellington City Council		Regional planning, transport, water levies, Regional Transport funding policy, regional parks
36. Michael Talyor		Long Term Financial Strategy, investment programme, acquisition of TranzMetro, kick start funding, water integration, environmental management, regional transport, regional water supply, land management, parks and Forests, Regional Stadium,
37. Brian Colegate		Regional water supply
38. Hutt City Council		Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan
39. Kapiti Coast District Council		Flood protection, regional transport

Comments on Submission 1

Kick Start Funding

The Regional Council has no responsibility for the Best Street Bridge in Wainuiomata. It cannot therefore qualify as a public transport “kick start” project under the Transfund New Zealand Patronage Funding Scheme. If the bridge were ever to be constructed the Regional Council would need to consider its suitability as a public transport route.

Water Integration

Comments noted

Submission process

The submitter can be assured that the Council is aware that the regional community is judging its performance and takes all submissions seriously.

Comments on Submission 2

Bus Service – Stokes Valley

Reviewing the public transport needs of the Stokes Valley area has been a low priority because of the 'kick start' projects being implemented under the Transfund New Zealand Patronage Funding Scheme. To undertake a survey of the Robson Street/McManaway Grove part of Stokes Valley would cost about \$5,000 and could not be programmed until later in the 2001/02 year. A probable cost of any new service in the area would be of the order of \$50,000. No new service would be provided without a strong indication from the survey that a service could be successful. Also the project would need to be submitted to Transfund New Zealand as a 'kick start' project. It would be imprudent to introduce any new service prior to 1st July 2003 that did not gain 'kick start' funding approval.

Comments on Submission 3

Acquisition of TranzMetro

The support for the Council to have an ownership interest in Tranz Metro Wellington is noted.

Kick Start Funding

This proposal is contrary to the adopted Regional Land Transport Strategy. The submitter needs to represent her views during the next review of the Strategy.

Water Integration

Comments noted

Marine Conservation Project – Lyall Bay

Unfortunately, the current Local Government Act precludes this Council from giving grants. Consequently, the Council is unable to provide funds for the proposed marine conservation centre on Wellington's south coast.

Comments on Submission 4

Rate Increases

The two reasons for Wellington Regional Council rate increases (4.67% overall) in Lower Hutt City are:

Transport – reflecting improved services	+	6.03%
Rivers Rate – this reflects the local contribution (\$1.192M in 2000/2002) flood protection enhancements being undertaken along the Hutt River	+	42.75%

Changes to the equalised value of Lower Hutt City mean that its proposed share of the Wellington Regional Council General Rate decreases by 3.96%.

Petone Railway Station

Though Tranz Metro Wellington is owned by Tranz Rail Limited, a private company, the services provided by Tranz Metro exist solely because the Regional Council purchases them on behalf of the community. Petone station only exists because it is part of the Tranz Metro network. Any changes to Petone station must be seen as part of the overall provision of passenger rail services to the Hutt Valley; this is the reason for the Council's involvement.

Comments on Submission 5

Acquisition of TranzMetro

The opposition to the Council having an ownership interest in Tranz Metro Wellington is noted, unless all bus and rail services are included.

Water Integration

Comments noted

MMP for Local Government

The writer's views are noted.

New local government electoral legislation has been enacted by Parliament and will apply to the 2001 Local Body Elections.

It includes the option of allowing Councillors to be elected by the present method (First Past the Post) or STV (Single Transferable Vote) from the 2004 Local Body Election. Which system is to apply is a matter for each community to decide.

Emergency Management

Planning for emergencies in the Wellington Region is a difficult and complex task. It has been made more so in recent years due to the increasing number of private and governmental organisations that are involved in emergency response. The old Ministry of Works is one example of this, as is the telecommunications industry where there are at least four providers in the Wellington region where traditionally there was just one. An essential part of emergency planning is now to communicate and co-ordinate with all of these agencies.

The Wellington Regional Council and each of the District and City Councils are required to have a Civil Defence Plan. These plans are written after consultation with other response agencies. These are the plans where issues of access, resources, transportation, communications, building reconnaissance and building demolition have been addressed. In some areas of planning it has been identified that Wellington does not have sufficient resources to manage the event. For example, an exercise to be held in 2002 will look at how the Auckland region can assist Wellington by providing resources or search and rescue, the treatment and movement of the injured, and the provision of safe water supplies.

Future legislation, to be introduced later this year, will require all of the Councils to plan jointly and prepare one plan covering the entire region. This plan will be required to cover reduction of risk, readiness for emergencies, response and recovery activities. Utilities and emergency services will be required to contribute to this planning process. The Wellington Regional Council looks forward to this planning process as it will formalise the involvement of emergency services and utilities in emergency planning.

In addition to the official Civil Defence planning process, there are a number of other avenues that have been set up for co-ordination and communication to occur. These include the Wellington and Wairarapa Lifelines Groups, the Wellington Regional Recovery Workgroup, Emergency Services Co-ordinating Committees, and inter-agency training exercises. Through these groups we capture the regular involvement of utilities, private companies, local and central government, and the emergency services to plan and prepare for emergencies.

Comments on Submission 6

Floodplain Management Funding Policy

Although this submission was made to the Hutt River Plain Management Plan it is more appropriately considered as a submission on the Annual Plan. The funding policy is noted in the Floodplain Management Plan almost as a matter of record whereas the proposed Annual Plan contains a summary of the complete policy. Consultation on the funding policy is part of the Annual Plan process.

In developing the funding policy for flood protection the Council has applied the three step process required by the legislation. Stage one sets out the theoretical economic evaluation; stage two sets out legal, fairness and other issues which could be taken into account; stage three introduces further issues relating to feasibility.

Councillors explicitly recognised a number of factors in developing the funding policy. They were:

- Ability to pay and equity across the region
- Valuing safety and security
- Provision of environmental and amenity benefits
- Sense of community

These considerations led to a judgement that a greater regional contribution is appropriate compared to that suggested by the theoretical allocation. Taking these factors into account and other issues of feasibility led the Council to decide that the funding policy should allow for up to 50% of the costs of schemes to be charged to the general rate.

It should also be noted that the Office of the Controller and Auditor General has reviewed the Council's flood protection funding policy and made the following comments:

“We have reviewed the Regional Council’s funding policy that was adopted on 15 June 2000. We note that the funding policy properly addresses the ‘three step’ approach that is required under Section 122E of the Act.”

“The funding policy and process adopted by Council is one of the most comprehensive we have seen. We see no reason to question the legitimacy of the funding policy.”

The Wellington City Council submission states (page five) that

“The idea of a ‘regional community’ is therefore dubious.. ”

This is a fundamental difference of philosophy. The Regional Council's long term financial strategy (which the funding policy is part of) is premised on the basis of an integrated regional community. Further, the Crown has explicitly recognised the concept of regions through the creation of regional councils.

Comments on Submission 7

Annual Plan Presentation

The submitter makes a number of very detailed comments on the Council's proposed annual plan document. Rather than respond to each specific matter raised, the following comments are made:

- The key assumption of road pricing being in place by 2006 is recognised on p3 and p38 of the document. In both cases the Council states that should that revenue not be available the Council would need to review its level of expenditure on Transport. The Council does not intend for this risk to be underwritten by ratepayers.
- The Council has stated its preferred public/private partnership model in respect of ownership and operation of rail in the Region. However, the Council has not yet been able to progress negotiations with Tranz Rail to a point where there is a firm proposition on the table. As such it is difficult to be more definitive about likely rating impacts.

Clearly the Council wishes to fully consult the community once there is a firm proposal on the table.

- The submitter is concerned that the Council has 'updated' estimates relating to years that were included in last year's LTFS.

It is difficult to avoid this when 'updating' the document. To leave the figures the same when the Council now has better information would be to ignore that better information. This would be irresponsible and imprudent.

However, the Council has included a section in respect of every significant activity (e.g. transport) to explain the material changes from the LTFS adopted in June 2000.

The submitter appears to be confused by the figures presented on page 39 of the plan. The \$41.9 million actually relates to the expenditure for 2001/02 contained in the final annual plan adopted in June 2000. (The submitter appears to have been quoting \$39.678 million as relating to 2001/02 when in fact that was the proposed expenditure figure for the 2000/01 year (as contained in the proposed annual plan last year).

Operating Expenditure

The submitter has noted 'apparent' changes to the 2000/01 base line budget figures. The 2000/01 budget figures on page 100 of the plan relate to the budget figures as approved by the Council in June 2000 (these may have been different to the budget figures contained in the proposed annual plan last year).

- In terms of Council's planned operating surplus of \$5.2 million, it is essentially being used to fund capital expenditure and debt repayment (refer p 100 of the annual plan).

Analysis of the financial summaries in each significant activity statement provides the following breakdown:

Water supply operating surplus	\$2,058,000
Flood protection operating surplus	\$2,004,000
Stadium operating surplus	\$649,000
Other operating surplus	\$576,000
	<u>\$5,287,000</u>

In respect of water and flood protection activities the surplus is being used for new capital works, self insurance investment funds and debt repayment and in respect of the stadium it is solely being used for debt repayment.

- Reserves are projected to increase to approx. \$16 million over the 9 years of the plan. However, it is important to appreciate that these projections assume no withdrawal from Council contingency reserves (e.g Flood contingency), which is very unlikely.

Also, since the completion of the proposed annual plan, there is new information available which will see a much reduced Transport Reserve (due to factors including higher inflation on contracted services in the 2000/01 year leading to a lower projected reserve balance at 30 June 2001).

Acquisition of TranzMetro

The opposition to the Council having an ownership interest in TranzMetro Wellington is noted.

The submitter makes the statement that “WRC should not take risks with ratepayers’ money”. Unfortunately paying \$17 million p.a. to a monopoly provider (i.e. Tranz Rail) is doing exactly that. The Council has never been able to receive the necessary comfort that it is achieving good value for money in its annual contract payments to Tranz Rail which is precisely why the Council has decided that a public/private partnership is required. (If the contracting model had worked well no ownership interest would be being sought by the Council.)

In effect the Council has taken much of the risk on capital expenditure (e.g. Ganz Mavag refurbishments) rather than Tranz Rail, so a move to a public/private partnership will actually reduce the level of risk currently run by the ratepayers rather than increase it.

Kick Start Funding

The ‘kick start’ projects listed on page 7 of the proposed plan are projects already included in the Long Term Financial Strategy but have been brought forward to take advantage of ‘kick start’ funding. They are therefore all well thought through projects. The specific project mentioned, ‘bus enhancements for Waikanae’, extends the evening services on the Waikanae route beyond the current close off 7.00pm; thereby providing more flexibility for public transport travellers. The Waikanae services are carrying good loads rather than being not well patronised, as suggested by the submitter.

All people in Leinster Ave have been advised of the possible removal of the current bus

service from their street. Submissions have been received from a number of people, far in excess of the number currently using the service. Options to provide existing users with an acceptable alternative are being considered.

Though the projected expenditure for Regional Transport increases by \$14.3 m between 2001/02 and 2005/06, the second bullet point on page 20 remains correct when it states that the increase in the year 2005/06 year is \$9.5 m.

The bus and rail service increases occurring on the Kapiti Coast are included in the adopted Regional Land Transport Strategy which was the subject of formal public consultation and submissions. Bus and rail contract prices are public knowledge once they are accepted during the tender process. A list of current contract prices for bus and rail services serving the Kapiti Coast will be sent to the submitter.

Details of patronage funding are set out under the assumptions on page 38 of the proposed plan.

Increased public transport use does provide extra income for operators during the term of their contract. This benefit is lost to them and gained by the Council once the contract is re-tendered.

The submitter is confusing the years 2000/01 and 2001/02. The original budget for 2001/02 in last years annual plan was \$41.9 m. This has increased to \$48.5 m (shown on page 35).

The projects brought forward come from the original Long Term Financial Strategy and are therefore not a 'wish list'.

Pest Management

The Council will be considering recommendations from the Rural Services & Wairarapa Committee in relation to the budget provisions for the Bovine Tb activity. The situation has changed significantly from the Council's Proposed Annual Plan position as the Proposed National Strategy for Bovine Tb has subsequently been finalised with a reduced work programme for 2001/02 in this region. There is also a changed funding apportionment as the Crown and the Industry are proposing to make greater contributions which will result in a lesser requirement for Council general rates and bovine Tb rates.

Parks and Forests

Investment in democracy

Comments on Submission 8

Acquisition of TranzMetro

The support for the Council having an ownership interest in Tranz Metro Wellington is noted.

Kick Start Funding

All research worldwide supports real time information. Users are particularly concerned about reliability. Real time information provides certainty and removes anxiety. Patronage growth is a consequential result.

Water Integration

Comments noted

Water Supply in Wairarapa

The last comment under 3 in the submission presumably applies to significant problems that the South Wairarapa District Council is having with the Greytown/Featherston water treatment plant. This matter is the responsibility of the District Council and they are working with the contractor to resolve the difficulties. The issues to be resolved are very specific and the regional council is not in a position to assist.

Comments on Submission 9

Security Cameras, Bunny Street Lower Hutt

Safety in city centres, regardless of the cause, is the responsibility of the Police and the local community through the local city council. Safety issues related to Bunny Street, Lower Hutt are therefore an issue for the Hutt City Council and the local Police.

Comments on Submission 10

Walking – Regional Land Transport Strategy

The Council is working with Transfund New Zealand on evaluating pedestrian benefits as an input into their project evaluation criteria. This is seen as being a legitimate way of implementing the Regional Land Transport Strategy. Other projects include further expenditure on pedestrian links to the Lambton Bus/Rail Interchange. The Council will continue to promote pedestrian links to public transport services.

The Council notes WalkWellington's objectives of promoting walking as a tourist activity, improving information for walkers and improving walking facilities for people with special mobility needs.

The Council considers that recreational participation is an important contributor to healthy people; one aspect of the Council's vision for the Region. The Council's marketing of its parks and forests is designed to increase visitor use and recreational participation. Providing information (e.g., brochures, web-based information, signage) to visitors is part of the marketing strategy. Council officers have been working with Sport Wellington on the KiwiWalks programme and have developed two KiwiWalks in the parks and forests. The Council has a programme to develop one additional KiwiWalk each year. Officers are also running a *Regional Outdoors Events Programme* to encourage use of the parks and forests; many of these events are walking based.

Comments on Submission 11

Acquisition of TranzMetro

The support for the Council having an ownership interest in Tranz Metro Wellington is noted.

Kick Start Funding

Support for 'kick start' projects is noted.

Water Integration

Comments noted

Public Access to Water Collection Areas

Access to the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo water collection area is an important issue for the Council. The Council has a policy of achieving an "A" grading for its water treatment plants in terms of the Ministry of Health's Drinking Water Standards. The Standards state that public access to water collection areas should be "strictly controlled". When deciding on the issue of public access to the catchment, the Council considers the definition of "strictly controlled"; this appears not to mean "unrestricted" public access. Without controls, the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo catchment would be easily accessible (posing a risk to water quality) due to its close proximity to residential areas and other public lands, as opposed to the Hutt catchment, which has geographic constraints limiting the number of people accessing it. Therefore it is a fine balance to develop a policy that achieves water quality objectives without putting unnecessarily strict limits on public access.

The Council has opted for a phased approach to access to the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo catchment, gradually increasing access over a three-year period to enable monitoring of any impacts on water quality. Phase 1 finishes on 30 June and has been very successful, with no negative impacts on water quality. In May, the Council agreed to move to phase 2, which effectively doubles the number of people going into the catchment. Phase 2 will be reviewed in April/May 2002 to determine whether to allow further access from July 2002.

Comments on Submission 12

Bulk Water Levy

Comments noted.

Transparency of Transport Rate

Table 5 on page 17 of the proposed annual plan clearly sets out the change in regional transport rates by local authority district. For the Porirua City District the change is from \$2,894,000 to \$3,069,000 which is a 6.05% increase. This increase is less than the average increase of 8.94%

Support for Friends of Maara Roa

The submitter congratulates the Council on the work that has been undertaken in relation to the Pauatahanui Inlet Action Plan and fully supports the continuation of this and related ecosystem initiatives. The Council thanks the submitter for these comments.

The Council also acknowledges that this work is being done in equal partnership with the Porirua City Council and the residents of the area and looks forward to the continuation of this successful relationship. The Council is putting a considerable degree of effort and investment into its biodiversity programmes across the Region but rates the Inlet as a very important area worthy of special attention.

The Council acknowledges the City Council's support for the Maara Roa proposal to declare as reserve the portion of the conservation covenant area in the Cannons Creek valley owned by Landcorp. The Regional Council, working with Maara Roa and officers from the City Council, has invested time and money in developing a restoration plan for the valley. Regional Council officers are discussing the plan and will investigate the proposal to create a reserve with Landcorp Farming Limited, in conjunction with City Council officers. The outcome of these discussions will be reported to both councils for a decision.

Environmental Management and Biodiversity

Porirua City Council's continued support for the WRC's efforts in these area is appreciated.

Comments on Submission 13

Otaki Bus Shelter

The Council works closely with the various local authorities to identify appropriate bus shelter sites. If the Kapiti Coast District Council view the Otaki south bound site as having high priority vis-a-vis other sites in the District then it is likely that it will receive attention in the coming year.

Comments on Submission 14

Cobham Drive Waterfront/Foreshore

The Regional Council acknowledges that the submitter has, through the annual plan submission process, been trying to get the issue of the Cobham Drive foreshore/waterfront resolved for a number of years. We commend the submitter on his commitment and patience. The Regional Council, especially with regard to its goal of “a high quality environment”, has some sympathy with the submitter’s views.

The issue has been discussed again with Wellington City Council. We are delighted to report some real progress.

City Council staff have advised that:

- They don’t consider that an approach to the Crown for financial compensation will succeed
- The City Council accepts responsibility for the matter
- The Draft WCC Annual Plan contains a provision for investigating the issues in Cobham Drive that have been raised by the submitter. If approved, this investigative work will take place in the 2001/02 year. The specific reference is on page 114 “Coastal Upgrades” of the WCC Draft Annual Plan.
- The City Council will personally be responding to your submission once the budgets have been confirmed (deliberations will take place between 18th and 29th of June).

The City Council’s response is consistent with the Regional Council’s previously expressed and current view about responsibility for this matter. It is also in keeping with the Memorandum of Understanding that exists between the Councils with respect to coastal management responsibilities (copy attached for information).

We hope that next year the submitter will be able to see environmental improvements to this area.

Comments on Submission 15

Acquisition of TranzMetro

The submitter does not say why his Council doesn't support WRC's public/private partnership model, nor what alternative is proposed.

Perhaps more importantly the submitter does not explain exactly how should WRC proceed from here, irrespective of whether the Govt regains control of the Rail corridor and associated infrastructure.

Water Integration

Comments noted.

Hutt River Floodplain Management

It is appropriate that discussion of non-structural measures for the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan does not pre-judge or pre-empt the outcome of any district plan variation or change process. City Council expenditure on any non-structural measures should likewise not be pie-determined.

Non-structural measures included as principles and outcomes in the Draft Plan will require flexibility to be developed in a way that enables matters such as legal validity, practicalities of implementation, annual planning priorities and fairness and balance to be appropriately considered. Importantly the process of developing and refining non-structural measures to achieve the intent of the principles will rely on the continuing good faith between the Regional Council and Upper Hutt and Hutt City Councils.

A change to the wording of the Performance Indicator is recommended.

Comments on Submission 16

Acquisition of TranzMetro

The support for the Council having an ownership interest in TranzMetro Wellington is noted.

Kick Start Funding

The current two days a week Masterton town bus service is operated under a five year contract which costs \$8,770 per year and is due to expire in October 2002. In the year ending July 2000 the subsidy per passenger was \$2.76.

We hope to review the service and consult with the public on its future in the first half of 2002, before re-tendering for a new contract.

As part of that exercise we will consider whether a five days a week service might be worth trialing. In any event Transit Coachlines or any other tenderer will be able to put forward a proposal for a more extensive service by submitting an alternative tender.

The contract for the Masterton-Featherston service is also for five years, expiring in October 2002. It currently costs \$64,980 per year. The subsidy per passenger in 1999/2000 was \$2.27.

Similarly it will be reviewed together with train connections for Greytown and Martinborough.

Environmental Education

The submitter applauds the Council's environmental education initiatives for schools, businesses and the general community but is disappointed that the programmes don't commence in the 2001-02 year. The submitter urges the Council to consider the Waikato Enviroschools initiative and look at something similar in the Wairarapa area. There is also support for the care group programme and biodiversity initiatives such as riparian management and protection of remnant indigenous vegetation.

The Council thanks the submitter for these comments.

The *Take Action* programme for schools does commence in the 2001-02 year, with its official launch in February next year. However, we have already trialed the programme with a number of schools, and the Hiona School in Masterton will be undertaking the programme in the third term of this year (2001). The *Take Charge* programme for businesses is being trialed at present and will commence in July of this year. The Care Group programme is already in full swing and there will be another opportunity for groups to apply early in the new financial year.

The Council does not have the resources to undertake the Enviroschools approach at present. This is a resource intensive exercise and the Council's current priority is to reach as many

young people as possible with its environmental messages. However, Council staff are assisting with a regionally based environmental education initiative which is testing the Enviroschool model. Four schools are likely to take part in this.

Rail Services

Support for the enhancement of public transport services is noted.

Biodiversity

Comments noted.

Comments on Submission 17

Suburban Rail Network

The Council monitors use of commuter carparks at stations on a regular basis. Capacity problems are addressed by seeking additional land or by re-organising the existing carpark to accommodate more cars. It is not always possible to do either. In the Tawa basin the Redwood carpark will be extended by the provision of 38 new spaces this year.

Western Corridor

The pros and cons of alternative roading options on the western corridor are spelt out in the technical work underpinning the Regional Land Transport Strategy. The preparation of that strategy was done through a full public consultation process. The submitter should be advised about the Regional Land Transport Strategy and their ability to have an input into the next review of it.

Water Integration

The submitter's support for water integration is noted.

Comments on Submission 18

Environmental management Performance Indicators

The submitter supports both the Council's planned collection and disposal of unwanted agricultural chemicals throughout the Region and its environmental education programme for schools, business, and the general community.

The Council has recognised that inappropriate disposal of unwanted agricultural chemicals presents a significant risk to the environment. As many of these substances are no longer manufactured and distributed, a one-off collection should dramatically reduce the environmental risk.

The Council thanks the submitter for their comments and looks forward to continuing its effective relationship with Regional Public Health.

Regional Water Supply

The submitter's support for water integration is noted.

Comments on Submission 19

Care Groups

The submitter supports the Council's proposals to expand the number of Care Groups, undertake riparian management and protect remnant indigenous vegetation, and control animal and plant pests.

The Council thanks the submitter for these comments and also acknowledges significant aspects of this work are being done in partnership with the Trust. The Council looks forward to the continuation of this successful and effective relationship. The riparian management strategy will be completed in draft form this financial year and the opportunity will then be taken to consult fully with the Trust on its contents. Further initiatives for the protection and management of remnant indigenous areas are also being developed at present. These will also be discussed with the National Trust shortly.

Sustainable Land Management and Biodiversity

The submitter's support for the Council's programmes is noted.

Pest Management

Council officers are already working very closely with the Queen Elizabeth II trust in relation to pest management. The supportive comments from the Trust are noted and much appreciated.

Wairarapa Wetland Park

The submitters support is appreciated.

Comments on Submission 20

Erosion in Otaki River

Mr McLuskie, on behalf of six Upper Rahui landowners, submits that protection works are required to stop erosion of the area known as the cliffs on the south bank of the upper Otaki River. The landowners request that Council allocate funds for this work in the 2001/02 annual plan.

There has been ongoing erosion of the south bank cliffs since the commencement of the Otaki Scheme in 1948. However, since about 1990, a section of the cliffs that was previously stable began to suffer significant erosion. This erosion was recognised in the development of the Otaki Floodplain Management Plan. The Plan includes the following river management works in the Upper Rahui area:

- Upper Rahui widening, including retreat of the north bank stopbank and edge stabilisation works – now completed.
- 500 metres of debris fence and planting on the south bank at the cliffs - this work is not included in the current Flood Protection 10-year Operating Plan.
- Ongoing maintenance programme.

The key to providing any relief to the south bank erosion is the channel widening completed as part of the Upper Rahui project. The next step would be to construct the debris fence and willow buffer zone at the foot of the cliffs. However this work ranks low in the priority list for Plan implementation, and as stated above is not included within the Flood Protection 10-year Operating Plan.

The following should be noted:

- The full benefits of the Upper Rahui widening, to the south bank landowners, have only just started to materialise. Further work was undertaken as part of the maintenance programme. Erosion resistant beaches were cut from the central channel to allow the river to meander over the full width of the new channel and so establish a “median course”.
- The Otaki River maintenance budget provides for ongoing in-channel works in the upper Otaki River. A combination of this work and the full benefits of the Upper Rahui widening will reduce, but not stop, the on-going southbank erosion.
- The southbank landowners were given the opportunity to construct protection works at the foot of the cliffs as part of the Upper Rahui project. This would have required a significant cash contribution from the landowners. The opportunity was declined.
- The “illegal works” described in the submission were constructed around 1990 to maintain the river alignment that had existed since 1955. A better description of the works would be work “legally constructed but not agreed with by the southbank landowners”.

A meeting was held with the southbank landowners on 22 March this year to discuss these issues.

Comments on Submission 21

Relationship with Iwi

The Council is aware that there are Maori within the Wellington Region who are not represented by the iwi authorities with which a formal relationship exists. The Charter of Understanding between the Council and these Iwi authorities expressly recognises this point in the following way; Ara Tahi is the Council's Inter-Iwi Representative Group.

“All parties remain open to the possibility of new parties joining Ara Tahi. If a new party communicates to the Council their desire to join Ara Tahi, their request will be brought to Ara Tahi. Ara Tahi will then decide on a process to determine whether such a group will be invited to be part of Ara Tahi and a signatory to this Charter.”

Environment Management

The Council will be continuing to use *Elements* as a way to promote responsible environmental behaviour and inform the community about the Council's activities in environmental management. We are aware that *Elements* has a wide audience with great range of interests and abilities. We try to make the information accessible to as many people as we can.

The priority in all emergencies is to protect the lives of people. It is important that emotional attachment (or financial in the case of agriculture) does not cloud people's judgements. Educating animal owners is therefore vital to ensure that human life is not sacrificed for the sake of an animal.

Sales of jet skis has flattened off after the initial burst of popularity and so we do not expect the number of jet skis on the Harbour to increase very much. There is also a greater awareness amongst the public of the problems that jet skis can cause.

The planned extension of Oriental Bay beach should not have any effect on harbour safety. The '5-knots within 200 metres rule' (as per the new Wellington Regional Navigation and Safety Bylaws 2000) will be maintained. The existing 5-knot warning buoys will be moved further offshore to maintain the 200 metre distance. The new bylaws also require jet skis to keep to under 5 knots within 50 metres of swimmers whereas previously it was only within 30 metres.

Last summer, the Council, in an effort to have a greater presence on the Harbour, employed two extra temporary harbour rangers to assist with safety and enforcement matters. This proved to be very successful and will probably be repeated this year.

Regional Transport

Support for 'kick start' public transport projects is noted, both those already in the proposed annual plan and those that could be added.

Increasing the length of the current Airport link service from Queensgate, Lower Hutt to connect hospitals and tertiary institutions would negate the primary purpose of the service which is for the airport users.

Integrated ticketing is certainly not likely to be started until the rail operator is in a position to fully participate.

The Council is keen to encourage Wellington City to provide bus priority measures through the CBD to ease bus congestion. This may now become feasible with the likely construction of the inner city bypass in the next year or two.

A number of the late night bus services are coming up for re-tendering. Adding a 4.00 am departure on Sunday mornings will be considered then.

Acquisition of TranzMetro

The submitter does not say why his Council doesn't support WRC's public/private partnership model, nor what alternative is proposed.

Perhaps more importantly the submitter does not explain exactly how should WRC proceed from here, irrespective of whether the Govt regains control of the Rail corridor and associated infrastructure.

Regional Water Supply

Comments noted.

Flood Protection

Council notes the Wellington Labour Local Body Committee support for the development of the Hutt River Scheme as fast as reasonably possible. Council believes that when its range of functions are considered the flood protection funding policy and its current application reflects a reasonable balance over the potential benefits which accrue on the floodplains and the national benefits.

There are no current proposals for flood scheme improvements that will affect the option of a rail link between Melling and Upper Hutt, however the viability and impact of such a rail link on the flood protection scheme would require very close consideration.

The Labour Committee's support for all other flood protection schemes is noted.

While the Labour Committee notes that it would like to see willows replaced by native species in riverside management, the Flood Protection Group advise that for initial front-line erosion control willows are the only species that will successfully establish. However the Group has noted that as bank edge willow plantings mature and the banks stabilise, native species self-propagate on the edges of and within willow buffers. Council has also increased its use of indigenous species for riparian planting and enhancement of river margins and river corridors. Indigenous species have traditionally been used as screen or copse planting on berms, but their use is becoming more frequent on banks where the edge has a toe lining of rock.

Parks and Forests

The Council acknowledges the support of the Committee for the changes from the 2000 – 2010 plan in the parks and forests area, and appreciates the positive feedback on the publicity in *Elements*

Comments on Submission 22

Security – Bunny Street Lower Hutt

This submission is in support of submission 9 from Hutt 2000 Limited. The comments to this submission are therefore the same.

Comments on Submission 23

Rimutaka Incline

The Council appreciates the interest being taken by the Trust in the heritage value of the Rimutaka Incline rail formation and its associated structures, and acknowledges the Trust's support for the Council's actions restoring the bridges and protecting the Ladle Bend straight.

The Council will be pleased to make available all information it has on the heritage values of the area to assist the Trust's investigations into registering the formation under the Historic Places Act.

The Council agrees that there are opportunities for interpreting the rail heritage along the walkway. In February, the Council's Landcare Committee considered a report on developing such an interpretation trail. Current funds do not enable a trail to be developed at present, however, officers have been asked to:

- incorporate the idea of an Heritage Interpretation Trail along the Rimutaka Incline Walkway into the current review of the Interim Forest Lands and Water Collection Areas Management Plan; and
- further refine the project and likely costings for consideration through the next full review of the 10-year plan in two years time.

There are currently two right angled crossing places south of Ladle Bend. Both these crossing places have been designed to avoid any damage to the rail formation and will be removed on completion of the logging. There is still 7000t to be harvested at the lower end of the walkway and when this is completed the walkway will be restored to the condition it was in prior to the commencement of the logging.

The harvest contract at present in the market includes the harvest of the Martin block. At this point the present track deviates from the rail alignment and any crossings of the alignment will be constructed so as to avoid any further damage.

Heritage

The submitter recommends the Council consider employing an Archaeological/Heritage Officer to provide for the integrated management of archaeological heritage in the Region.

The Council thanks the submitter for these comments. The Council's involvement in heritage matters has generally been in relation to regionally significant heritage items and places as defined in the Regional Policy Statement (RPS). These are tightly defined to include only Category One items on the Historic Places Trust Register. In general, archaeological matters are handled at the District Council level and the Council would only get involved if it were a significant site.

However, the Council will be reviewing its involvement in heritage matters in 2001-02 as part of its implementation of the heritage provisions of the Regional Policy Statement. The

Council will undertake Method 9 of the Landscape and Heritage Chapter of the RPS which calls for an assessment of the need for a regional plan for regionally significant heritage matters. The issue of the Council's role in archaeological heritage can be considered at this stage.

Comments on Submission 24

Regional Cycle Strategy

The Council's Regional Land Transport Strategy requests Transit New Zealand and Territorial Local Authorities to provide improved facilities for cyclists (policy 5.1.2 – making cycling and walking more attractive).

Cycle Path Maps

The Regional Council publishes brochures and maps on cycling opportunities within its regional parks and forests. However, it is outside the powers of the Regional Council to produce and promote a regional map of recreational cycle paths where the paths are not on land the Council owns or manages.

Cycles on Public Transport

The Council itself is responsible for providing cycle facilities associated with public transport services. The ongoing provision of cycle lockers at railway stations is part of that programme.

Comments on Submission 25

Regional Transport

The submitter's views on the Regional Land Transport Strategy are well known and have been expressed on a number of occasions at Committee and Council meetings. The Regional Land Transport Strategy is evaluated against the objectives of safety, sustainability and social and economic performance. The projects contained in the Regional Land Transport Strategy are demonstrably those that best achieve those objectives in an affordable way.

Land Management

Where they are available, the Flood Protection Group uses locally sourced species for its native species plantings.

Comments on Submission 26

Annual Plan Presentation

The submitter appears to have some difficulty with the Council's Long-term Financial Strategy.

It is a legislative requirement that Council update the Long-term Financial Strategy at least every three years. Council chooses (because it makes sense to do so) to "update" the LTFS every year, while carrying out a detailed review of priorities each three years.

Investments - Forestry

The Council has a policy of being a seller of cutting rights at the right price rather than a holder at all costs. There is no intention to sell land and the Council is aware of the environmental and recreational interests.

Environmental Management

The submitter refers to the following long-term performance indicator:

The Council will carry out its resource management responsibilities in a way which gives sustainable outcomes and which is fair, equitable, provides investment certainty and involves the least possible compliance costs.

This indicator was developed after much discussion with the Audit Office. We do not believe that "sustainable outcomes" and "fair, equitable, provides investment certainty and involves the least possible compliance costs" are mutually exclusive. Indeed, that is the challenge of sustainable development.

The submitter will be aware that under the purpose of the Resource Management Act 1991 is to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources. The submitter may also be aware that there has been considerable debate about section 5 of the RMA with regard to the primacy of environmental well-being over social, cultural and economic well-being.

This Council is committed to good environmental management. It is also committed to giving good customer service. The reference to "fair, equitable, provides investment certainty and involves the least possible compliance costs" is a recognition of our customers' needs. In our opinion, if we are to be good environmental managers and promote sustainable outcomes, we have a responsibility to work with our customers – not alienate them. The submitter should note that we do not say "low" costs -just the "least possible".

The submitter may be interested to know that we have had comments about the term "sustainable outcomes". There is a view that many people do not understand the meaning of the term and we should give a more in-depth explanation. The Council is currently looking at ways we can gain a better understanding of sustainability.

The submitter is supportive of our challenge to be more hard-nosed about compliance and so can see that we are committed to sustainable outcomes. Once again the submitter raises the Pukeatua Power and Roaring Meg example. The Council reminds that this episode happened a number of years ago. It was a mistake that has been rectified as far as possible. The Council is anxious to move forwards and improve, rather than dwelling on past errors of judgement.

The submitter asks why the total cost of compliance monitoring is not borne by consent holders. There are two main reasons why ratepayers contribute to this project. The first is that it is not uncommon to receive complaints alleging a breach of consent conditions which, upon investigation, are not confirmed. It is not fair to charge consent holders for an investigation that was triggered by another party and when no breach could be proven. Accordingly, the costs fall on the ratepayer.

The second reason is that it has proven impossible to recover the full costs of enforcement action. The Courts have discretion about whether they award costs in the event of successful enforcement action. If costs are awarded, the Courts use a standard scale that does not fully compensate for the costs of legal representation or expert witnesses. In addition the Courts rarely allow any costs relating to the time spent on enforcement action by Council staff.

The submitter asks that some detail on the environmental projects that Iwi will be undertaking be included in the annual plan.

The Council has relationships with seven Iwi authorities in the Region. When the annual plan is prepared, the Council does not have sufficient detail about the proposed projects. However, each the submitter can be assured that each proposal is carefully considered on its merits. Projects which fall into the following categories will be considered for funding:

- Projects that allow the Iwi and the Council to meet their obligations under the Resource Management Act 1991 in relation to Māori concerns and allow for good environmental outcomes.
- Projects that recognise policy in the Regional Policy Statement, and the regional plans or any other Council documents in which tangata whenua concerns are provided for and meets with Iwi responsibilities and aspirations.
- Projects that improve the relationship between the Council and iwi and, in particular, projects which lend themselves to partnership implementation.
- Projects that allow Iwi to practice tino rangatiratanga.

The purpose of the budget is to have sufficient funds available to enable a positive response to requests to support Iwi initiatives. All funding will be administered by contract with the individual Iwi authority. Iwi projects that are funded will be reported back in the annual report so that the public can see how these funds have been allocated.

This is a relatively new area for the Council and we are operating on the basis of “good faith” and our responsibilities under the Treaty of Waitangi as reflected in our Regional Policy Statement, Regional Plans and Charter of Understanding with the Iwi of the Region.

The submitter’s concern about the need to reinstate the environment should a project fail or

be abandoned is a valid one. Bonds or insurance cover are a good way of achieving this end and are routinely used by the Wellington Regional Council for larger resource consents. They are part of normal best practice. Forthcoming legislative changes allowing bonds to be retained after the resource consent is expired will further improve their usefulness.

The submitter's comments about the Landscape Plan are noted. The decision to withdraw the plan was made following a substantial public consultation process and after much soul searching by the Council. The decision was not made lightly, and we remain committed to the protection of regionally significant landscapes, but by means other than a regional landscape plan.

Regional Transport

The submitter's support for public transport infrastructure and services is noted.

Regional Water Supply

The Council has debated the issue of access to the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo water collection area on several occasions. The Council has a policy of achieving an "A" grading for its water treatment plants in terms of the Ministry of Health's Drinking Water Standards. The Standards state that public access to water collection areas should be "strictly controlled". The Council considers this definition when deciding on the issue of public access to the catchment; it appears not to mean "unrestricted" public access. Without controls, the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo catchment would be easily accessible (posing a risk to water quality) due to its close proximity to residential areas and other public lands, as opposed to the Hutt catchment, which has geographic constraints limiting the number of people accessing it. The Council is endeavouring to achieve a fine balance with a policy that achieves water quality objectives without putting unnecessarily strict limits on public access.

The Council has opted for a phased approach to access to the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo catchment, gradually increasing access over a three-year period to enable monitoring of any impacts on water quality. Phase 1 finishes on 30 June and has been very successful, with no negative impacts on water quality. In May, the Council agreed to move to phase 2, which effectively doubles the number of people going into the catchment. Phase 2 will be reviewed in April/May 2002 to determine whether to allow further access from July 2002.

Land Management

The submission asks that the Council investigate the proposition of proposing a National Pest Management Strategy for all pests of wide distribution. Legally, any person or organisation can propose a national strategy under the Biosecurity Act. However, in practice this is normally a very major undertaking even in relation to a single pest or unwanted organism such as has been found with Bovine Tb or varroa bee mite. Recently all regional councils tried to promote one National Strategy for all those pest plants currently on the National Surveillance list within each regional pest strategy. As well as the difficulties of getting agreement of all relevant agencies across the country with regard to content, rules, and funding, we also found that there was no agency who would accept the role as the proposed management agency to implement such a strategy. In this case MAF were not prepared to undertake that role. While the idea of a national strategy is a nice one, our experience to date

indicates that this approach is unlikely to succeed unless there is a single unwanted pest involved or central government has initiated the process.

Parks and Forests

The Council acknowledges the support from the Club for the parks and forests activity. However, the Council disagrees with the statement that it makes disproportionate provision for formal recreation and competitive sports. The Council does not provide any facilities for formal recreation and competitive sports that are not predominantly available for informal recreation (e.g., tracks for walking, running and mountain biking can also be available for competitive events but are largely used for informal and casual recreation). In some instances land is made available for formal recreation facilities (e.g., Go-cart track, equestrian events), however, the clubs concerned are responsible for developing and paying for the facilities themselves.

The Local Government Act gives the Council the mandate to acquire and develop regional parks for three purposes:

- provision of outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities;
- protection of environmental and landscape values; and
- heritage protection.

Plant and animal pest control is a key function in protecting environmental values, including indigenous flora and fauna, on Council lands. Officers take an integrated management approach, considering the multiple values of the areas. This leads to more sustainable outcomes and maximises the values of areas and the benefits for the community. The approach is supported in the feedback we are receiving from the various community and environmental groups using the parks and forests. Therefore, it is appropriate that this activity is retained in the parks and forests area, rather than under the land management function where pest control relates more to Bovine TB control and pest control on lands outside the Council estate.

The submission requests that the Council funds new parks and land additions to existing ones, rather than taking over control of Whitireia Park or providing ranger services to Whitireia Park, the Hutt River and East Harbour Regional Park. Ranger services are a key component of the parks and forests activities. The rangers manage the parks and forests, facilitate safe and enjoyable access, provide interpretation and education to park users, monitor and ensure structures meet safety requirements, manage contractors working in the parks, provide security, and numerous other functions critical to delivering the standards appreciated by the majority of park users. They are also a key link and contact point for the community with the Council.

The Council agrees that there is a need to provide additional land for regional parks and has provided for this through taking over control of Whitireia Park and the proposed role in the Wairarapa Wetlands Park. The Council also has a regional parks land purchase reserve fund available for purchasing land for addition to existing or new regional parks.

The Club's submission notes a need to provide a more equitable distribution of parks to Wellington City residents and states a preference for a "Terawhiti Regional Park". The Council acknowledges the concern about equitable access to parks for Wellington City

residents. However, all the Council's parks and forests have a significant number of visitors from outside their immediate local communities. For example, Queen Elizabeth Park has a traditional base of Wellington visitors during the summer period and Belmont is well used by Wellington City residents for mountain biking. The three proposed new parks are a result of requests from the community, which have been assessed on merit. Each proposal is assessed to determine the importance of the area's recreation, heritage and environmental values to meet the requirements for acquiring land for regional parks contained in the Local Government Act. The Council acknowledges the desirability of creating a park along the Wellington South Coast, however, it believes that the current proposals have a higher priority for the limited funding available. The Wellington South Coast Regional Park proposal is noted in the Council's IO-year plan (Long-term Financial Strategy) as a possibility to explore beyond 20 10.

Regional Stadium

The Council has been delighted at the success of the Regional Stadium. In every respect, including financial, the Stadium has exceeded our expectations.

The Stadium is now a major regional recreation facility which is a source of recreation for all those who attend (not just sports players who tend to be there as a place of work).

Financial Tables

The submitter's comments in relation to lack of actuals is noted. In fact, there are historical debt figures shown on page 108, and historical financial trends on page 19. However, the general comment is fair.

Essentially it comes down to the prime purpose of the document which is a forward looking document. Council reports each year actual vs budget within the Annual Report.

Comments on Submission 27

Railway Station – MacKay’s Crossing

The concept of a railway platform at the entrance to Queen Elizabeth Park near McKays crossing is not new. The benefit from such a platform would be entirely for visitors to and from the Park including immediate access to the Tramway Museum.

The Council’s Western Corridor Implementation Plan (part of the Regional Land Transport Strategy) proposes a new station at Raumati South. To achieve this the track from McKays crossing to Raumati South will need to be doubled. This change to track layout is not envisaged by the submitter’s proposal that assumes the current single track. The two track layout will substantially increase the cost of a platform at this point. The cost is unlikely to be justified by the number of potential users.

The Council supports the principle of its parks and forest being accessible by public transport. The location of the rail line provides an opportunity to enable people to travel to Queen Elizabeth Park by public transport and to link with the historic trams for transport within the Park.

As noted in the Tramway Museum’s submission, the State Highway 1 realignment project at MacKays Crossing provides a good opportunity to incorporate a rail platform into planning for the area. Council officers have been working with Transit New Zealand’s consultants undertaking the roading design. Provision is being made to accommodate a rail platform in the future. The Council does not currently have funds allocated to construct a rail platform at MacKays Crossing, as it is not considered a high priority. However, such a project could be considered, along with all other projects put forward for Council funding, during the next full review of the IO-year plan in two years time.

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Comments on Submission 28

Land Management

The Society's support for increased use of native species in riparian plantings is noted, and the Council looks forward to receiving the fact sheet that will detail those indigenous species suitable for the regions wet sites. The points made in this submission about using native plants are increasingly being promoted by Council officers as part of their day to day work. However, the Council can not dictate which plants are purchased in the case of sales from the Akura Nursery and in many of our land management activities, as the cost of these plantings are being met by private landowners.

As has been outlined in previous annual plan responses to the Society, the Flood Protection Group believes that for initial front-line erosion control willows are the only species that will successfully establish in that very harsh environment. Accordingly no economic analysis has been carried out for the debris dam build-up and breach phenomenon described in the Society's submission. The Group believes that until a bank edge is established and stabilised, the option to use native species is not viable. However the Group has observed that as bank edge willow plantings mature and the banks stabilise, native species self-propagate on the edges of and within willow buffers.

The Council has over the years increased its use of indigenous species for riparian planting and enhancement of river margins and river corridors. Indigenous species have traditionally been used as screen or copse planting on berms, but their use is becoming more frequent on banks where the edge has a toe lining of rock and the native species will not be badly undermined.

Three streams have been identified as pilot projects for our new Riparian Planting Initiative - Karori, Kakariki (Waikanae) and Enaki (near Carter-ton). Staff will be promoting appropriate species for the locality and the issues or problems to be addressed. Where grants are made for the development of riparian management zones, it is likely that the following grant rates will apply:

Riparian zones based on natives - 55% grant rate

Riparian zones based on exotics - 40% grant rate

Willows that are part of river management schemes are often deliberately lopped to reinvigorate the growth and to stimulate root development. This provides additional protection to the river edge from lateral erosion at very little cost.

Akura Nursery

Native species sold from the Akura Conservation Centre are sourced wherever practical from local nurseries specialising in native plants. However, native species can be up to four times more expensive than exotics and this does influence what landowners purchase.

Comments on Submission 29

Access to Paraparaumu Station

The medium term plan for bus and rail transport on the Kapiti Coast is to promote Lindale as the public transport hub once the rail line is electrified to Waikanae. Paraparaumu would remain an important station and would be remodelled along the lines of the current Porirua station.

The possible cost to purchase the Mana Coach Services site would be substantial and hence would delay the development of the preferred medium term proposals.

Reviewing the Queen Elizabeth Park Management Plan is on the Regional Council's work programme, commencing in January 2002. The review is likely to take around 18 months. The Council will be considering a number of issues and competing uses, and balancing the environmental, recreational and heritage values of the Park, when formulating the draft Plan. There will be extensive public consultation through the review process, which will enable a range of views to be considered.

Comments on Submission 30

Catchment Management in Waikanae River

Kapakapanui submit that the Regional Council needs to assist in shaping an integrated Waikanae river and catchment management plan and note that the Environmental Strategy, prepared for the Waikanae River, covers only a small part of the river's length.

The Environmental Strategy is a key component of the Waikanae River Floodplain Management Plan, no more and no less. The Floodplain Management Plan, as the name suggests, focuses on flooding in the lower catchment area. As such, its scope mostly reflects Flood Protection's roles and responsibilities rather than those of the Regional Council. The management of discharges, wider land use practices and water usage are outside the consideration of the floodplain management plan.

The submission specifically identifies **landuse** as a "significant cause of the problem". In its Regional Freshwater Plan integrated management of rivers is promoted in a way which recognises that territorial authorities (KCDC) are primarily responsible for controlling land use and the WRC is primarily responsible for discharges; taking, use damming, and diversion of water, and the use of river and lake beds. This division of responsibility is consistent with our RPS.

Any integrated management of the Waikanae catchment will require all of the WRC's roles and responsibilities to be considered in conjunction with KCDC, DoC, the Wellington Fish and Game Council, Iwi and the Waikanae community. If the focus is on land use, then KCDC will need to take a lead role because they are the agency with control over land use.

The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment (PCE) has recently completed a report on water management on the Kapiti Coast. One of its recommendations is for the WRC and KCDC to investigate opportunities to improve integrated water catchment management planning in both the Otaki and Waikanae catchments. The PCE proposes a workshop soon which will be an opportunity to explore the roles of agencies and groups for better integration on the Waikanae River.

Queen Elizabeth Park

The Council agrees there is a need to review the Queen Elizabeth Park Management Plan and to undertake consultation with Iwi, Department of Conservation, park users and community groups. This project is on the work programme starting around January 2002.

Comments on Submission 31**Park and Rides**

Takapu Road station car-park cannot be extended further. Linden station has no off road car-parking as there is no available land in the area. Redwood station car-park is being extended by 38 spaces this year. Tawa station does have some land for car-parking on the Woolworths side but it is not well used because of limited signage and marking. The signage and marking are going to be addressed soon.

Comments on Submission 32

Rates

The transport rate increase in the Kapiti Coast District is some \$306,000. About 50% of that increase results from increases in operator fuel costs. Of the remainder about \$100,000 is to provide a doubling in the urban rail service frequency to and from the coast and the remainder is to provide connecting buses to these services. The Council's Transport Funding Policy clearly identifies the beneficiaries of expenditure on public transport as being the road user. Transfund New Zealand the allocator of national roading money provides only about 50% of these costs. The Council has only one other source of funding and that is the ratepayer as a road user.

The regional rate increase for 2000/2001 was agreed only after careful consideration of the many submissions received. Council decided that it was the right time to make a significant investment in the Wellington Region to bring about a better future. Most of our plans are in place – now it's time to act. Like any investment, there is a cost, so after a period of ten years during which rates decreased in real terms, regional rates have recently increased.

The proposed average rate increase of 8.8% in 2001/2002 for Kapiti is largely due to improving passenger transport issues. Also Kapiti Coasts' share of the Council's general rate relates to an increase of property for the district which is a very fast growing part of the Region (a quarter of last year's growth in the number of rating assessments in the Region was in the Kapiti Coast). As can be seen from our proposed Plan, when account is taken of that growth, the overall Wellington Regional Council Rate increase for Kapiti Coast is 4.53% for the coming year and averages some \$9.12 a year per rate assessment.

The submitter notes that there is a double funding charge on ratepayers in relation to the stadium.

The WRC share of the funding for the stadium has been handled in a totally transparent manner with a separate stadium purposes rate for servicing and repaying the \$25 million borrowed by WRC. The Council felt that borrowing the money required was the best way to ensure fair and equitable distribution amongst the Region's ratepayers.

Clearly the WCC also provided money for the stadium (but did not appear to borrow separately for that purpose) so it is true to say that ratepayers of both Councils have contributed. However, without both Council contributions the stadium would simply not have been built.

Apart from Wellington City Council, no other territorial authority in the region has contributed to the Stadium. The City Council's contribution reflects the local benefits (i.e. to Wellington City). It is understood the Wellington City Council contribution was not funded directly from a special rate but from the Council's general revenue.

Kick Start Funding

Kick start funding is not available for existing projects only new projects designed to increase overall patronage.

Water Integration

Comments noted

Comments on Submission 33

Environmental management

The submitter's support for the proposed public education programme on resource consents is appreciated.

Regional Transport

The proposal to upgrade Petone railway station involves consideration of a number of options. The interests of bus users to and from the station will be met. The Hutt Corridor Study will clarify the role of SH58 versus a new route between Porirua and the Hutt Valley. This study will result in either an endorsement of the current Regional Land Transport Strategy or changes to it.

Water Integration

Comments noted

Flood Protection

The submitter's support for the work of the Council is appreciated.

Parks and Forests

The Council supports the Association's view that the paper roads in Belmont Regional Park should be closed. The roads are under the control of the Hutt City Council. The Regional Council has written to the City Council asking that the roads be closed. However, we understand that the City Council has received public submissions against the proposal from groups wishing to use the roads for motorised recreational activities. The use of the roads for such activities will be canvassed through the review of the Park Management Plan which is due to commence in around two years time.

The Regional Council agrees with the Association's comments on recognising the historic importance of the Old Coach Road. Officers are currently producing several interpretation boards on the historical features in the Park, including one referring to the Old Coach Road.

Another interpretation panel relates to the ammunition bunkers in the Park. These bunkers are located on land owned by Landcorp Farming Limited and are therefore that company's assets. The Council is aware of the desirability of restoring and protecting some of the bunkers and officers will be discussing this with Landcorp and the Historic Places Trust.

Comments on Submission 34

Waiwhetu Stream Action Plan

The Waiwhetu Stream restoration project changes the way Flood Protection undertakes its maintenance work, which is currently focussed on maintaining flood capacity rather than environmental restoration of the stream.

The first major change, the control of aquatic weeds by manual means rather than with herbicides, is in place and is already stretching existing staff resources. While contractors or periodic detention workers undertake the majority of the hand clearing work, Flood Protection staff are still responsible for removing the weed from site and managing the operation. Continuation of the essentially “no-cost” periodic detention labour resource is far from certain.

The proposed restoration work involves significant streamside planting. This planting requires maintenance and restricts machinery access to the stream. This will, at least in the medium term, lead to greater on-going maintenance than Flood Protection is currently resourced for. Once streamside planting areas establish maintenance requirements should reduce.

The Flood Protection group is working closely with the restoration project team to ensure sound design of the restoration work and minimise future maintenance difficulties. However the resources required for Waiwhetu Stream maintenance will need to be reviewed at the next review of Council’s LTFS.

Comments on Submission 35

Regional Planning

The Council is delighted that WCC wishes to strengthen our relationship at the political and officer level in respect of urban growth and the integration of transport and land use policies.

Indeed, this Council's thinking is exactly the same. At a recent meeting of the Environment Committee the following resolution was passed:

That Officers work with their colleagues in local authorities on developing an urban growth strategy for the Region and that progress be reported to the Regional Land Transport and Environment Committees.

Council staff have also met with staff from Porirua City Council who indicated their support for such an approach.

We shall certainly be pursuing this avenue with some urgency as we can see that a Region wide approach to urban growth is much needed.

Transport

Water levies

The level of debt and the rate at which debt is repaid are judgement calls. Currently our water supply debt is above our targeted debt level of \$51M (as recommended by our advisors; Bancorp). On that basis it could be argued that recent debt repayments have not been high enough.

While we appreciate WCC's logic and opinion in this regard, we do not see their recommended approach to our debt being applied in their own organisation. For example, their water supply assets have virtually no debt. Surely that is in direct contrast with what they are proposing we do.

Regional Transport funding policy

Regional Parks

The City Council's submission notes a need to provide a more equitable distribution of parks to Wellington City residents and supports a Wellington South Coast Regional Park. The Council acknowledges the concern about equitable access to parks for Wellington City residents. However, all the Council's parks and forests have a significant number of visitors from outside their immediate local communities. For example, Queen Elizabeth Park has a traditional base of Wellington visitors during the summer period and Belmont is well used by Wellington City residents for mountain biking and walking.

The Regional Council considered the Wellington South Coast Park proposal, along with community requests for other regional parks, through the review of its Long-Term Financial Strategy last year. The Council acknowledges the desirability of creating a park along the Wellington South Coast, however, it believes that the current proposals (Wairarapa Wetlands Park and Whitireia Park) have a higher priority in view of the limited funding available. The Wellington South Coast Regional Park proposal is noted in the Council's 10-year plan (Long-term Financial Strategy) as a possibility to explore beyond 2010. The Council is happy for officers of both Councils to examine the matter for future consideration.

Comments on Submission 36

10 Year Strategy

The submitter notes a concern with the use of the term “Long-term Financial Strategy”. It is of course a legal requirement to produce a Long-term Financial Strategy and the Local Government Act spells out what such a strategy needs to contain.

The submitter is also concerned about the annual plan forming part of the Long-term Financial Strategy. It is not clear what the concern is with this approach. It is an approach that the Council has utilised for approximately five years and recognises that the key document is actually the Long-term Financial Strategy (not the Annual Plan) given the nature of Council’s activities, which are long term in nature.

Acquisition of TranzMetro

The submitter’s support for the Council’s preferred public/private partnership model is noted.

Kick Start Funding

Support for bringing all ‘kick start’ projects into the 2001/02 annual plan is noted.

Water Integration

The submitter’s opposition to the formation of a Water Trust and support for water conservation is noted.

Environmental Management

The submitter’s support for the WRC activities is appreciated.

Regional Transport

Support for increased public transport expenditure is noted.

Land Management

Support for the revised Plant & Animal Pest Management Strategy is noted.

Regional Water Supply

The submitter has requested that water catchments be maintain primarily as recreational areas and that water supply activities be sympathetic to that use.

Given the Council’s responsibilities in term of the Local Government Act and the Health Act to supply a high standard of potable water, the water catchment area must be maintain for

recreational use in a manner that is consistent with those statutory responsibilities.

Parks and Forests

The Council appreciates your support for the Parks and Forests function.

In your submission you note disappointment that the Council has no mention in the Annual Plan of the Wellington South Coast Regional Park. The Wellington South Coast Regional Park proposal is noted in the Council's IO-year plan (Long-term Financial Strategy) as a possibility to explore beyond 2010. The Council acknowledges the desirability of creating a park along the Wellington South Coast, however, it believes that the current proposals (Whitireia Park and Wairarapa Wetlands Park) have a higher priority in view of the limited funding available.

The Council has debated the issue of access to the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo water collection area on several occasions. The Council has a policy of achieving an "A" grading for its water treatment plants in terms of the Ministry of Health's Drinking Water Standards. The Standards state that public access to water collection areas should be "strictly controlled". The Council considers this definition when deciding on the issue of public access to the catchment; it appears not to mean "unrestricted" public access. Without controls, the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo catchment would be easily accessible (posing a risk to water quality) due to its close proximity to residential areas and other public lands, as opposed to the Hutt catchment, which has geographic constraints limiting the number of people accessing it. The Council is endeavouring to achieve a fine balance with a policy that achieves water quality objectives without putting unnecessarily strict limits on public access.

The Council has opted for a phased approach to access to the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo catchment, gradually increasing access over a three-year period to enable monitoring of any impacts on water quality. Phase 1 finishes on 30 June and has been very successful, with no negative impacts on water quality. In May, the Council agreed to move to phase 2, which effectively doubles the number of people going into the catchment. Phase 2 will be reviewed in April/May 2002 to determine whether to allow further access from July 2002.

Regional Stadium

The submitter notes concern over the appearance of operating expenditure in the stadium activity.

The operating expenditure relates to interest on Council's loan and rate collection costs. The term "operating expenditure" is a general title and is used consistently across the Council to distinguish operating expenditure from capital expenditure.

The submitter's supportive comments in relation to the LATE issue are appreciated. However, it must be said that we have only reached the position that we have because the Govt have been unwilling to support a change to the Wellington Regional Council (Stadium Empowering) Act 1996.

Comments on Submission 37

Regional Water Supply

In relation to comment on water supply, Kapiti Coast District Council has, at date of writing (29 May), not formally endorsed their Works Committee's recommendation. This we understand takes place on 31 May. Wellington Regional Council will consider the formal request when it arrives.

Comments on Submission 38

Flood Protection Funding Policy

Most of this submission was considered as part of the hearing of submissions on the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan. Paragraph 7 suggests that any review of the funding policy for this activity should also consider the Hutt Valley as a source of bulk water.

Whilst the submitter seeks to link the funding policies of two separate WRC activities, the Local Government Act requires the transparent consideration of the funding policies of each Council function. The WRC looks at each function independently, identifies the beneficiaries and exacerbators, and makes appropriate decisions, using the three-step approach, about how each function should be funded.

Comments on Submission 39

Flood Protection

Kapiti Coast District Council (KCDC) commend the Regional Council on the approach taken to floodplain management, the raised awareness that has resulted and the good progress made on implementation work to date.

Through Investing in the Future 2000 – 2010, the Regional Council adopted a 40 year timeframe for implementing its three major floodplain management plans for the Hutt, Otaki and Waikanae rivers. Corresponding expenditure is in the order of \$96 million over the forty years, with an average annual capital expenditure on flood protection of \$2.4 million per year. The first ten years of the plan meet this commitment. Capital expenditure budget is apportioned equally, on a pro-rata capital works basis, over the two main areas (Kapiti and Hutt).

KCDC believe that the proposed floodplain management plan implementation timeframe of 40 years is excessive and the work proposed for the next ten years is inadequate. They note the potential for flood damage and the trauma and disruption that would result from severe flooding.

In response, while the Regional Council has committed to a 40 year FMP implementation timeframe, the actual work completed to date and that proposed for the next 10 years equate to a faster effective implementation. Forecast completion by 2010 is 41% in Otaki and 6 1% in Waikanae - in approximately 25% of the proposed implementation timeframe.

It is worth noting that the completed and proposed higher priority projects reduce a higher proportion of the potential damages than lower priority projects. While the Otaki and Waikanae plans are forecast to be 41% and 6 1% complete respectively at 2010, the percentage of annualised damages the completed works will save will be substantially higher.

Further and following the October 2000 flood event, \$410,000 of edge protection works on the Otaki River, programmed over the next three years, was brought forward and the work completed in the current financial year.

Kapiti Coast District Council note what they perceive as a “planning blight” on Otaki due to the non-structural measures, and request that construction of the main stopbank (“Chrystall’s Extended”) between Chrystall’s bend and the railway line be expedited - “to relieve the planning threat”. To fund the expedited work, KCDC state that some variation on the 50/50 funding policy could be “negotiated” as a special case, but moving to 100% funding (over the District) would be unacceptable.

When Council allocated its ten year budgets, it did so based on an agreed debt profile and debt servicing commitments. As the Chrystall’s extended stopbank is not budgeted in the current ten year timeframe, its inclusion will increase both the adopted debt profile and debt servicing requirements. In terms of priority the Otaki Floodplain Management Plan places

the South Waitohu (Tasman Road) stopbank at a higher priority than the Chrystall's stopbank. The broad logic behind this is that the Waitohu Stream can flow down to Rangiuru in lower equivalent events than the risk of a breach in the existing stopbank between Chrystall's and the railway line. The latter provides approximately "100 year" protection, but with a moderate to high risk of failure through erosion. The South Waitohu stopbank is budgeted for construction over three years from 2005 to 2008.

While it is likely that the flood hazard maps and provisions may be revised as a result of construction of the Chrystall's Extended bank, it is unlikely that the provisions will be totally removed. A current project is considering the various flood scenarios for both the Otaki and Waikanae floodplains, and the corresponding flood map categories and extents.

Council could consider bringing forward construction of the Chrystall's Extended stopbank as an item in the next three yearly review of the ten year plan – this review will commence late 2002.

Regional Transport

The submitter's strong support for the Council's transport investment plans is noted.

It is agreed that a detailed programme of development of the Western rail corridor is needed. The current Long Term Financial Strategy does contain a programme for these elements but finalisation of it must await announcement of the new owner of Tranz Metro Wellington.

Tranz Rail currently advise us that electrification into Waikanae only requires the track to be duplicated to the proposed Raumati South station. Costs shown in the Long Term Financial Strategy are based on this requirement. No new rolling stock would be required to extend the service to Waikanae initially.

The submitter's views regarding Regional Council ownership of public transport infrastructure are welcomed. The Council has made a number of attempts to have the law changed accordingly. Proposed transport legislative changes later this year provide another opportunity to seek this impartial change.

Major infrastructure projects are identified in the Long Term Financial Strategy and are driven by the Regional Land Transport Strategy. Minor projects result from initiatives by the Council and territorial local authorities and as they arise are prioritised against existing projects in a minor infrastructure list using a defined multi-criteria evaluation process. Up to this coming year these projects were funded from reserves as and when reserves came available.

In future years they are intended to be rated for an annual basis. The issue of allocation of transport rates will be reviewed as part of the overall review of the Council's funding policies in the coming year.

The submitter notes a preference for a Wellington passenger rail company to gain access to track via an access agreement rather than assignment. This issue has yet to be resolved by the Council but the position taken by officers to date has been to take the access rather than assignment path. Assignment carries certain obligations which the Council is unlikely to want to take on.

The submitter notes that TA's are unlikely to want to take over stations due to the financial burden they will impose. That is clearly a matter for TAs to decide.

The submitter notes three areas of concern over the Council's public/private partnership model.

- (1) The process does not appear to meet Transfund's CPP requirements

If the Govt approves of the Council's public/private partnership, Transfund's requirements should not be a problem.

- (2) The profit made by the rail operator depends on the level of WRC subsidy.

This is a statement of fact under all options, rather than a problem. Certainly a public/private partnership would allow WRC to share any profits 50/50 which would not be the case if the operator was a private sector operator.

- (3) The duty of Directors in a company are to the company and all shareholders and therefore access to information may not be any better.

That is exactly why a public/private partnership is seen as beneficial. The WRC as part owner will have appointed directors to the rail company board who will be in a position of knowledge. This will supplement any information able to be obtained via the rail service contract (currently this is difficult with Tranz Rail).

None of these objections to the public/private partnership would appear to add up to "grave" concern expressed by the submitter.

It is interesting that the submitter goes on to say that perhaps the WRC should acquire the rail assets to subsequently franchise the service.

This is not inconsistent with what is proposed with the public/private partnership being a "means to an end" rather than an end in itself.