

Makara Ohariu Community Board Submission to Draft Annual Plan 2011-2012

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This submission is made on behalf of the Makara Ohariu Community Board (stated below as “the MOCB or the Board”), which consists of six board members, three from Ohariu and three from Makara.

Environment

The Board **supports** the WCC and Berhampore Nursery which assists in supplying free plants for the Makaracarpas (a local Makara volunteer planting group) for planting the Makara Estuary Reserve, and Makara Beach and also road reserve planting further up the Makara Valley by another small group, the Notice Tree Corner and Phillips Corner in Ohariu Valley, and riparian planting alongside Makara and Ohariu streams, and wishes that to continue with no reduction in resources provided.

The MOCB also **supports** the Council in continuing the funding required to provide for the monthly weeding of the Makara Foreshore Reserve. We also approve of improving several walking tracks, and continuing the maintenance and upgrading of the Skyline Walkway, the Makara Beach Walkway Track to the Gun Emplacements above Fisherman’s Bay, and the Old Coach Road in Ohariu.

The Board **congratulates** the WCC in obtaining funding for goat eradication from the Biodiversity Fund from Te Kopahau on the South Coast, around to Makara and Ohariu on private and public land, and looks forward to seeing a significant regeneration of native bush when goat numbers are reduced.

Economic Development

Broadband internet and cellular coverage

The MOCB considers broadband internet and adequate cellular telephone coverage as essential household services. While the Draft Annual Plan makes reference to the Ultra Fast Broadband initiative, this is limited to ‘allowing’ this to occur through changes to regulations. The MOCB believes that WCC should take a much more active role in ensuring these essential services are available to all Wellington residents and this should

be represented in the Annual Plan. This is particularly critical for the Makara and Ohariu communities where basic broadband and cellular coverage is not available to a large proportion of residents. There is also very real potential for reducing the load on other services within the city (such as roading and parking) by enabling a significant proportion of the population to effectively and efficiently work from home. As such, the provision of these services should feature significantly in the Annual Plan, rather than being ignored.

Strengthening infrastructure and planning for the future

The MOCB **approves** of the granting of funding for community emergency preparedness initiatives, and research into how the Council can **support** vulnerable areas in the community in times of an emergency.

Heritage

The Board has several historic churches, buildings, land and structures, such as the historic Fort Opau gun emplacements, which require protection in the Makara and Ohariu area, along with a long history of usage of the land by Maori and Pakeha families. The Board **supports** the Council in the continuing of information gathering, maintaining records of our heritage, and assistance in the maintenance of historic buildings and protection of these special areas of historic interest.

Social and Recreation

Libraries

We **support** a small reduction in library hours as stated, however **do not support** further reductions being made, as access to libraries is seen as important for all in the rural area.

Swimming Pools

We **support** the grants funding to assist schools in upgrading existing pools, and learn-to-swim programmes but **do not support** the increase of general admission to pools which may prevent some families being able to attend due to increased cost. Programmes going into schools will give every child an opportunity to learn to swim and survive. This will make a better generation of water-safe children.

Public Health and Safety

The MOCB **supports** the additional grant funding to support community proposals to build on community emergency preparedness in local neighbourhoods. The Makara and Ohariu valleys are geographically separated from Wellington City and could be isolated in an emergency, and as such residents will need to have the resilience, training,

equipment, and knowledge to look after themselves if the need arises. The Council's ongoing **support** of the Makara and Ohariu Community Halls is seen as vital, particularly as these are key infrastructure in an emergency.

Elderly

We would **support** any proposal or programme put forward by the Council to enable the elderly/aged members of Makara and Ohariu remain living and remaining active in their community for as long as practically possible, keeping their sense of independence intact. This would provide benefit to both the person and the aged services area of government and council.

Youth

We welcome the Council's support of the youth in our area, and any practical proposals or programmes which the Board, in consultation with the Council, may initiate.

Transport and Roothing

Parking Fees

We **do not support** the raising of parking fees within the central city area by \$1 per hour. We believe the current fees are adequate. Residents from Makara and Ohariu do not have public transport in their area, and as such must either bring vehicles into the inner city, or catch buses from the start/end of the bus route, thus incurring the highest cost bus fares, and longest time on the bus. More emphasis should also be given to finding ways to improve the use of bus services, and adding bus lanes to make journeys shorter.

The Board supports the reinstatement of a school bus for the Ohariu Valley children, this would assist in the children getting to school safely and would help in the reduction of traffic on the road.

Roothing

We **support** the Council in the continuing upgrade of Makara and Ohariu Roads, with an emphasis on road improvements, while still retaining the rural character, to enable vehicles, horse riders, cyclists and walkers to be able to have access to the roads in safety, without accidents caused by rooding issues such as potholes, loose seal and gravel, deep culverts and untended roadside gutters. The narrow roads through Makara and Ohariu are becoming subject to much more traffic movement than was perhaps originally contemplated, due to a general increase in people visiting the area, the popularity of cyclists using the area as a circuit, the increase in traffic to Makara Beach which is the only north facing beach at which recreational fishers can launch boats in a southerly wind, and heavy road vehicle traffic travelling to/from the Meridian Westwind Farm.

The Makara Road, Takarau Gorge Road and Ohariu Valley Roads could be important as an alternative route in a Wellington civil defence emergency, so the Board sees it as important in continuing to maintaining these roads to a good standard.

Urban Development

We **support** the continuing containment and managed growth of Wellington City to ensure that the rural area of the city is maintained and protected for rural activities, recreation and enjoyment of all users.

We continue to **support** the use of targeted rates so that rural residents are not charged for services they do not receive.

Conclusion

In conclusion we **support** the continuation of Community Boards, reporting to the Council, in accordance with current practice. We see the interests of those living in a rural area, such as Makara and/or Ohariu as having areas of particular interest and concerns, which are not necessarily the same as those of city dwellers, and in our view, such residents need a voice (the Community Board's) to express their views on matters as and when they arise.

Prepared by

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Chairperson on behalf of the Makara Ohariu Community Board
(Approved by email from all members and to be ratified at our next meeting on Thursday
19 May 2010)