



REPORT 8

2014/2015 DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN SUBMISSION RATIFICATION

1. Purpose of Report

To enable Community Board members to approve the Board's submission on 2014/2015 Draft Annual Plan.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Tawa Community Board:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Approve the submission of the Tawa Community Board on the 2014/2015 Draft Annual Plan attached as appendix 1.*

Tawa Community Board Submission

Wellington City Council's 2014-15 Draft Annual Plan

The Tawa Community Board (TCB) wishes to make the following submission to the Wellington City Council's 2013-12 Draft Annual Plan.

The Tawa Community Board wishes to be heard at the Oral Submissions stage of this consultation.

In terms of the changes proposed that are highlighted in the Wellington City Council (WCC) Draft Annual Plan Consultation we wish to make the following submissions:

NEW OR CHANGED INITIATIVES:

Cycling Improvements: We wish to thank Councillors for their past support of the establishment of the Tawa Valley Pathway and which will shortly be completed. We agree that the investment in further cycling improvements should continue. However, we would like to see a greater priority given to the expansion of further walking and cycling linkage opportunities with the Tawa Valley pathway built upon this community asset. Particularly to

- Pedestrian Access to Tawa Countdown supermarket. The consent process for this development highlighted that pedestrian access to this supermarket from the Takapu rail station was always going to be problematic yet a necessity those without car transport. **We therefore submit** that a safer pedestrian route be formalised from the Willowbank Reserve end of the Tawa Valley Pathway to the new Tawa Countdown Supermarket,
- Middleton Road Pedestrian / cycleway project - Fair access from Tawa to Wellington. Tawa residents are high users of public transport but are also high users of roads as vehicle drivers, cyclists and pedestrians. The only route for cyclists and pedestrians to areas south of Tawa is Willowbank/Middleton Road. This route is narrow and was never designed for non motorised use. It is thus dangerous for cyclists and pedestrians as there is insufficient room on either side of the road to safely accommodate both them and vehicles. Previous Council's have denied Tawa residents a safe cycling and walking route from Tawa to Wellington. While acknowledging that it has a high cost the TCB it is saddened that it has raised this point since at least 2007 and in that time funding has been found for many southern suburb facilities. The fact remains that Middleton road is the only permissible route and it is time that action was taken. What is the cost of human life? The TCB is concerned that WCC's refusal to provide a safe route will one day cost someone their life. The TCB requests urgent work to make this route safer for cyclists and pedestrians. **We therefore submit** that WCC continue to investigate options for the eventual continuation of a walking/cycle route from Tawa through to Johnsonville.

Lower Development Compliance costs: We note that in the last Annual Plan consultation there were initiatives announced around Smart Energy promotion with a focus on overall grid energy reduction through savings, education and alternative green energy usage. Yet Wellington City Council remains one of the few NZ Councils to still insist on a Building Consent for the installation of Solar PV electrical panels with compliance costs which can exceed 10% of the total cost of a typical residential installation. Many NZ Councils either waive the necessity for a Building Consent for Solar PV panel installations that otherwise comply with the Building Code and District Plan requirements (for height restrictions); e.g.

Auckland City Council and Tauranga City Council, or waive the building consent fees as part of a promotion of a package of encouraging “Environmental Sustainability Initiatives”; e.g. Hutt city Council. We would like to see further support for the encouragement of private environmental sustainability initiatives through the reduction of compliance costs for residential developments and private environmental sustainability initiatives, including the use of alternative green energy solutions.

Living Wage: We strongly disagree that Council should be instituting A Living Wage policy for CCOs and Council Contractors. We believe that in terms of social policy this is a matter for Central Government to determine what is best for NZ as a whole. In terms of creating a better employment environment and being a good Corporate Citizen, this should be a matter for the individual Boards of COOs and Contractors.

Should such a policy be introduced then we submit that the costs should be recovered through the direct fees associated with the services provided by the Organisation concerned.

We also note that should the WCC introduce such a Living Wage policy ahead of any regional amalgamation then this could have considerable blowout in ‘flow on’ cost increases of the amalgamation/integration process through the necessity of harmonising the policy across the wider organisation or retracting the policy.

INVESTMENT IN GROWTH AREAS: We generally support further continued investment in areas that will promote the economic growth of the Wellington Region on the basis that these costs ought to be eventually recovered through an increased rating base.

Johnsonville Rooding Improvements: We note that WCC intends to work with NZTA on various rooding projects, but the Grenada to Petone Link road and its recently announced northwards impacts in linking with the Transmission Gulley route is omitted. We submit that the Draft Annual Plan Section 7 “Transport” should also include a commitment to work with NZTA, the Tawa Community Board and the Tawa Community on the Petone to Grenada Link road, and the impacts on the local community of the NZTA proposals to extend linkages by either widening the existing SH1 motorway, or the creation of a new carriageway through the rural Takapu Valley.

SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS:

Natural Environment: We strongly support the proposed increase in funding being made under the banner of “Our Capital Spaces – a framework to develop, promote, and prioritise investment in the city’s open spaces and outdoor recreation facilities”.

In particular we support the measures planned:

- To increase the funding for implementation of the Open Access Plan (tracks and walkways),
- To increase support for community planting and pest control, and
- To increased funding to support the Project Halo to support increased pest control and biodiversity in an increased buffer zone around Zelandia and the surrounding rural area.

All of these measures will be of some benefit the Tawa’s ecology and bird life as the flow on effects benefit the whole city.

It is of great concern to learn that Greater Wellington Regional Council is planning from July 2014 to cease its current funding of pest control in the Wellington City area. This includes all of the current pest control funding for the Tawa area; including funding of possum bait supply to the Friends of Tawa Bush Reserves volunteer group, and the funding of possum bait station maintenance contractors that cover the Spicer Forest and Grenada-Horokiwi “transmission block” reserves. These areas together provide to a large degree an effective buffer zone that limits the continual infiltration of possums into the Wellington isthmus from the north. Stopping this pest control programme will inevitably set back

decades of good work being undertaken by hundreds of volunteers throughout the Wellington City and seriously setback many of the biodiversity and Living City initiatives that Councillors have sought to put into place and result in the quality of native bush and birdlife quickly returning to its previous depleted and declining state, and a strong downturn in many of the Environmental category Council Outcome Measures.

We understand from Council officers that it is possible for Wellington City to take up the resourcing of the pest control funding previously provided by GWRC, but that this requires approval of the proposed Draft Annual Plan change to increase the funding allowance for pest control. We therefore strongly support this measure.

Hazardous Tree Removal: We support the necessity of removing hazardous tree, but ask that where this has been extensively undertaken; e.g. in Tawa's Willowbank Reserve, that the opportunity be taken to rebuild the natural environment of the area in a manner that will also contribute to the Biodiversity Action Plan and Catchment restoration initiatives. Also where possible we ask that local community groups be involved in any resulting restoration projects so that there is ongoing engagement and buy-in for the local community / neighbours to look after their own back yard environment.

Libraries – Children's literacy programme: We support this programme initiative and welcome its inclusion at the Tawa Library.

CHANGES IN CAPITAL EXPENDITURE:

Deference of an Artificial Sports field in the Grenada North/Tawa area: The Tawa Community Board is very aggrieved that the promised Turf in the Tawa area for the 2014-2015 is proposed to be removed from the LTCP through the current Draft Annual Plan changes, and that its previous efforts to have this project initiated have now come to nothing. Considering that one of Council's performance indicators is "Residents' perceptions that there are barriers to participating in recreation activities", this is doubly disappointing.

It appears that the beneficiary is Karori who will get a new turf.

Tawa has a proud sporting record in Wellington and beyond, with high playing numbers and as the TCB has pointed out in previous submissions, that we are one of the few Wellington suburbs that include Primary, Intermediate and Secondary Schools, as well as many active sporting Clubs yet it has arguably the worst grounds in the Wellington area. This means in winter months, play is restricted to one game per ground on most grounds. The deferral and reallocation of funding priorities for an artificial turf in Tawa is increasing barriers to participation, and will mean that young people in Tawa have fewer and fewer opportunities to participate in sport. This has massive flow on effects in terms of quality of life and well being.

The Tawa community registered its desire for a new turf in 2011 when a Community ePetition was raised and this was favourably looked upon by the council at the time. We believe at the very minimum, key grounds such as Redwood Park should be developed to a standard where regular play can take place and the provision for a turf in the Tawa area should be reinstated as soon as possible.

It is worth noting that with NZTA's plan for the Grenada - Petone link that the Grenada grounds will no longer exist, necessitating other options for grounds to be considered. The Tawa area has few sporting areas of this nature that also has adequate nearby parking and it will be difficult to replace Grenada Park.

Turfs need to be strategically placed throughout the Wellington region so when disaster strikes there are still some recreational facilities available.

We do not believe that the reasons given in the recent Wellington Regional turf strategy study, which indicated that the Wellington Northern suburbs were currently adequately served due to the recent addition of two artificial turfs in the Porirua, is valid. The cited turfs are privately owned and not open for general public use by a number of sporting codes.

Further General Comments:

TTA Amalgamation: Although not specifically mentioned as a topic within the current consultation we continue to believe that Wellington City Council (WCC) needs to gain considerably more mutual co-operation with other Councils in the Wellington area. The synergies created from greater co-operation, commonality of services and bye-laws should create efficiencies, reduce overall costs to ratepayers and businesses alike. In particular, such efficiencies would reduce the exposure to rates increases, reduce the prospect of future integration costs, and harmonise planning and policy across the region, when the inevitable amalgamation occurs.

Similarly the initiative mention in last year's Annual Plan of 'increased revenue by providing our expertise and services to other local authorities' needs to continue and is another of the 'Win-Win' synergies created from greater co-operation with other Councils.

In-flight Cycling and Plimmer Bequest projects: We eagerly anticipate the continuance and final completion of the Tawa Valley Pathway project, together with the upgrade of Grasslees Reserve during this current Financial Year. Any delays could put the supporting funding at risk.

Parks, sport and recreation: The Tawa community has seen an increase in the use of the Community Centre, over the last 7 years, and looks forward to working with the both Council and our own community in the management and development of the Community Centre.

Park 'n' Ride parking facilities: As anticipated the growth of population in the Northern suburbs is continuing to put pressure on the existing Park 'n' Ride parking spaces at the Takapu, Redwood and Tawa rail stations, with these facilities full and overflowing into the surrounding suburban streets during the normal business day. Increasingly these facilities are being utilised by residents from outside of Tawa (from Churton Park, Woodridge, and further north) who wish to take advantage of the improved commuter journey and transit times into the city since the upgraded rolling stock was introduced. The shortage of inner city parking due to continual closure of some City Parking Buildings since the mid 2013 Wellington Earthquakes, also adds to the pressure on Park 'n' Ride in Tawa. There is additional land available at Takapu, Redwood and Tawa for additional carpark places.

Tawa residents are tired of WCC pointing at GWRC, and vice versa, and claiming no responsibility for park 'n' ride. Tawa has a serious shortage of park 'n' ride facilities which is seeing residential streets clogged with commuter parking. Plan Change 47 made land available for park 'n' ride at Takapu and it is disgraceful that this option was not implemented. We request that WCC make it a priority to work together with GWRC to make this happen.

Neighbourly Behaviours: The annual Plan indicates as a Social and recreation Council Outcome Measure that it wants "65% of residents to engage in 'neighbourly' behaviours". Perhaps there is an opportunity for WCC to do more to facilitate these 'neighbourly' behaviours and to use Tawa as a model for expanding Neighbours day participation throughout other suburbs of Wellington.

Other Transport Matters:

Grenada to Petone Road: The TCB, in principle, supports the construction of this road as it will be a significant road for the area we represent. Its construction will reduce the travel times for people that need to use their vehicles. This includes Tawa people working in the Hutt Valley and people working in Wellington city.

While we are highly supportive of public transport we must also be mindful of people who must use their vehicles as they work from them.

We are concerned however with the proposed feeder roads between this route and the proposed Transmission Gully road. On one hand we have the severe impact on residents bordering SH1 people and on the other an impact on the rural environment and the associated destruction of Grenada Park.

Inner City Parking: We are pleased to note there are neither increases in parking fees nor new restrictions to parking. The TCB supports the enforcement of parking times and parking infringements and sees the bringing back of enforcement, as a core WCC function, as being credible.

Should you have any questions relating to this submission please don't hesitate to contact us.

Tawa Community Board

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