

22nd March 2012

Draft LTP
Auckland Council
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Submission to Auckland Council from Community Waitakere on Draft Long Term Plan for Auckland-March 2012

Introduction:

Community Waitakere is a Charitable Trust, dedicated to achieving our vision of a sustainable Waitakere with strong, connected communities.

We have thirty years of history in Waitakere, working collaboratively with communities and local/central government to achieve positive social outcomes for our citizens, neighbourhoods and local community organisations.

We have been a strong, respected community leader and advocate for social, economic, cultural and environmental wellbeing, and have worked effectively in partnership with the Waitakere City Council for the best outcomes for our citizens and communities over that time.

We are recognised locally, regionally and nationally as a key linkage between communities and central and local government at all levels. We work across the three Western Local Board areas, and have established positive relationships with them individually and as a “cluster”, particularly in our roles of advocacy, leadership and connection.

We strongly support the vision for Auckland and agree with Mayor Brown that the potential of Auckland lies “in its communities and people”. The vision for Auckland to become the most liveable city in the world is ambitious and inspirational! And it is achievable!

In particular we endorse **Item 11; Directive 1.9** of the **Auckland Plan Deliberations Report** from the **Auckland Future Vision Committee** dated 17th February 2012.

Priority 3 states that:

- “community-led development underpins the entire Auckland Plan”
- “community-led development is about people working together and having the resources, power and influence to make transformational change in their communities”
- “community-led development empowers communities by removing barriers, building capacity and capability, developing resources, increasing resilience and growing collective leadership”

Directive 1.10 of the same document is entitled – “Support community led development and work with communities to develop leadership, skills and capacity”.

Community Waitakere fully supports these three priorities and the words of the directive.

In order for the **Auckland LTP** to give effect to the **Auckland Plan**, it must reflect commitment to community-led development and key strategic partnerships with community. If community-led development is at the heart of the Auckland Plan, there must be an indication of financial allocation to support that commitment in the Auckland LTP.

Taking a community-led development approach seriously and demonstrating that commitment through the allocation of both human and financial resources will be what lifts Auckland to meet the Plan's aspirations. Working with communities to develop leadership, skills and capacity requires committing resources to develop and sustain strategic partnerships. This takes time, but is a very wise investment which has proven long term outcomes. This approach is generally under-recognised and needs to be championed and advocated within and by Council. Several key and well-established partnerships already exist, such as the legacy partnership between Community Waitakere and Auckland Council.

We are willing to share our experiences in this way of working, with others across the region. But in no way do we suggest that ours is the model for all for the way forward. One of the most important factors in the amalgamation of Auckland is that our communities retain their vibrancy, diversity and sense of identity for the future.

Community Outcomes: Community Waitakere generally supports the seven community outcomes for Auckland. If these are able to be achieved we will certainly have a city to be proud of. The identification of five transformational shifts necessary in order to achieving them is insightful.

In our view, the seven **community outcomes** from **the Auckland Plan** do not emphasise enough the need for strong, resilient and networked communities. The first outcome, (for a "Fair, safe and healthy Auckland") uses the term "cohesive" communities. Cohesive communities are based on relationships and linkages, and take time to develop. The current Auckland LTP has little focus on relationships, but they are the "soft" social infrastructure which is as critical as the transport and telecommunication infrastructure. In the tragic recent experiences in Christchurch, it was the connectedness of communities that sustained the resilience and spirit of the people, despite the shattered "hard" infrastructure. Without adequately resourcing "soft" social infrastructure community development activities will be difficult to achieve.

More than ever before, Auckland Council would be wise to invest in the wealth of community-led development skills and resources available to it and willing to work with it. The future of Auckland does indeed lie in the hands of its people and its communities.

General responses:

Transport: Transport is a critical issue for Auckland and we support Auckland Council's endeavours to finding realistic solutions. In particular we support the emphasis on addressing our public transport services and increased patronage. We agree that priority is also given to walking and cycling. As a community partner we see that Community Waitakere could play a role in assisting with road safety education through our advocacy work.

Economic Development: We agree that the current economic environment has to be stabilised and well-managed so as to grow sustainably. Simultaneously, we see a significant role for Auckland Council in growing the **social** economy as part of its Economic Development strategy. The burgeoning Community Economic Development movement

nationwide is an indicator of NZ's readiness for CED and Social Enterprise. Auckland Council showed early interest in CED in its support of the two CED Conferences and could take a brave lead in recognising the wisdom of investing in championing the Social Economy, alongside the Business Economy and Maori Economy.

Urban Development and the Natural Environment: Community Waitakere fully supports the Transformational Shift to *“strongly commit to environmental action and green growth”*. We support the emphasis the Auckland Council has placed on preserving and protecting the natural environment of Auckland as it manages expected growth over the next 20 years through an integrated environmental strategy and development of standards and guidelines around all components (eg. air quality; cultural heritage; biodiversity and bio security and urban design).

Local Communities: Community Waitakere is in agreement with the proposed extra funding allocated to local boards for local projects. We also agree with the statement in Vol. 1. #2.5.3 that *“One of the challenges faced by Council is how best to amalgamate Auckland-wide services into one city without losing the unique identity of people and place throughout Auckland. Both the governing body and local boards have a key role in delivering strong and vibrant communities”*.

As a key strategic partner with the governing body and the three Western Local Boards, Community Waitakere plays a key role in brokering the links between local and region-wide projects and initiatives which result in the most significant effect on the daily lives of neighbourhoods and communities whilst retaining their unique and diverse identities.

We agree with the Community theme overview (Vol. 2 #11.2) that *“building strong communities will make Aucklanders feel a sense of belonging to their neighbourhoods and take pride in their region”*. This chapter goes on to talk about the provision of high-quality facilities and services. It needs to go further. High quality facilities and services alone are not enough. If Auckland Council is serious about community-led development, then this should be obvious from the wording of this chapter, and a clear indication given that funding will be allocated to support embedding a community-development approach in the Auckland Plan.

Swimming Pools: Community Waitakere believes the local voice in decisions around swimming pool entry fees should determine the chosen option. This is in keeping with the principles of community development that decisions effecting communities should be made as close to the ground as possible.

..... see over

In summary Community Waitakere submits to the governing body that:

- Auckland Council demonstrates in its LTP that it will allocate sufficient funding and human resource to community-led development, to ensure that Auckland has community-led development at its heart.
- Auckland Council demonstrates in its LTP that strategic community partnerships are an essential investment in order to achieve the Mayor's vision for Auckland and allocates funding and resources accordingly
- Key strategic partnerships between the communities of Auckland and the Auckland Council are formalised and resourced
- Auckland Council's Community Development Strategy is developed in partnership with Auckland's community leaders
- Auckland Council demonstrates through its LTP that it is committed to the region's social economy and social infrastructure as well as the business economy and allocates funds accordingly
- That the title of the first community outcome be amended to read "A fair, safe and healthy Auckland with strong, connected communities".

Local Boards:

Whau Local Board:

Community Waitakere supports the Whau Local Board's Draft Agreement in principle and in particular their desire for strong local economies and communities. The re-defined boundaries of the Local Board's area incorporate several areas which were not within the "old" Waitakere City boundaries. For Community Waitakere this means that we do not have the same long established community relationships within those areas. We are gradually working towards establishing these. We support the WLB in their support for community initiatives and for aiming to connect the three distinct business areas with the residential areas through a demonstrated commitment to the four well beings. Community Waitakere looks forward a growing relationship with the WLB to enhance their strategic priorities from a community development perspective.

Cohesive communities are based on relationships and linkages that take time to develop. There is a cost incurred in carrying through this relationship-based community development approach, which is not clearly demonstrated in the budget description line.

Community Waitakere submits that the Whau Local Board expenditure item 2012/2013 under Local Community Services is amended to read: "Local community *relationships* and initiatives".

Henderson-Massey Local Board:

Community Waitakere supports the Henderson-Massey Local Board Draft Agreement in principle. We have first-hand experience of the Board's genuine commitment to working with the local community. Community Waitakere and the HMLB and their support staff have worked effectively together to enable local groups and networks in our sector to come together to discuss local issues. The HMLB continues to advocate strongly for the continuation of Project Twin Streams. We appreciate the challenge the HMLB has faced in setting budgets and making financial decisions when there is still uncertainty about where responsibilities for these lie. But we have some concerns that community development initiatives and community-led environmental projects could fall between the governing body and local boards' spheres of responsibility.

Cohesive communities are based on relationships and linkages that take time to develop. There is a cost incurred in carrying through this relationship-based community development approach, which is not clearly demonstrated in the budget description line..

Community Waitakere submits that the Henderson-Massey Local Board expenditure item 2012/2013 under Local Community Services is amended to read: "Local community relationships and initiatives".

Waitakere Ranges Local Board:

Community Waitakere supports the Waitakere Ranges Local Board Draft Agreement in principle. We fully endorse their commitment to engagement with local people and their openness to consult with them and with local communities. Community Waitakere has had first-hand experience of this approach. Community Waitakere and WRLB and their support staff have worked together in various settings to create opportunities for local groups to come together to discuss local issues and work on finding local solutions. We support them in their identified role as Kaitiaki of the Waitakere Ranges and observe their deep commitment to that role. This Board to have been strong advocates for the continuation of Project Twin Streams recognise and acknowledge the benefit of working in partnership with community.

Cohesive communities are based on relationships and linkages that take time to develop. There is a cost incurred in carrying through this relationship-based community development approach, which is not clearly demonstrated in the budget description line.

Community Waitakere submits that the Waitakere Ranges Local Board expenditure item 2012/2013 under Local Community Services is amended to read: "Local community relationships and initiatives".

Finally Community Waitakere wishes to acknowledge the three Western Local Boards and their support staff for having the insight to cluster together on issues where appropriate and for their collective commitment to working alongside their communities in Waitakere.

Pat Watson
Chief Executive
Community Waitakere

March 2012