

Foreword

We have great pleasure in presenting to you the Taranaki Regional Council's first *Long-Term Council Community Plan*. This is the first such plan prepared by the Council under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2002.

The Council welcomes the new legislation. It opens up opportunities for the Council to be more responsive to the needs of the community than was possible under previous legislation, subject to the proper checks and balances in the Act being applied.

The Local Government Act focuses the Council on what role it might play in the achievement of community outcomes for the intermediate and long-term future of the region. This has enabled the Council to look at the big picture over a 10-year planning horizon.

In putting this *Plan* together, the Council has thought long and hard about the contribution it can and should make to the Taranaki of tomorrow. The Council has decided that it can be most effective by concentrating its efforts on achieving a "sustainable Taranaki", ensuring that our natural environment and physical resources are sustained and protected in the long-term. We are in no doubt that this role is crucial for the future well-being of the region. That is a view that has also come through very strongly from the Taranaki community. Good water quality, healthy rivers and streams, flourishing biodiversity, fresh clean air, quality coastal environments, productive land and soils and clean industries are vital ingredients of a prosperous, healthy and sustainable community. These are areas in which the Taranaki Regional Council is already playing a significant role. This *Plan* signals a continuation and strengthening of this role over the next 10 years through such programmes as our riparian management and self-help possum control programmes.

Also set to continue and develop further over this time is the Council's role in civil defence emergency management, public passenger transport (with a focus on the needs of the transport disadvantaged) and in developing its regional garden amenities.

This *Plan* therefore builds on the Council's current range of activities. While the Council now has wider powers that enable it to be involved in other areas, projects or

programmes, the Council has decided to focus on its core business. However, the Council recognises that from time-to-time it may wish to or be called upon to play a broader role in promoting the well-being of the Taranaki community, including support for community projects that fall outside of the Council's core range of activities. The Council has a policy in place and a detailed process to work through to deal with such situations.

At this stage the Council has put together a *Plan* that it believes will take Taranaki forward in the important areas of the Council's activities. It has done this in a way that makes the most efficient and effective use of our ratepayer funds. The *Plan* forecasts a continuing strong financial position for the Council over the next 10 years. The Council plans to continue to have no public debt over the life of this *Plan*. Only minimal changes to rating levels are planned.

This *Long-Term Council Community Plan* is the first under the new legislative framework established by the Local Government Act 2002. Regular readers will see a number of changes from the content of previous plans to comply with the new legislative requirements.

The long-term planning process provides an important opportunity for ratepayers and residents to examine and provide views on the Council's proposed activities in the forthcoming years prior to the Council committing itself to a programme.



Basil Chamberlain
Chief Executive

Foreword

There were 26 submissions on the draft of this *Plan*. As a result of those submissions a number of minor changes were made to this finalised *Plan*. There was no net change to the estimates for 2004/05 arising from the public consultation process.

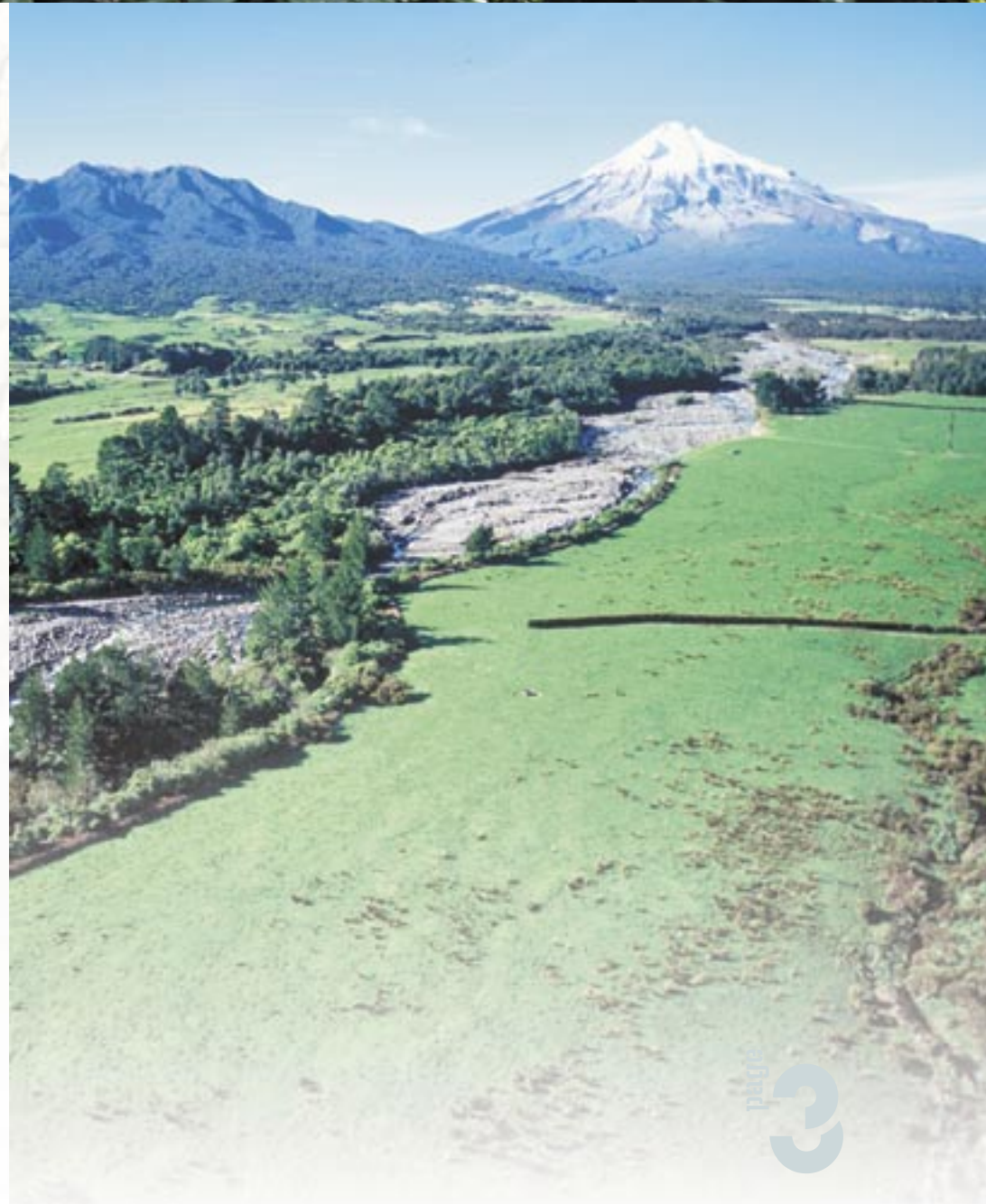
This *Long-Term Community Plan* was adopted on 21 June 2004.



David Walter
David Walter
Chairman

Basil Chamberlain
Basil Chamberlain
Chief Executive

David Walter
Chairman



Councillors

Your Councillors prepared this *Long-Term Council Community Plan* with the assistance of Council staff and many others. The Taranaki Regional Council has ten representatives elected by the community through local body elections every three years. There is currently one vacancy in the New Plymouth constituency of the Taranaki Regional Council.

 <p>DAVID WALTER Chairman Stratford</p>	 <p>TOM CLOKE New Plymouth</p>	 <p>DAVID LEAN New Plymouth</p>	 <p>BARRY MARSH New Plymouth</p>	 <p>VACANCY New Plymouth</p>
 <p>ROGER MAXWELL Deputy Chairman North Taranaki</p>	 <p>IAN ARMSTRONG South Taranaki</p>	 <p>DAVID MacLEOD South Taranaki</p>	 <p>NEIL WALKER South Taranaki</p>	 <p>DONALD McINTYRE North Taranaki</p>



At a glance

This *Plan* – the first *Long-Term Council Community Plan* prepared by the Taranaki Regional Council under the Local Government Act 2002 – presents the Council's strategic directions and programmes for the next 10 years. It also sets out details of the programmes for the 2004/2005 year, the year ahead.

Over the next decade the Council's key objectives are to:

- Prepare, adopt and maintain a suite of comprehensive, high quality and publicly considered **policies, plans and strategies** that will deliver to the Taranaki community, efficient and effective management of the Council's functions.

In 2004/2005 the Council will review and develop policies for protecting indigenous biological diversity in Taranaki and release a discussion document as part of the review of the Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki.

- Promote and enhance within the Taranaki community, an integrated, comprehensive **civil defence emergency management** system.

Specifically in 2004/2005, the Council will assist to prepare and adopt the Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Plan for Taranaki.

- Process some 3,000 applications for **resource consents**; administer all current resource consents; undertake **compliance monitoring** of resource consents including carrying out more than 30,000 inspections of agricultural and small business premises and completing over 1,500 tailored compliance monitoring programmes for major consents. The Council will also respond to **pollution incidents** and where necessary undertake successful **enforcement** action. These activities will be carried out in an efficient and effective manner that places the Council at the forefront of national best practice.

Specifically in 2004/2005, the Council expects to process over 500 applications for resource consents and to process and administer not less than 98% of accepted resource consent applications within statutory timeframes. The Council will design and implement approximately 120 compliance monitoring programmes for major consents and complete 3,300 inspections of agricultural discharges and minor industrial operations.

- Promote **sustainable land management** and **riparian management** by providing property planning services in conjunction with landowners that identify actions for land use management on an individual property basis. The Council intends by the end of the period of this *Plan*, to have active or completed riparian plans in place for over 90% of dairy farms and active comprehensive farm plans in place for over 80% of sheep and beef farms. In ten years the Council expects to have supplied approximately three million plants – mostly native species – to holders of these plans to support its sustainable land management programme, making it one of the largest water and soil management programmes in New Zealand.

Specifically in the 2004/2005 year the Council will prepare comprehensive, agroforestry and conservation farm plans covering not less than an additional 15,000 hectares from an estimated 45 properties and complete riparian management plans covering not less than an additional 1,000 kilometres from an estimated 300 properties. Approximately 200,000 plants will be supplied to plan holders for planting. The Council will continue to provide timely, high quality advice to promote sustainable land and water management throughout Taranaki.

- Manage and maintain the Waitara and Waiwhakaiho **flood protection schemes** and manage other minor **river control schemes** to accepted or agreed design standards to minimize and prevent damage by floods and river erosion. The Council will continue to provide accurate and timely flood warnings, flood control advice and undertake minor works and associated actions to minimise and prevent damage by floods and river erosion.

In addition to generally maintaining the current Waitara and Waiwhakaiho flood protection schemes, the Council will in 2004/2005 install continuous rock bank lining from McNaughton Street to the estuary on the Waitara River flood protection scheme.

- Promote an integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable **land transport system** for Taranaki, promote the provision of community **passenger transport** in Taranaki and assist the special transport needs of the transport disadvantaged. The Council will promote **safe navigation** for all users of the waters of Port Taranaki.



At a glance

Specifically in 2004/2005, the Council will complete a comprehensive review of passenger transport services in Taranaki. A review of the *Regional Land Transport Strategy for Taranaki* including the *Regional Passenger Transport Plan* will also commence in 2004/2005. The Council will continue to provide harbourmaster and harbour warden services for Port Taranaki to implement relevant harbour bylaws and regulations.

- Monitor and investigate the **state of the environment** in Taranaki and the effects of the implementation of the Council's policies and plans in accordance with the Council's monitoring procedures and programmes. This will be done by applying recognised and reputable methods of data collection and analysis and reporting.
- Encourage and implement **waste management** and cleaner production initiatives in Taranaki consistent with the *Regional Waste Strategy for Taranaki*.

In 2004/2005 the Council will comprehensively review the state of the environment monitoring programme for the 2005/2006 year. The Council will also investigate the performance characteristics of farm dairy oxidation ponds and their effects on surface water quality, implement a monitoring regime to assess the effectiveness of riparian planting programmes and support selected studies being undertaken by research organisations. Also programmed for 2004/2005 is the implementation, in conjunction with the region's district councils, of a programme of waste minimisation including among other things employing a waste minimisation officer to assist sector leaders in exploring and implementing waste minimisation.

- Promote the protection of the environment through a programme of **enhancement grants**.

The Council will continue to use environmental enhancement grants for the protection of regionally significant or important wetlands.

- Control **pest animals** to minimize their adverse effects on biodiversity, primary production and the regional economy and environment in accordance with the

Council's approved regional pest animal management strategy. By the end of the period of this *Plan* the Council's *self-help possum control programme* implemented in partnership with land occupiers, will be extended to cover greater than 90% of the Taranaki ring plain and northern and southern coastal terraces, incorporating approximately 5,000 properties over an area of approximately 300,000 hectares.

- Control and/or eradicate **pest plants** to minimize their adverse effects on biodiversity, primary production and the regional economy and environment in accordance with the Council's approved regional pest plant management strategy.

Specifically in 2004/2005 the Council will as part of its self-help possum control programme undertake initial control operations on not less than 12,000 hectares and ensure that landholders maintain possum populations within acceptable limits on the 185,000 hectares of land already within the programme. In relation to pest plants, the Council will undertake the direct control and eradication of all known infestations of *Senegal Tea*, *Climbing Spindleberry*, *Mignonette Vine*, *Giant Reed* and *Darwin's Barberry* in the region, confine the spread of or reduce the extent of 'eradication' and 'containment' pest plants through a programme of inspections and where necessary enforcement on all properties and take necessary actions on all pest plant complaints.

- Facilitate the redevelopment of Rubgy Park into **Yarrow Stadium** and ensure that the **Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust gardens, Hollard Gardens** and **Tupare** are maintained and enhanced as regionally significant recreational and heritage amenities.

In 2004/2005 the Council will continue repayment of the grant made for redevelopment of Yarrow Stadium, from targeted rates and will commence development of Tupare and Hollard gardens to the standards established in asset management plans.

- Ensure that **public representation** by the Council and its Committees is carried out effectively and efficiently in accordance with statutory requirements and **advocate** on behalf of the Taranaki community on matters of regional interest or concern.



At a glance

In the 2004/2005 year local government triennial elections will be held and a new Council formed. In conjunction with the triennial elections a poll will be held on the question of whether the region should be represented by a Māori constituency.

- Promote community awareness and understanding of the Council's functions and activities and make quality and timely **information** publicly available. This area of activity will include further development of the Council's website, **sponsorship** of the *Taranaki Naturally* gallery in the Puke Ariki museum and library complex and use of this facility to promote key messages. The Council will continue its **environmental education** programme where over the period of this plan, the Council expects to involve approximately 50,000 school students in class visits, field trips and visits to the Council's display areas.

Specifically in 2004/2005 the Council will publish and distribute regular editions of the *Recount* newsletter to over 1,000 stakeholders, maintain the Council's website and implement its environmental awards programme. At least 150 school class visits or field trips will be undertaken with approximately 1,000 people visiting the Council's display areas.

- Ensure that the Council-owned port company, **Westgate Transport Ltd** is efficiently managed as a successful business and that **property and treasury investments** owned by the Council are efficiently managed. The Council will seek to attain at least a 6% return on land and treasury investments over the period of this *Plan*.
- Over the 10-year life of this *Plan* the Council intends to retain a strong **financial position** with no public debt and maintain sound **financial performance** with minimal rate increases.

Specifically for 2004/2005 the general rate increases by \$83,322. This equates to a 2.6% increase in rates. The key components leading to the increase in general rates are the increase in funding for disabled persons' passenger transport services and the increase in resources for initial possum control works as part of the *self-help programme*.



Purpose

The Taranaki Regional Council's *Long-Term Council Community Plan* for 2004-2014 is the first such plan to be prepared by the Council under the new Local Government Act 2002. This *Plan* is important to you because it presents the Council's strategic directions and programmes for the next decade.

As the name suggests, the *Long-Term Council Community Plan* is a document put together by the Council and the community. In it you will find a description of the activities the Council will be engaged in over the next 10 years, the objectives of those activities and their costs – as accurately as can be forecast over this period. But the plan does more than this – it describes how the Council, through its various activities and programmes will contribute to achieving the long-term outcomes for the community that the community itself has identified. Many of these activities focus on ensuring that Taranaki's natural environment and physical resources are sustainably managed for the long-term benefit of the community.

The *Plan* also describes how the Council with the help of the community and other organisations will work together to achieve these community outcomes. The next section of this *Plan*, *Looking to the future: working together to achieve community outcomes*, tells you more about this.

There are a number of other more specific documents, plans and strategies that the Council has in place to help it carry out its work. These are also prepared and reviewed in consultation with the community. What this *Long-Term Council Community Plan* does is provide a basis for integrating and coordinating the activities and resources of the Council over the long-term. It provides an opportunity for you, the community, to have a say in these long-term plans.

Under the Local Government Act 2002, the Council is required to produce a long-term council community plan every three years, covering the next 10-year period. The Council is also required to prepare an annual plan for each financial year it does not prepare a long-term council community plan. The annual plans prepared in the years after the long-term council community plan will look different from previous annual plans. They will largely contain budget, funding and financial statements for that year in support of the long-term council community plan. The Council is required to prepare and adopt its next long-term council community plan by 30 June 2006.

The community outcomes contained within the Council's long-term council community plan are reviewed every six years to ensure the Council is on track. Progress towards achieving these outcomes is reported on every 3 years.

The emphasis in preparing this *Plan* has been to produce a straight-forward easy to read document. The *Plan* has been structured in the following way to help readers understand the long-term proposals of the Council:

- Introduction – a brief description of what the plan is about
- Looking to the future – an explanation of community outcomes and how the Council will contribute to those outcomes
- Taranaki region – key factors concerning the environment in which the Council operates
- Assumptions – the underlying basis upon which this *Plan* was prepared
- Groups of activities – the background, objectives, performance measures and budgets for each of the Council's activities
- Funding and financial policies – the financial framework by which the Council operates and under which this *Plan* was prepared
- Financial statements – the planned financial performance and position of the Council for the next ten years
- Funding impact statement – the effect that this *Plan* will have on the ratepayers of the region
- Explanatory notes – additional financial information
- Developing Māori capacity – the processes by which the capacity of Māori to contribute to the decision-making processes is fostered
- Appendices – additional policies and financial information.