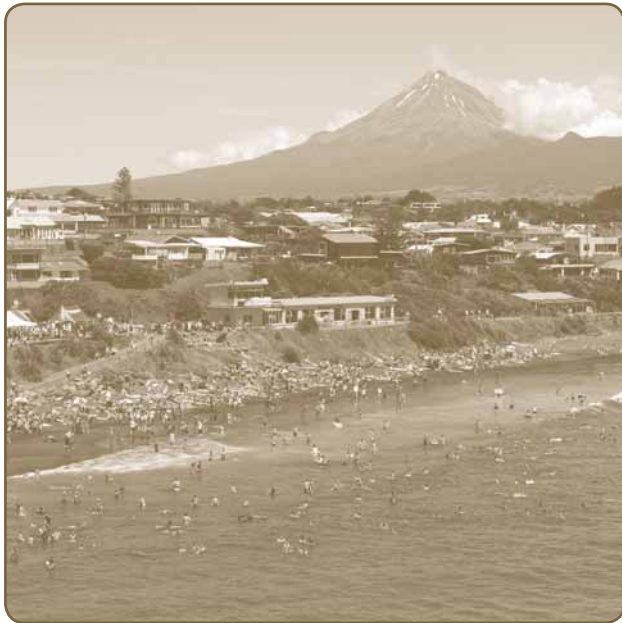


LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

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PURPOSE/WELL-BEINGS

The Local Government Act 2002 specifies the purpose of local government, which is to:

- enable democratic local decision-making and action by and on behalf of communities; and
- promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of communities, in the present and for the future.

The role the Taranaki Regional Council is to give effect to the purpose of local government in relation to the Taranaki region and to perform the duties and exercise the rights given to the Council under the Local Government Act 2002 or any other Act.

COMMUNITY OUTCOMES – STRATEGIC CHOICES AND TRADEOFFS

The long-term council community plan provides a long-term focus (over ten years) for the activities of the Council and describes how those activities will contribute to the achievement of community outcomes. Outcomes are simply a desired result or state of affairs. Community outcomes describe the type of place that our people want Taranaki to be. They describe what we value as important for a good quality of life. The identification of outcomes for the Taranaki community is important because it enables us to plan with a longer term focus.

Clearly though, the Taranaki Regional Council is not in a position to achieve all of the outcomes that the community seeks and neither does the community want this. For some outcomes the Council will play a major role. For others it will have only a small role to play or no role at all and it will be up to other organisations or agencies to take the lead. The identification of outcomes for the Taranaki community therefore has a second important purpose: to allow for the coordination and prioritisation of resources across different organisations such as councils, government departments, business groups, iwi, community groups and others.

From May 2003 to February 2004, the four councils within the Taranaki region worked together to consult with people of Taranaki to identify the things that the community thinks are *important for its well-being*. As a result the Taranaki community identified seven broad community outcomes for the region as follows:

Connected Taranaki

A region that delivers accessible and integrated infrastructure, transport and communications systems, which meet the needs of residents, business and visitors.

The elements of a *Connected Taranaki* are as follows:

- Effective, efficient, safe and reliable infrastructure is provided and maintained
- High quality communication systems, information technologies and distribution networks exist
- The land transport system is safe and responsive
- The strategic value of the region's state highways is recognised and provided for and local road networks are maintained and enhanced where appropriate
- The capabilities of Port Taranaki and the region's airport and rail network to service the needs of the region, are maintained and where appropriate enhanced
- The public transport system is reliable, safe and accessible to all who need it.

Prosperous Taranaki

A region that boasts a sustainable, resilient and innovative economy that prospers within the natural and social environment.

The elements of a *Prosperous Taranaki* are as follows:

- Taranaki is an attractive place to work, do business and to visit
- The region is a birthplace of innovation and ideas, where technological developments and opportunities for added value are capitalised on
- Taranaki's strengths are recognised and diversification of business and industry is valued and encouraged
- There is a high level of employment and adequate incomes for all
- Development and population growth in the region is encouraged but managed in a manner that does not compromise the natural or social environment
- People are confident and are happy to invest in the future.

Secure and Healthy Taranaki

A region that provides a safe, healthy and friendly place to live, work or visit.

The elements of a *Secure & Healthy Taranaki* are as follows:

- There is equality of access to a comprehensive range of high quality health and disability services when required
- The environmental, physical and mental health of the people of Taranaki is maintained, enhanced, promoted and protected
- A well-being model for health is promoted in the region, whereby people are encouraged to take responsibility for their own health in order to promote good health outcomes

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- There is adequate and affordable housing for all
- Residents and visitors of all ages feel safe from crime
- A sustainable management approach is taken to hazards and risks across the areas of reduction, readiness, response and recovery
- Taranaki is a friendly and welcoming place.

Skilled Taranaki

A region that values and supports learning so that all people can play a full and active role in its social, cultural and economic life.

The elements of a *Skilled Taranaki* are as follows:

- Learning and the creation of knowledge is valued
- High quality education and training opportunities exist with strong links between business, schools and training institutions. There is excellent pre-school, primary and secondary education with superb teachers and literary programmes
- A wide range of innovative education and training opportunities are accessible to people of all ages
- A supportive and responsive learning environment exists where people are encouraged to participate
- The workforce has the skills to meet the needs of the region's employers.

Sustainable Taranaki

A region that appreciates its natural environment and its physical and human resources in planning, delivery and protection.

The elements of a *Sustainable Taranaki* are as follows:

- There is sustainable use, development and protection of resources. Taranaki's land and soil, water, air and coast, its biodiversity and its natural features and landscapes are understood, valued, maintained and enhanced for future generations
- Animal and plant pests and biosecurity risks in the region are appropriately managed
- Taranaki's historic heritage is identified, recognised and protected
- Built environments and environmental amenities are of a high standard and contribute significantly to the well-being of people and communities
- People are valued and their contribution to the economic, social, cultural and environmental well-being of the region is recognised and supported
- Sustainable development is encouraged.

Together Taranaki

A region that is caring and inclusive, works together, and enables people to have a strong and distinctive sense of identity.

The elements of a *Together Taranaki* are as follows:

- All people feel valued and supported within a caring community and have a sense of equality and belonging
- A cohesive, united community exists based on strong relationships between people from different cultures, communities and organizations. Multi-ethnic diversity is celebrated and different cultural values are respected
- The place of Māori is recognised and respected. Relationships that are mutually beneficial are built between Māori and the wider community



- People from all sectors of the community are able and encouraged to contribute to their communities and opportunities to participate are enhanced
- Cooperation, collaboration and coordination between agencies, organisations and councils occurs to avoid duplication of resources, minimise "red tape" and promote a consistent focus
- Taranaki people have a strong sense of place. The special significance of Mount Taranaki to the people of Taranaki and its role in Taranaki's identity is recognised and provided for
- There is a sense of community where local distinctiveness and diversity are valued and allowed to thrive
- The Taranaki "brand" is recognised nationally and internationally.

Vibrant Taranaki

A region that provides high quality and diverse cultural and recreational experiences, and encourages independence and creativity.

The elements of a *Vibrant Taranaki* are as follows:

- People have access to and are encouraged to participate in a wide range of high quality recreational, sport, leisure, art and cultural activities
- The region has high quality public amenities and facilities
- Individual responsibility, independence and creativity are encouraged
- All people have access to local services and facilities
- There is safe, convenient and affordable access to the natural environment and public access to the region's coastal marine area, lakes and rivers is maintained and where practical enhanced.

HOW THE COMMUNITY OUTCOMES WERE IDENTIFIED

The outcomes were identified using 'best practice' methods having regard to the Taranaki context. The methods used aimed to be comprehensive in

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that they sought to identify community outcomes across social, economic, environmental and cultural concerns. A mix of consultation methods were used to ensure that the results of the consultation were reliable and representative of the community's views.

The process included the following steps:

- Informing the community and raising public awareness of the outcomes process
- An analysis of existing documents or existing statements of community visions or outcomes
- Three public meetings, one in each of the district council centres, New Plymouth, Stratford and Hawera
- Three stakeholder meetings, including one with key sector stakeholders from a variety of business, social and cultural backgrounds and one with representatives of Crown departments, ministries and agencies. A regional hui was also held, to which representatives of iwi and hapu within the Taranaki region were invited
- Six focus group meetings, two in each of the district council centres. The participants were randomly selected and each group was made up of a representative cross-section of the community. The small groups enabled more detailed and in-depth discussion than was possible in the public and stakeholder meetings
- A professionally designed, scientific telephone survey that involved interviewing 540 people across the three districts
- A flyer that was sent to every household and box-holder in Taranaki. The flyer outlined the draft community outcomes that had been developed as a result of the previous consultation and included a freepost response form for people to provide the councils with feedback
- A report on the draft community outcomes was released and submissions on the draft outcomes were invited
- A hearing of submitters on the report and respondents to the flyer who wished to be heard
- Preparation of a final report on community outcomes.

The process of identifying community outcomes was concluded in 2004. Subsequently the Council has worked with other local authorities and stakeholders in Taranaki to develop and agree on indicators to measure progress towards the achievement of the outcomes. The Council considers that the outcomes remain relevant and current because their identification and agreement on indicators has only recently been completed and was undertaken through a reliable and robust process. The Council has therefore resolved to retain the community outcomes already identified. The next formal review of the community outcomes will take place in 2012/2013.

HOW THE COUNCIL WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE OUTCOMES

The role of the Council in furthering community outcomes can take a number of forms. For example the Council could take on the roles of:

- **advocate** – trying to persuade others to act
- **facilitator** – bringing various parties together to carry out an activity
- **educator** – providing information and advice.

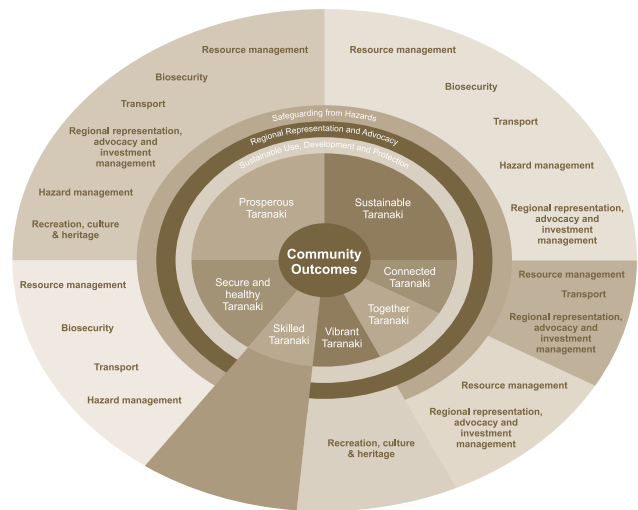


Figure 2: Relationship between the Council's mission and activities and the community outcomes.

The Council can also take on the more direct roles of a:

- **funder** – by making a financial investment in a programme
- **service provider** – carrying out a programme using the Council's own resources
- **regulator** – by developing and enforcing rules
- **monitor** – gathering information.

In some cases the Council will be involved in more than one way in furthering a community outcome. In other cases it will be appropriate for the Council to have no specific role because of the functions of other parties. The details of these activities and associated roles are outlined in the following sections of this *Plan*.

The Council's role in furthering community outcomes is summarised by its mission statement. The mission is a statement of the Council's primary role or 'reason for existence'.

The Council's mission is:

"To work for the present and future benefit of the Taranaki region by:

- *promoting the sustainable use, development and protection of Taranaki's natural and physical resources;*
- *safeguarding Taranaki's people and resources from natural and other hazards; and*
- *representing and advocating Taranaki's regional interests.*

We will do this in a responsible and cost-effective way that includes and encourages participation by the regional community and takes account of the Treaty of Waitangi."

The Council's mission statement reflects its core statutory responsibilities and activities in resource management and environmental protection, pest management (biosecurity) and hazard and emergency management. It also reflects the Council's role in representing and advocating Taranaki's regional interests including transport and recreation, culture and heritage activities at the regional level.

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Figure 2 shows the way in which the Council will contribute to community outcomes through its mission and the actual activities the Council carries out.

The activities shown in Figure 2 are groups of activities. The groups of activities and the more specific individual activities within them form the basis of reporting on the details of the 10-year programmes contained in later sections of this *Plan*. However, it is the contribution of these activities to the achievement of the community outcomes that lies at the heart of this *Plan*.

Figure 2 demonstrates how each of the groups of Council activities is linked to the relevant key community outcomes that it contributes to. The diagram shows that most of the Council's activities will contribute to furthering the community outcomes of a *Sustainable Taranaki* and a *Prosperous Taranaki*. Some activities will contribute to a *Secure and Healthy Taranaki* while others contribute to the outcomes of a *Connected, Together* and *Vibrant Taranaki*.

The Council through this *Plan*, is making a significant contribution to the achievement of a *Sustainable Taranaki*. The Taranaki Regional Council will work hard to protect our rivers and streams. A major focus of the Council's land management work over the next ten years will be to continue to promote the retirement and planting of riparian margins along all of our rivers and streams. One of the main instruments to achieve this will be through our land management services and associated supply of riparian plants.

By December 2008, the Council had completed the preparation of 2,257 riparian plans with farmers, of which approximately 1,500 are for dairy farms. This represents about 90% of Taranaki's dairy farms. The emphasis is now increasingly on plan implementation instead of development and resources are being deployed accordingly. As part of this it is planned to provide 350,000 plants at cost for streamside planting in 2009/2010. The aim is to increase this number of plants by approximately 50,000 each year over the term of this *Plan*.

This will have major benefits for water quality in our rivers and streams and in our coastal waters into which our rivers ultimately flow. It will also provide a major boost to biodiversity protection and enhancement in Taranaki by providing habitat for native plants and animals and corridors of native vegetation from mountain to sea.

The Council through this *Plan* is further committed to promoting sustainable land management on erosion-prone land, particularly in the region's hill country and other sensitive environments. The Council intends to significantly raise the coverage of comprehensive farm plans to over 80% of all hill country farms over the next ten years. By this time the Council expects to have supplied approximately three million plants to holders of riparian and comprehensive farm plans. This will make the Council's sustainable land management programme one of the largest water and soil management programmes in New Zealand.

In addition the Council will continue to closely monitor soil health in the region to ensure that activities do not lead to any significant deterioration in soil structure, nutrient status or soil contamination.

Resource investigations, monitoring and enhancement is a significant area of activity for the Council. The Council has invested considerable time and resources to monitoring the overall state of the environment so that the Council is in the best possible position to anticipate trends and take action ahead of time rather than be reactive. This is set to continue over the next ten years. Where necessary the Council will undertake research and investigations, at times, in conjunction with outside research providers, to ensure that it keeps abreast of resource management issues or potential issues facing the region.

Practical assistance in the form of environmental enhancement grants will continue to be made available over the life of the *Plan* for regional initiatives to protect the environment. It is the Council's aim to use this scheme to further protect and enhance the region's remaining significant wetlands and areas of native bush and to protect our native fresh water ecosystems – all contributing to protecting and enhancing the region's biodiversity.

Over the next 10 years the Council anticipates that it will expand its role further in maintaining and protecting the region's biodiversity. This is an area of enormous challenge not only for Taranaki, but also for New Zealand as a whole. The threats to our native plants and animals are real and the costs of protection of habitats and species is potentially high.

However, with positive working relationships and the goodwill of landowners that already exists in Taranaki, the Council believes it can make significant progress in this area. The broad policies to maintain and enhance our indigenous biodiversity have been developed through reviews of our *Regional Policy Statement* and pest strategies as signalled in this *Plan*. The key to successful implementation of our policy is having good information and a commitment to work alongside landowners in a proactive, constructive and supportive way to maintain and protect our most valued areas.



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The Council has worked closely with a number of stakeholders to identify our key native ecosystems, their values and threats. The Council has also prepared a *Biodiversity Operational Strategy* to identify its priorities and guide its actions in the area of biodiversity protection. Now that these initiatives are in place, the Council can go to work alongside our landowners to protect our most significant natural areas and native plants and animals. In time, as the targets of the self-help possum control programme on the ring plain are met, efforts will be redirected to biodiversity protection on specific sites. The Council's environmental enhancement grant and general advisory services will also be applied. Resources for monitoring our progress in this area will be put in place. Work is already underway in these areas and is set to pick up significantly over the term of this *Plan*.

Waste minimisation and efforts towards meeting the targets in the *Regional Waste Strategy* will continue to be a focus for the Council over the next ten years. The *Regional Waste Strategy* is the result of a joint planning exercise with the New Plymouth, Stratford and South Taranaki district councils and the Taranaki Regional Council. It is based on the targets for waste minimisation and management contained in the New Zealand Waste Strategy but in many areas sets targets that better those in the *New Zealand Waste Strategy*. Achieving these targets will produce environmental benefits as well as gains for industry through better efficiencies and reduced costs in resource use. The Council expects to be able to report further progress in this area to build on the achievements of the last ten years.

The Council's regulatory activity, particularly in the area of resource consents processing and administration and compliance monitoring, is one of the core activities of the Council. The level of activity in this area fluctuates from year-to-year depending on the level of economic activity and other factors, but the Council anticipates that it will process some 3,000 applications for resource consents over the next ten years. The Council has always been committed to monitoring the effects of activities to ensure that those activities do not have undue adverse effects on the environment. Over the next ten years, the Council will carry out over 30,000 inspections of agricultural and minor industrial operations and complete over 1,800 tailored compliance monitoring programmes for major consents. The Council will continue its policy of efficiency and timeliness while ensuring that environmental effects of resource use on our land, water, air and coastal resources are thoroughly assessed and closely monitored and enforcement action taken when required. These activities will continue to be carried out in a way that places the Council at the forefront of national best practice.

The Council through this *Plan*, has set out a programme of regular review and update of its main policy, plans and strategies over the next ten years. This will ensure that the policy frameworks that the Council works within remain relevant, up to date and appropriate to the region and fulfil their purpose.

All of these activities will contribute to the outcome of a *Sustainable Taranaki*. They will also assist in the achievement of a *Prosperous Taranaki* by enhancing Taranaki's clean, green image and ensuring it remains



a reality in overseas markets as well as emphasising Taranaki as an attractive place to work, do business and visit.

Details of these activities can be found in the Resource Management chapter of the *Plan*.

The Council's pest management activities are also set to make further significant contributions to a *Sustainable Taranaki* over the next ten years. Details can be found in the Biosecurity chapter of the *Plan*. Pest management is recognised in the *New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy* as one of the most critical areas for halting the decline in New Zealand's biodiversity and for returning the 'dawn chorus'. The Taranaki Regional Council has a major role to play. It is the Council's intention that within the life of this *Plan* there is over 90% coverage on the ring plain, of the Council's *self-help possum control programme*. This programme involves a partnership with landowners whereby the Council undertakes initial control to reduce possum numbers to very low levels with landowners then trained in appropriate pest management techniques to keep possum numbers at low levels. This very successful programme significantly reduces risks to animal health and pastoral production and, therefore, our agricultural economy, as well as protecting our native biodiversity from the highly destructive effects of possums.

Ongoing activities are also programmed for pest plants with proposals to control agricultural and environmental pest plants to acceptable levels and in some cases completely eradicate damaging plants from the region. The Council will remain vigilant and ready to respond with other stakeholders to act on incursions of unwanted organisms in Taranaki.

An expansion of the Council's role in land transport is anticipated over the next ten years. Details can be found in the *Transport* chapter of this *Plan*. Reforms in land transport planning and funding put in place by central



government in 2008 give important new functions and responsibilities to regional councils. The Council is now charged with preparing a *Regional Land Transport Programme* that includes information on all aspects of land transport including state highways, local roads, passenger transport, walking and cycling. A key part of the programme, which is reviewed and prepared every three years, is regionally agreed priorities for major capital works projects. The process for preparing the programme involves public consultation on what the priorities should be. Once adopted the programme sets the direction for investment in this important area. This function is carried out by the Council's Regional Land Transport Committee and relies upon a collaborative approach between central, regional and local government.

In respect of the Council's own operational activities—planning and funding public passenger transport services—further but gradual enhancements in services, are proposed over the next ten years.

In recent years the Council has made a successful transition to fully contracted urban bus services in New Plymouth and introduced once-a-week services throughout rural Taranaki on a trial basis. (Continued monitoring of trial services in rural Taranaki will enable the Council to make decisions about the longer term future of these services). Provision of well designed and cost effective public passenger transport services that meet the needs of users and particularly the needs of the transport disadvantaged – is important for the social well-being of the community.

This Council will work with other funders and providers to ensure that the needs of the transport disadvantaged are met. This will ensure that all members of the community have reasonable access to transport for those social, health, educational, recreational or employment opportunities that are important to the maintenance of an acceptable quality of life.

On a wider front the Council is required to prepare a *Regional Land Transport Strategy* for the region. The purpose of the *Strategy* is to aid the development of a safe, integrated, responsive and sustainable land

transport system in the Taranaki region. The *Strategy* identifies issues to be addressed and actions to be pursued for the region's land transport system as a whole. This includes such things as route security and reliability particularly for our major highways, ensuring that our land transport system continues to function efficiently and is environmentally sustainable, promoting road safety, walking and cycling and demand management and integrating land use and transport planning.

A large part of the *Strategy* is implemented by other agencies such as road controlling authorities and the New Zealand Police. The Council has a role in planning for and funding parts of the *Strategy*, (for example, public passenger transport services) while in other areas it may take on a regional coordination, facilitation or advocacy role.

These activities will promote the community outcomes of a *Prosperous, Sustainable, Connected, and Secure and Healthy Taranaki*.

Over the next ten years the Council will work to further strengthen new civil defence emergency management structures and processes introduced in 2002. Details can be found in the *Hazard Management* chapter of this *Plan*. This will result in a region-wide civil defence emergency management structure working to policies and programmes developed under the *Taranaki Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Plan*. This will ensure that the risks to people, property and the environment from all hazards are managed to acceptable levels.

The Council's long-standing role in river control and flood protection will continue over the next ten years, including ongoing maintenance of the Council's Waitara and Waiwhakaiho flood protection schemes. A substantial increase in the level of flood protection associated with the lower Waiwhakaiho Flood Protection Scheme is programmed over the next 10 years to reflect the increasing level of development that has occurred in this area. These activities will make a significant contribution to a *Sustainable, Prosperous and a Secure and Healthy Taranaki*.

This *Plan* provides for the completion of the repayment of \$6.4 million of funding for the redevelopment of Rugby Park into Yarrow Stadium, by way of a targeted rate over the whole region. It also provides for the maintenance and enhancement of two regionally significant and nationally recognised garden amenities. Details of these activities can be found in the *Recreation, culture and heritage* chapter of this *Plan*. The activities in the area of recreation, culture and heritage will contribute to the outcomes of a *Prosperous and a Vibrant Taranaki*.

When the need has arisen or where the community has demanded it, the Council has taken on a regional representation role. The Council expects that it will continue to be active in this area over the next ten years.

The Council will continue to develop and implement a programme of information transfer, advice and education on the Council's activities. This will raise awareness within the community of the Council's work and will continue to stimulate positive attitudes and actions towards the environment. Use of the Puke Ariki regional museum and library complex for this purpose will add a new dimension to the Council's efforts in this area in future years.

The Council's investments, including its 100% shareholding in Port Taranaki Ltd, will be managed to optimise returns in the long-term while balancing risk and return considerations.

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Details of these activities can be found in the *Regional Representation Advocacy and Investment Management* chapter of this Plan. These activities will contribute to the outcomes of a *Sustainable, Prosperous, Connected* and a *Together Taranaki*.

HOW THE COUNCIL WILL WORK WITH OTHERS

The Taranaki Regional Council will work with other local and regional organisations, Māori, central government and non-government organisations and the private sector in furthering community outcomes. The range of organisations and stakeholders that the Council will work with is shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3: The range of stakeholders that the Council will work with.

As indicated previously, the Taranaki Regional Council is not solely responsible for all the community outcomes that have been identified. The Council's role and how it will work with others will vary depending on the specific outcome and the activities involved. In areas where it has a primary role it will act as the lead agency being largely responsible for action in a particular area. This is the case in the areas of promoting the sustainable use, development and protection of our natural and physical resources and in safeguarding the community from natural and other hazards. In these areas the Council's involvement is wide, which requires it to work with many stakeholders in a number of different ways, for example, as a regulator, funder and educator. In other areas such as in regional representation its role may be one of advocating, supporting or monitoring. In appropriate cases of regional significance the Council may take on a more direct role which may involve working jointly or in partnership with other agencies.

In consulting and working with the community the Council will apply the consultation, planning and decision-making provisions of the Local Government Act 2002 and other statutes that it works under. The Council will also develop partnerships and work through other forums with its stakeholders to agree on approaches to furthering community outcomes.

MONITORING AND REPORTING

The Council will monitor, and not less than once every three years, report on progress made by the community towards achieving the outcomes for the region.

In conjunction with other organisations and community stakeholders, the Council has developed measures of success (indicators) for each outcome against which progress towards achieving the outcome can be assessed at a regional level. These indicators are contained in an annual report entitled *Regional Community Outcome Indicators for Taranaki*. They form part of an integrated and coordinated performance management framework within which outcomes and both regional and local actions towards achieving those outcomes can be measured. The Council, in conjunction with the region's three district councils reports annually on progress in implementing the community outcomes using information on those indicators that is available annually. A full report on progress is to be made every three years. The first full report will be prepared in 2008/2009. Ongoing work over the next decade will seek to refine and improve the indicators used in the reporting process.

The Council currently undertakes a number of monitoring and reporting activities that will assist in measuring progress towards achieving the community outcomes and in particular, the specific contributions from the Council's activities.

The Council has a comprehensive monitoring framework in place with many varied and wide-ranging programmes to monitor and to report on the outcomes of its activities. The main components of this framework and their connection to the Council's planning processes are shown diagrammatically in Figure 4.

The Council's monitoring framework is complex and multitiered. It covers a range of monitoring programmes from broad regional level monitoring of



community outcomes and wellbeing, to overall state of the environment monitoring, monitoring of specific activity areas (such as pest management, land transport and emergency management) and monitoring of individual resource consents for compliance with consent conditions and Council policies. It also covers different time scales (from quarter-hourly, to daily, quarterly, annually, three yearly, five yearly or longer) according to different needs or requirements.

Monitoring is also undertaken at different geographical scales (region-wide, catchment, eco-regions, property-based or site-specific) and may involve different types of information.

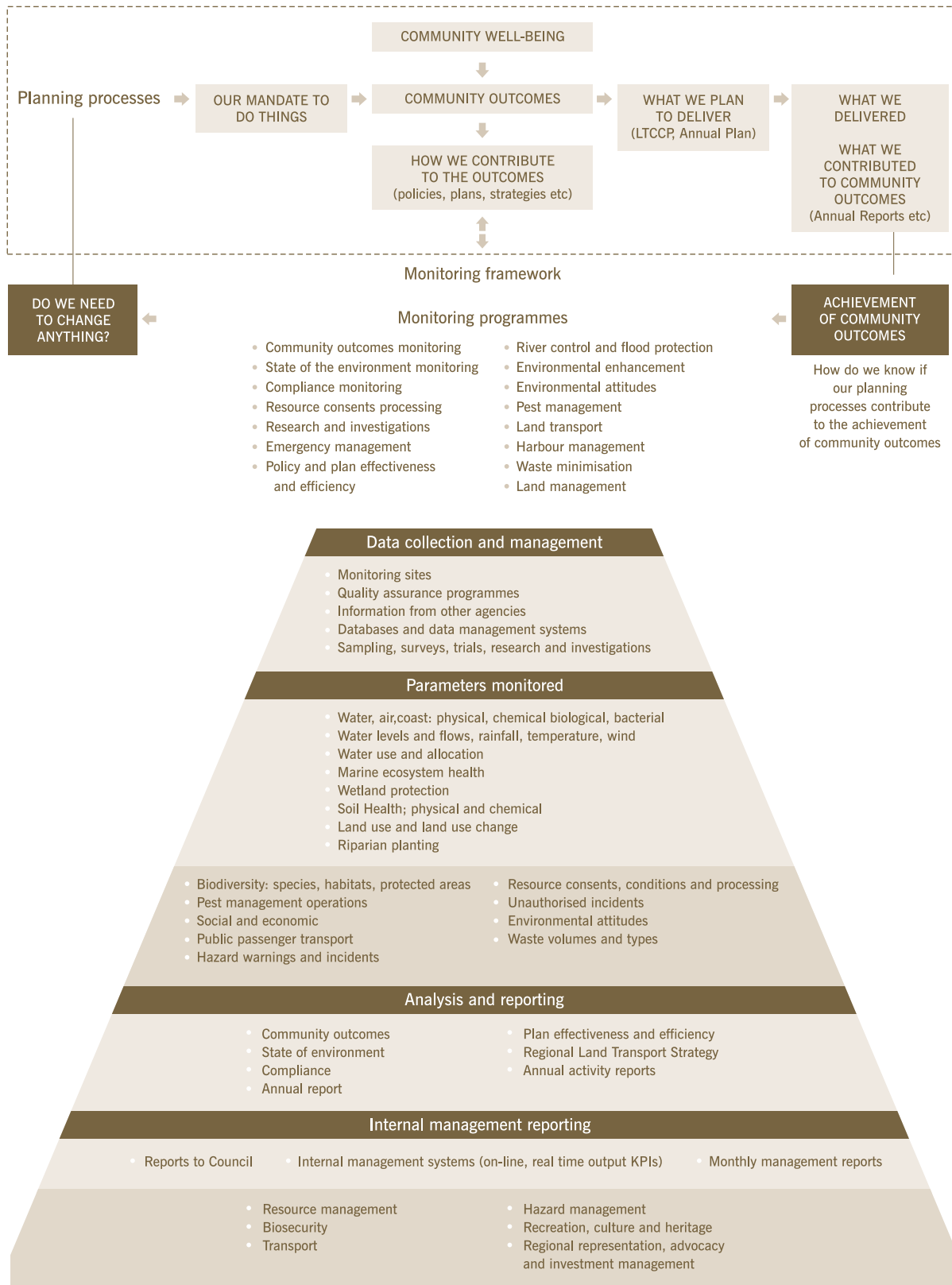
In developing its monitoring programmes, the Council has sought to establish an integrated monitoring framework that recognises the need for consistency, coordination and integration of monitoring activities:

- within the Council – to generate information that is timely, relevant and useful to the Council across a number of activities
- with other agencies – to avoid duplication and to make use of other sources of information where appropriate
- across issues and media – to recognise the inter-connected nature of the biophysical economic, social and cultural environments.

Underpinning all aspects of the Council's monitoring programmes is effective data collection and management. This involves careful selection and maintenance of monitoring sites (having regard to the purpose, location, type and number of sites), proper sampling, surveying and analysis being undertaken according to recognised quality assurance programme by suitably qualified staff, and the maintenance of effective databases and data management systems. A wide range of parameters is used in monitoring and these form the foundations of the Council's monitoring framework.

Programme performance indicators for monitoring progress on implementation of this *Plan* are set out in later stages of this *Plan*. These programme performance indicators are specifically measured, monitored and reported upon monthly and annually. The full year's achievement of these programme measures is included in each year's audited annual report and in specific more detailed annual reports that are separately published for each group of activities. It should be noted that these performance measures focus on whether the defined tasks have been performed. A wider range of performance measures are contained in other reports prepared by the Council. The results of measurement of progress on this *Plan* towards the achievement of community outcomes are published in each year's annual report.

Figure 4: Monitoring and reporting framework of the Council.



THE TARANAKI REGION

KEY FACTORS AND INFLUENCES

Sheep and beef farming are concentrated in the hill country and also play an important part in the regional economy.

Exotic forest plantations continue to expand, with the region offering a suitable climate, good forestry sites and a well-established roading system and port facility. There has been a marked increase in exotic forest plantations in the region from 9,700 hectares in 1990 to an estimated 28,000 hectares in 2002.

The oil and gas industry is a major contributor to the regional economy. The Taranaki Basin is currently New Zealand's only hydrocarbon producing area, with the Kapuni and the offshore Maui fields making up the major part of New Zealand's natural gas resources. Development of the offshore Kupe field, discovered in 1986, commenced during 2006/2007.

Extensive drilling programmes over recent years in an effort to support the Kapuni and Maui fields have resulted in a number of significant new finds. The Mangahewa onshore gas and condensate field was discovered in 1997, the Maari offshore field in 1998 and the Rimu onshore field in South Taranaki in 1999. The nearby Kauri field was discovered in 2001. The Pohokura offshore gas field in North Taranaki, the largest gas and condensate find in 30 years, was discovered in 2000 while the offshore Tui, Amokura and Pateke oil fields were discovered in 2003 and 2004. Exploration interest in Taranaki remains high.

The presence of oil and gas in the region has given rise to industries involved in the processing, distribution, use and export of hydrocarbons. Production stations or gas treatment plants are found at Oaonui, Kapuni, Waihapa, Rimu, Kaimiro and the McKee oil and gas field. An ammonia urea plant is located at Kapuni, UF resin plant at Waitara and gas-fired power stations at Stratford and New Plymouth.

Tourism is playing an increasingly important role in the Taranaki economy, with over 540,000 total guest nights spent in the Taranaki region by domestic and international visitors per annum. Most visitors are from other North Island regions. Some 15% of total guest nights are from international visitors. The region's mountain, forests, gardens and parks are attracting increasing numbers of visitors for rural-based and outdoor recreation activities.

As an export-based economy, major changes in the world economy can significantly affect Taranaki. The regional economy is therefore vulnerable to changes in overseas markets. The Council needs to be aware of national and international developments in financial markets, commodity prices and trading arrangements and the opportunities and threats these may present for the Council in carrying out its work.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The use and quality of water is the major resource management issue in the region. Water is a vital resource for agriculture, recreation and industry and has profound cultural and spiritual importance to the community.

While overall water quality in the region is very good, particularly in the upper catchments, there is some deterioration in the lower reaches of rivers as a result of intensive agricultural land use.

With the continuing intensification of dairying, there will be increasing pressures placed on our water resources from farm run-off, sediment and nutrients. Increased efforts will be needed just to maintain current



water quality and to improve quality where deterioration has occurred. Attention must continue to be given to promoting good land and riparian management practices.

Management of the many industrial, municipal and agricultural waste discharges from individual point sources has improved significantly over the years. These discharges are closely monitored. It is vital for Taranaki's future that all major discharges to land, water and air are carefully managed.

Where there are gaps in our knowledge of the resources of the region or the environmental effects of their use, necessary investigations and research must be undertaken to improve our understanding.

Other significant environmental issues facing the Taranaki region include:

- managing clearance of bush and scrub on steep hill country, resulting in soil erosion that degrades land productivity and water quality. Parts of the inland hill country experience significant soil erosion but changes to more sustainable land use practices and conversion to forestry present opportunities to address this
- controlling threats to indigenous flora and fauna and the economic costs faced by the region as a result of pest plants and pest animals
- managing the coastline and coastal waters in a way that recognises special ecologically and culturally sensitive areas within the coastal environment, and that allows appropriate use and development of the coast
- promoting protection of the region's remaining significant wetlands
- managing discharges of contaminants to air and maintaining the high overall standard of air quality
- managing the allocation of the region's surface water resources, especially for increasing interest in pasture irrigation.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND IWI

The tangata whenua, through the region's eight iwi: (Ngati Tama, Ngati Mutunga, Ngati Maru, Te Atiawa, Taranaki, Nga Ruahine, Ngati Ruanui and Nga Rauru), have particular concerns with respect to the natural environment, particularly water (surface water, groundwater and coastal waters), the allocation of that water, and the discharge of contaminants which might affect water quality.

Iwi wish to maintain meaningful and adequate input to Council decision-making and to have structures and processes in place to enable that to occur.

THE TARANAKI REGION

KEY FACTORS AND INFLUENCES

BIOSECURITY

Biosecurity refers to activities that relate to the exclusion, eradication and effective management of pests and unwanted organisms. It is an area of work that will become increasingly important in Taranaki as the region becomes exposed to a greater range of animal and plant pests through interregional and international transport and through the effects of climate change which could see the spread into the region of unwanted organisms, previously unable to survive in Taranaki.

Not all harmful or unwanted organisms that might be considered to be pests, will be able to be excluded or eradicated from the region, or otherwise managed in some way by the Council. It may not be appropriate or necessary or reasonable for the Council to undertake a management response. In some cases this will be because the cost of acting does not provide sufficient benefit or because the management or control tools are not sufficiently effective. In other cases management responses or operations may be the responsibility of others, for example border control operations carried out by central government departments or agencies.

Nevertheless, biosecurity management is important for Taranaki, particularly given the critical importance of Taranaki's primary industries to the region's economic and social well-being and the significance of its natural flora and fauna which are vulnerable to incursions of pests and diseases.

The Council will make maximum use of the tools it has available under the Biosecurity Act 1993 to manage those plants and animals deemed to be pests. The principle tool that the council uses is that of a pest management strategy which may contain rules to control or eradicate pests. These strategies are prepared in close consultation with the community as to what organisms are to be classified as pests, and what methods of management are appropriate and who should pay. The primary objective of all the Council's biosecurity work is to protect values from the effects of pests and unwanted organisms.

TRANSPORT

Land transport is an important area of work for the Council and one that will expand over the duration of this *Plan*. It is also a challenging area of work because of the number of other councils, organisations or agencies with a direct involvement or interest in land transport, the importance of land transport to the economic and social well-being of the community and because of gaps nationally between funds available for transport and community expectations and desires in relation to the many aspects of land



transport – road, rail, passenger transport, walking and cycling. Despite these challenges the council is working hard to obtain the best outcomes it can for Taranaki.

The Council's goals in the area of land transport as set out in its *Regional Land Transport Strategy for Taranaki* are to improve route capacity, reliability and security of the region's, land transport infrastructure; develop a safer roading environment; maintain and enhance our land transport networks to service the needs of the Taranaki economy and provide access to our rural communities; encourage access and mobility in order to meet the economic and social needs of the community, to promote the public health and environmental benefits of alternative modes of transport.

The Council through its Regional Transport Committee, will apply the processes available to it – including preparation of a *Regional Land Transport Programme* and implementation of its *Regional Land Transport Strategy* – to achieve these goals. Changes in legislation introduced in 2008 also enable the council to consider whether a regional fuel tax ought to be put in place in Taranaki to ensure that infrastructure developments important to the future of the Taranaki economy and community in general can proceed within a reasonable time-frame. A regional fuel tax is not being proposed at this stage but it remains an option for the future. Many issues relating to the costs and benefits for Taranaki of such a tax would need to be considered and the council would undertake very close consultation with the community and the many stakeholder interests before such a tax was considered.

As to its passenger transport services the Council is facing a number of pressures and influences. New Zealand's population and that of Taranaki is aging and growing numbers of people do not have access to independent means of travel, relying instead on various forms of public transport. Still others, because of constraints of income or their place of residence, find convenient and affordable transport a difficulty.

Public passenger transport can also play an important role in meeting the needs of commuters, reducing travel by car and traffic congestion, improving road safety and reducing costs of roading infrastructure. It can also have environmental benefits by reducing greenhouse gas emissions that would otherwise be emitted from private motor vehicles. The Council is looking to build on the successful transition to a fully contracted service in New Plymouth, to gradually improve levels of service for commuters and the transport disadvantaged in Taranaki's largest urban area. The Council will also continue to monitor and review its current trial services in rural Taranaki.

The taxi-based Total Mobility service which provides a 50% discount on taxi fares for those with a permanent disability continues to be a significant component of the Council's passenger transport budgets. The Council has made operational improvements to the Total Mobility Scheme in Taranaki that increased efficiencies in this area. The Council will continue this work. However, while the Council fully supports the need for such a scheme, it considers that the responsibility for funding the scheme should not lie with the ratepayers but instead should be met by central government. It therefore intends to explore the options for alternative providers.

Likely increases in commercial port activity and in water-based recreational use of the port area over coming years will mean an on-going need to monitor and review the Council's navigation safety, oil spill response and harbour safety management policies.

THE TARANAKI REGION

KEY FACTORS AND INFLUENCES

HAZARD MANAGEMENT

Taranaki faces risks from a number of hazards including flooding, earthquake, volcanic eruption and high winds. The Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) Group – a joint committee made up of representatives of the region's three district councils and the Taranaki Regional Council – has developed effective systems and processes to deal with emergencies.

Goals in the area of civil defence emergency management are to increase community awareness, understanding and participation in civil defence emergency management; reduce the risks from hazards to Taranaki; enhance Taranaki's capability to manage emergencies and enhance Taranaki's capability to recover from disasters.

The CDEM Group administered by the Council maintains in a constant state of readiness through monitoring and through on going community awareness raising and training, to deal to emergencies if and when they arise.

The Council will continue to maintain and improve its river control and flood protection schemes in the Waitara and Lower Waiwhakaiti.

The long-term effects of climate change such as increasing rainfall intensities, storm frequencies and sea level rise will be considered as part of the Council's ongoing work in the area of hazard management.

RECREATION, CULTURE AND HERITAGE

The Council has proceeded in the last few years with development of Tupare and Hollard Gardens – both assets of regional significance. The Council has also assisted with the planning for refurbishment and redevelopment work at Pukeiti.

These initiatives have been very well received by the public. With Tupare and Hollard Gardens which are owned by the Council, the Council has developed a point of difference with enhancements of heritage and amenity values. The Council will continue its role in this area to provide high quality recreation, heritage and amenity facilities of regional significance for the enjoyment of local residents and to meet the expectations of increasingly sophisticated visitor and tourism markets.

REGIONAL REPRESENTATION, ADVOCACY AND INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

Regional advocacy – making representations on behalf of Taranaki and promoting the interests of the regional community – has always been a high priority of the Council. This is expected to continue into the future. Working with people to achieve the Council's goals and targets is one of the Council's strengths and the Council anticipates that its programmes of public information transfer will intensify. The Council will keep abreast of changes in technology that will enable it to produce and disseminate high quality information in the most efficient and effective way.

The Council's revenue, financing and investment policies are influenced by a wide range of economic and financial conditions. These are difficult to forecast with certainty. The Council will continue to exercise prudent financial management in accordance with statutory requirements and best practice, in responding to the needs of the community.



The Council currently holds a 100% shareholding in the ownership of Port Taranaki Ltd. This reflects the very important role that the port plays in the region. The Council applies dividends derived from port earnings to offset general rates thus reducing the burden of rates for all Taranaki ratepayers. But this is not the main reason that the Council owns Port Taranaki on behalf of the community. Port Taranaki is an integral part of the region's transport infrastructure and is an asset of major strategic value facilitating the movement of goods into and out of the region and the country. It is New Zealand's second largest export port by volume and fourth largest by value. It is the deepest export port on New Zealand's west coast and closest to Australia.

Port Taranaki provides services to Taranaki's main export industries – primary production, dairy and meat processing, oil and gas, chemicals and engineering – which are key drivers of the regional economy. Growing container traffic means that the port is having an increasing effect across all import/export industries in Taranaki.

In its analysis of the economic impact of Port Taranaki undertaken in 2007, Business and Economic Research Ltd (BERL) calculated that the direct economic impact of Port Taranaki through its own and port-related activities is a contribution of \$604 million to output, \$290 million to GDP and the employment of 1,485 full time equivalents. This rises even further if indirect and induced effects are considered. BERL noted that the value of the port also lies in the fact that it acts as an 'enabler', facilitating business activity throughout the region for those industries that use its services. Put into a regional context, Port Taranaki is a key participant in activities that account for 43% of Taranaki's GDP and a third of its employment.

The Council notes that both financially and strategically Port Taranaki is a major asset that will have an important role to play in the future economic development of the region. These considerations remain at the forefront of the Council's thinking about the future of the port. The Council looks forward to working with a range of parties to progress Port Taranaki Ltd for the future benefit of the Taranaki region.