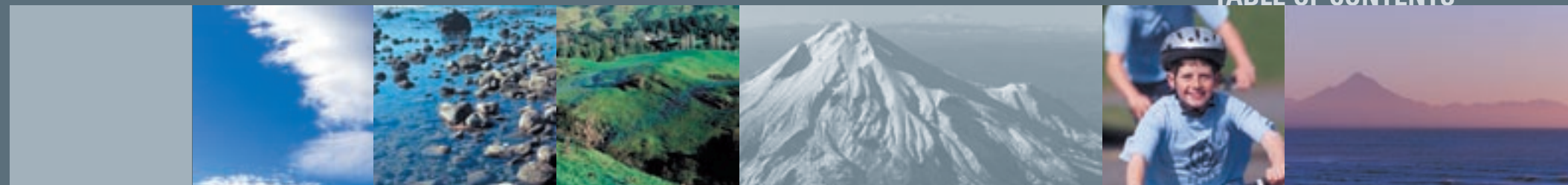
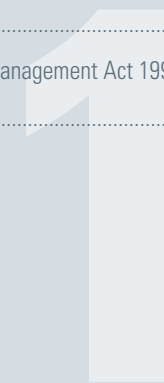


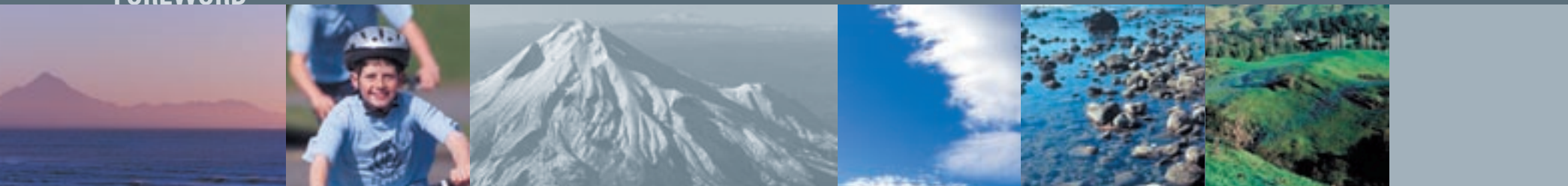
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FOREWORD



The Taranaki Regional Council is pleased to present its *2003/2004 Annual Plan*. This *Plan* summarises the Council's proposals and programmes for the forthcoming year, working from specific objectives and activities, to then indicate how much will be spent on each activity and from where those funds will be sourced. Over the last thirteen years the Council has concentrated on performing its functions with a focus on continuous improvement and being effective. That effort has placed us in a sound operational and financial position.

In May 2001, the Council adopted a *Long-Term Financial Strategy* for the decade ahead. This plan for 2003/2004 is almost entirely consistent with that *Strategy* with only a couple of significant exceptions. The key assumptions underpinning the *Strategy* were that, first there would be no significant changes in the legislation which directs the Council's activities, and second, there would be no significant changes in the levels of any activity.

There have been significant changes to the Council's underpinning legislation. The key change has been the enactment of a totally new local government statute bringing in a host of changes to existing operating methods and new requirements on the Council. Over the next period, the Council is obliged to engage a detailed public process to determine *community outcomes* and prepare a *Long-Term Council Community Plan*. These, along with other requirements will result in significant new expenditure from rates.

There have also been other changes to legislation such as the new *Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002* that will change the delivery of these services in Taranaki in the future. At present, it is uncertain how these changes will impact on the Council's financial plans. For the purposes of this *Annual Plan*, it has been assumed that the current levels of service and expenditure will be carried forward into 2003/2004.

In terms of changes in activities or activity levels, several are proposed for the forthcoming year. First, the Council is proposing a greater level of support for the good work of the Taranaki Tree Trust. The Trust reviewed its operations last year and the Council has agreed that there are benefits to the work of both organisations if the Council provides annual grant funding to the

Trust in addition to the administrative services that have been provided in the past. The sum of \$30,000 per annum is proposed.

Second, the Council is proposing to make \$50,000 available to work in association with the district councils of the region to promote waste minimisation. A regional waste strategy, in preparation, is likely to recommend this action, which pilot trials have indicated to be beneficial.

Third, and of greatest financial significance, is a proposed increase in funding for disabled persons' passenger transport services. Demand for these services continues to grow at double-digit rates. The Council continues to be concerned at the growth in expenditure for this service and the use of rates for funding it, but recognises that the needs of these people are real and basic to quality of life.

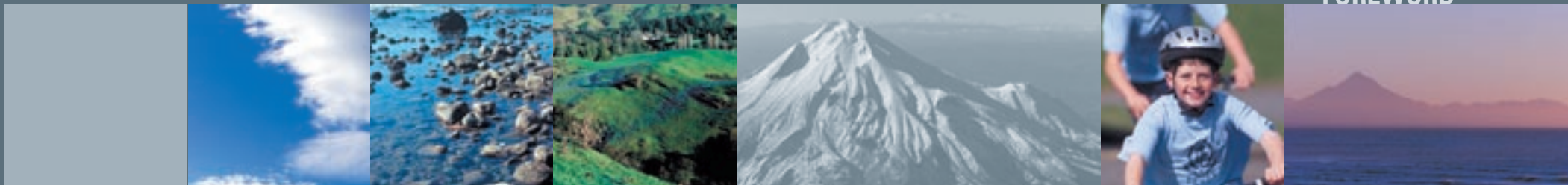
Without responding to the above-described changes, the Council would have confidently met its long-term objective of no change to general rates for the forthcoming year. With those inclusions, however, a small increase in rate take of \$70,841 is proposed. The increase in disabled persons' transport funding is equal to this amount.

The Council plans to continue to have no public debt for 2003/2004.

Another significant proposed activity level change is in land management services where dramatic increases are proposed to the number of riparian and other plans produced during the year. Previous investments in technology and training are giving rise to major productivity improvement. No budget increases are involved.



David Walter, Chairman (left) and Basil Chamberlain, Chief Executive



The only other proposed activity level change of significance is in respect of a component of regional land transport planning and safety. For 2003/04 the Council has resolved to cease providing regional road safety coordination because of changes required by the Land Transport Safety Authority in the delivering of its community programme.

This *Annual Plan* is a transitional document as the Council moves from operating under the old local government legislation to the new. Readers will see some changes from the content of previous plans to comply with transitional requirements.

The annual planning process provides an important opportunity for ratepayers and residents to examine and provide views on the Council's proposed activities in the forthcoming financial year, prior to the Council committing itself to a programme.

There were sixteen submissions on the draft of this *Annual 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 2003/04 arising from the public consultation process.

The Council has worked hard to listen to the community and to put in place efficient and effective programmes which will benefit the region. The focus has been on our future as well as our present needs. With this *Annual Plan* the Taranaki Regional Council is satisfied that it is in a position to carry on the work of this, and previous Councils, in a professional and efficient manner.

This *Annual Plan* was adopted on 2 July 2003.

David Walther
Chairman

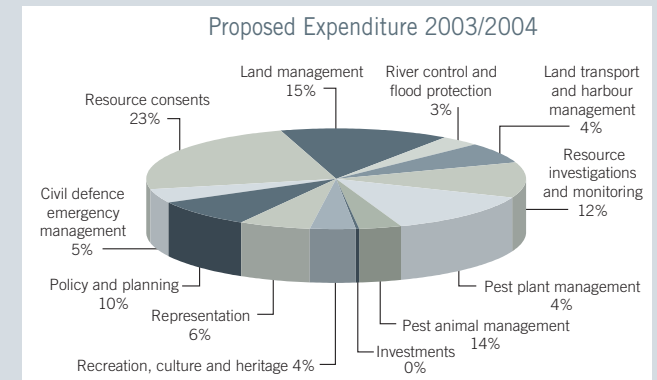
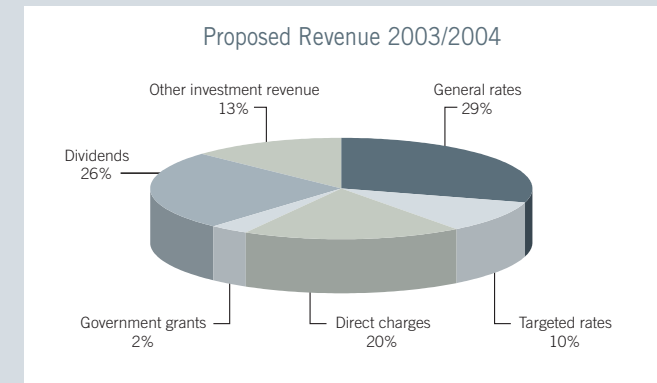
Basil Chamberlain
Chief Executive

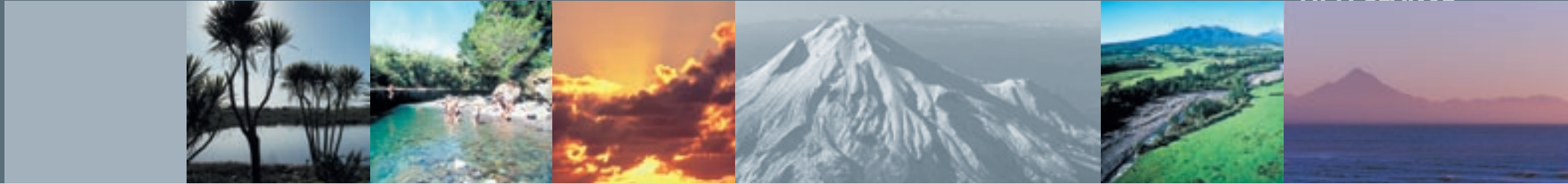
AT A GLANCE



In 2003/2004 the Taranaki Regional Council's key plans are to:

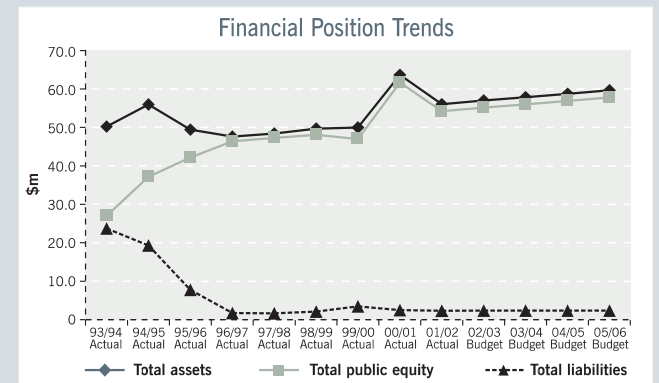
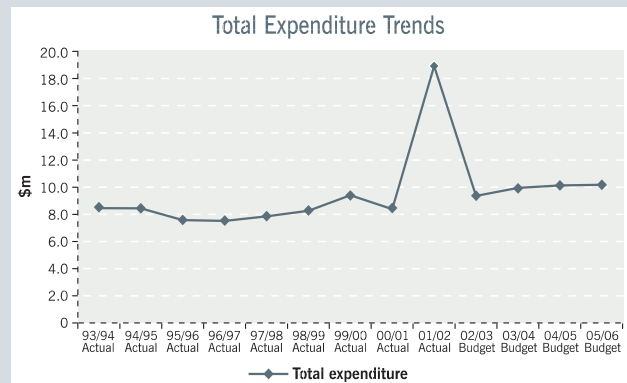
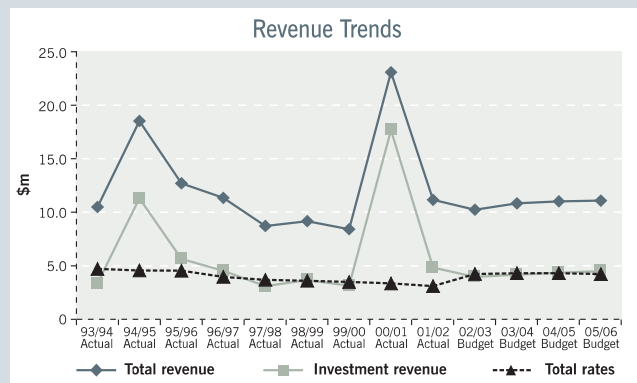
- Complete the preparation and adoption of the Council's first *Long-Term Council Community Plan* prior to 1 July 2004.
- Process all consent applications for the use of air, land, water and coastal resources effectively and efficiently.
- Ensure compliance of all granted consents through appropriate monitoring and enforcement, including the completion of approximately 110 tailored compliance monitoring programmes and approximately 3,000 industrial and agricultural inspections.
- Respond to all notified pollution incidents within four hours of receipt, instigating appropriate control, clean up and enforcement procedures.
- Administer and implement the *Taranaki Regional Oil Spill Response Plan* as agreed with the Maritime Safety Authority.
- Provide sustainable land management planning services by supporting existing plan holders and generating new plans to cover approximately 15,000 hectares of farmland and 1,000 kilometres of riparian management. Liaise with the 800 existing plan holders.
- Facilitate the protection of regionally significant wetlands.
- Provide administrative and financial support to the Taranaki Tree Trust.
- Maintain the flood control schemes on the Waitara and Waiwhakaiho rivers to the established standards as per the adopted asset management plans. Provide advice and minor works for river control purposes throughout the region.
- Undertake a range of resource investigations to improve resource management information and decisions.
- Develop and implement a waste management programme for Taranaki.
- Provide increased funding assistance to disabled persons' transport services in the main urban areas of Taranaki.
- Provide harbourmaster and harbour warden services for Port Taranaki to implement relevant harbour bylaws and regulations.
- Complete the preparation and commence the implementation of the asset management plans for the Council's regional gardens.





- Continue the implementation of the pest animal and pest plant management strategies, including the extension of the self-help possum control programme to another 12,000 hectares.
- Administer the Civil Defence Emergency Management Group and implement the changes arising from the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002.
- Monitor rainfall and river levels and issue flood warnings when necessary in accordance with the *Flood Event Standard Operating Procedure*.
- Facilitate environmental education in schools and provide information through the Puke Ariki regional museum and library.

- Provide, on a cost-recovery basis, approximately 120,000 plants for land stabilisation and water protection programmes
- Maximise the returns from the Council's investments in Westgate Transport Limited, property and treasury instruments.
- Maintain a nil external public debt position.



COUNCILLORS



Your Councillors, with assistance from Council staff, prepared this *Annual Plan*. The Taranaki Regional Council has ten representatives elected by the community through local body elections every three years.



David Walter
Chairman
Stratford



Tom Cloke
New Plymouth



David Lean
New Plymouth



Barry Marsh
New Plymouth



Claire Stewart
New Plymouth



Roger Maxwell
Deputy Chairman
North Taranaki



Ian Armstrong
South Taranaki



David MacLeod
South Taranaki



Neil Walker
South Taranaki



Donald McIntyre
North Taranaki

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Our 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.

In fulfilling this mission, the Council engages in a wide range of activities for the Taranaki community as shown in the following diagram.

