

# Purongo Putaiao

ISSUE 9 | December 2011

## Welcome

Kia ora and welcome to the final edition of the Northland Regional Council panui for 2011.

In this issue, we highlight two documents that we want your feedback on. We are proposing changes to the Navigation Safety Bylaw and to the Regional Land Transport Plan. Both have extended consultation periods over the summer so now is the chance to have your say.

While not covered in this issue, the regional council is also asking Ruakaka residents for feedback on the possible reintroduction of a public bus service – find out more about the survey at [www.nrc.govt.nz/ruakakasurvey](http://www.nrc.govt.nz/ruakakasurvey)

After much discussion, Kaitiāia's public bus service will continue for now under a new regime between the regional council and CBEC. However, passenger numbers need to increase for the service to remain viable long-term – so I encourage Kaitiāia residents to get out there and use the bus.

During November, the regional council lost one of its longest standing staff members when Peter Joynt of Ruāwai passed away at the age of 73. Peter was a well respected and liked member of staff who be sadly missed. I would like personally extend my condolences to his family for their loss.

Finally, as the year draws to a close, I wish you all a pleasant and safe summer break.



*Craig Brown*  
Craig Brown  
Chairman

**Kei roto**

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## Feedback invited on public transport plan

A new plan – which will provide a strategic blueprint for the region's public transport for the next six years – has been released for public comment.

John Bain, Chairman of the regional council's Regional Transport Committee, says the Draft Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP) 2011-2017 is a long-term plan that looks at how public transport services are delivered in Northland.

"Legally we're required to produce this plan because we both administer – and rate for – Whāngārei's public bus service 'CityLink' and the regional council also administers the Total Mobility Scheme, which gives the disabled and elderly access to discounted taxi trips."

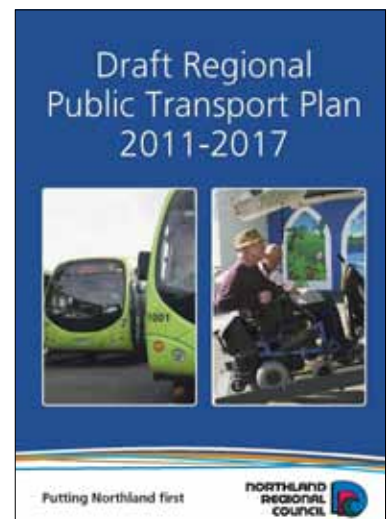
Councillor Bain says both CityLink and Total Mobility have been successful and popular with Whāngārei's urban users.

"CityLink alone now carries almost 300,000 passengers annually; three-and-a-half times the 80,000 its predecessor did when it began operating in 2000."

He says among the challenges in coming years will be how to maintain an affordable, quality service while continuing to grow patronage.

"The plan proposes investigating ways of improving user experience, including public transport information and ticketing options."

However, Councillor Bain says the plan also recognises that providing access to public transport in other parts of Northland is of equal – if not greater – importance.



It also acknowledges that achieving this poses a real challenge because so many of our communities are relatively small, rural-based and essentially car dependent.

Councillor Bain says the plan proposes helping those with a disability by not only maintaining the Total Mobility Scheme, but also by looking for opportunities to expand it to areas outside of Whāngārei.

"It also recognises the other public transport services that already exist elsewhere in the region and provides guidance on how their operators can try to gain subsidies to help reduce their costs."

**Continued on P2**

# Purongo Putaiao

## Feedback invited on public transport plan *continued*

### *Continued from P1*

He says the regional council is running an extended public consultation period for the draft plan, with people able to make submissions until 3pm on Monday 16 January.

“This longer-than-usual period is to make sure as many people as possible can have

their say on this important document and also to take into account the upcoming Christmas/New Year break.”

Input from the public will help shape the public transport plan before it is finalised. It is expected that a final plan for the region’s public transport will be adopted in February 2012.

## READ THE PLAN

The Draft Regional Public Transport plan, and a summary document, are on the Northland Regional Council website at [www.nrc.govt.nz/publictransportplan](http://www.nrc.govt.nz/publictransportplan) Printed copies are available from regional council offices and public libraries.

## Busabout Kaitāia fans urged to ‘use it or lose it’



Far North residents are being encouraged to use the ‘Busabout Kaitāia’ community bus service as often as they can in a bid to secure possible future funding from central and local government.

The service has been operated on a limited budget by the Kaitāia-based Community Business and Environment Centre since June 2009, but with few regular passengers had been facing the prospect of imminent closure without outside funding.

Its operators recently secured \$70,000 of limited funding from the Northland Regional Council and the New Zealand Transport Agency (\$35,000 each) and in October Busabout Kaitāia began

operating as a joint CBEC/regional council venture.

It currently operates daily worker and shopper runs along three routes to and from Kaitāia via Ahipara, Pukenui or Mangōnui, as well as a separate route offering regular week day trips to Kaitāia’s new multimillion dollar Pak N Save supermarket in North Rd.

Sharlene Selkirk, the regional council’s Public Passenger Transport Officer, says the latest funding will expire at the end of June next year and is basically buying a few months of extra time for the service to give it time to raise passenger numbers.

The funding will be paid out each month in the form of a subsidy for each passenger carried – rather than a simple one-off lump sum grant – and is basically buying a few months of extra time for the service to give it time to raise passenger numbers.

“It’s basically a ‘use it or lose it’ situation,” Sharlene explains. “Some trips are carrying very few, if any, passengers which is obviously not sustainable in the long term.”

She says if the service manages to get its regular passenger numbers up, it will hopefully improve the economic viability of the service enough to attract further possible funding from the regional council and NZTA from July next year.

“Realistically to achieve this, we need to grow patronage from the current low levels to a more sustainable seven or eight passengers per trip.”

Sharlene says Kaitāia people are effectively being asked to commit to supporting the service more regularly if they want to see it continue.

“It would be a great shame if Kaitāia and the Far North were to lose this service, especially given the terrific hard work and enthusiasm CBEC has already put in to it.”

## Navigation safety – have your say



Northlanders are being asked for feedback on proposed bylaw changes designed to make our harbours and estuaries safer and reflect changing recreational use of them.

The public will have until Friday 03 February next year to comment on the proposed changes to the Northland Regional Council's Navigation Safety Bylaw.

The council's Ōpua-based Regional Harbourmaster, Jim Lyle, says the longer-than-usual consultation period is designed to ensure that both local residents – and those who regularly visit our coastal areas over the summer break – have plenty of time to have their say.

Mr Lyle says the proposed changes will incorporate safety improvements and reflect changing maritime recreational activities.

"Maritime incidents over the past several years have been analysed and the information gathered has led to the proposal to amend or introduce a number of bylaw clauses to improve safety," he says.

"The bylaw is also being updated to include changes in maritime recreational activities and the effects these have on other users of our waters and coastal communities."

He says some procedural changes are also proposed where these are needed, as a result of incidents and feedback received from various users and user groups.

Some of the changes being proposed include:

- tightened requirements for life jackets
- new or altered areas designated for high-speed activities
- removal of some existing ski lanes
- restrictions on the transfer of mooring licenses, and
- an increased emphasis on mooring maintenance.

"We're a region of water users and coastal communities and I'm keen for everyone who uses the marine environment to have their say on the proposal," Mr Lyle says.

### HOW TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK

A summary of the main changes proposed in the Draft Navigation Safety Bylaw 2012 – along with a detailed comparison with the current bylaws – is available from the council's website at [www.nrc.govt.nz/draftnavbylaw](http://www.nrc.govt.nz/draftnavbylaw)

Information is also available by phoning the regional council on 0800 002 004.

Hearings to consider the public submissions will be held in late February.



## Tribute to Peter Joynt

Peter Joynt, well-known Kaipara community member and long standing council employee, sadly passed away on Friday 11 November aged 73 years.

Throughout nearly three decades of working in biosecurity with local government, Peter's expertise has played a major role in Northland's battle against invasive plants.

Peter started at Ōtamatea County Council in 1983, and joined Northland Regional Council when local government was reorganised in the late 1980's.

After resigning from full-time employment in 2008, Peter continued to work part-time managing a project that is helping to turn the tide in tackling the invasive Manchurian wild rice.

Outside of work Peter was heavily involved with the Ruāwai community as the local Lions president and member of school boards and local clubs.

Peter will be greatly missed by council staff, his family and communities alike.



The 55 Northland students who attended the recent 2011 Northland Regional Council Youth Summit.

## Northland youth help protect our coastline

Fifty-five students from throughout Northland gathered recently for the 2011 Northland Regional Council Youth Summit in Whāngārei.

The 16th annual summit saw students discuss coastal environmental issues and what they could do to make a difference.

The day-long workshop brought together Year Seven and Eight students from 18 Northland schools, including four students from Kaipara, 32 from Whāngārei and 19 from the Far North.

The students developed action plans to help sort out local sustainable

management challenges such as river and beach water quality and coastal rubbish management.

Northland Regional Council Education Officer Susan Botting says it's encouraging to see Northland students taking an active interest in protecting and preserving their local marine environment.

"The work of these students makes a real contribution to the health of Northland's estuaries, harbours and coastlines. That's important for all Northlanders".

## Further information

If you wish to discuss anything raised in this newsletter, please contact:



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## NRC offices to close for Xmas, New Year

All Northland Regional Council offices will be closed from 2pm Friday 23 December until the morning of Wednesday 4 January for the Christmas-New Year holiday break.

The council's 24/7 freephone Environmental Hotline (0800 504 639) will still be available for people to report environmental or maritime incidents.

Maritime, environmental response, Civil Defence and hydrological staff will remain on-call during the break and the

council's annual summer swimming water quality monitoring programme will also continue. Results are posted weekly on the council's website at [www.nrc.govt.nz/swimming](http://www.nrc.govt.nz/swimming)

Regional council offices around the region will re-open on the morning of Wednesday 4 January.

Councillors, management and staff wish all Northlanders – and visitors to the region – a merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year.