

Foreword

A word from the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

The 10 year period this Community Plan covers – and in particular the next several years – is poised to be among the most exciting and challenging our region has faced in decades.

Together we must negotiate a host of issues from the impacts of global problems like the deepening world economic crisis to a raft of locally generated environmental, infrastructural and other matters.

The document you're reading now is a draft that effectively sets the Northland Regional Council on the path it – and the community it represents - will follow until 2019 as it tackles these issues, albeit with regular reviews along the way.

This Draft is your opportunity to influence what we are planning to do over the next 10 years and how it will be funded, including through your rates contributions.

The Northland Regional Council has identified the sustainable growth and development of Northland as a key priority over the next 10 years. While this Draft takes a longer term view until 2019, it also has a strong focus on the next three years – the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2012.

Current indications are that for much of this time – and certainly the next 12 months or so – Northland (and New Zealand) will remain firmly in the grip of the global economic crisis that has developed in recent months.

Council will be keeping a close eye on events as they unfold, in particular the impact of the crisis on the revenue streams from our investments and our resulting ability to fund the infrastructural and other developments our community wants.

An ongoing and extensive across-the-board review of the way the Northland Regional Council operates over the past 12 months has seen a revamp of the Council's political arm and Committee structures and an internal staffing restructure.

These changes have led to improved internal operating efficiencies and mean the Council is well placed to responsively address growing public concerns in New Zealand over the amounts people are being asked to pay in rates.



In a similar vein, the Council is proposing to transfer its majority shareholding in the Northland Port Corporation to a new Infrastructure Development Agency. This will offer a number of financial benefits, including increasing our ability to raise money to finance future infrastructure projects, without altering our investment risk profile.

These and other measures outlined in this Draft represent Council's determination to 'cut our cloth' - ensuring that our rates are kept as low as possible, but that non-negotiable bottom lines designed to protect our environment are enforced and that much needed infrastructure is allowed for.

Over the next decade, Council expects to continue to fund its operations via a roughly even split between rates, income from investments and fees and charges.

With one or two exceptions – the reasons for which are detailed in this Draft – your Council intends to hold annual rates increases at, or close to, the rate of inflation for the next decade.

The Council expects to collect about \$13.5 million in rates (incl GST) over the next 12 months with that annual figure rising to about \$17.1 million (incl GST) in 10 years time.

At about \$153 on average (including GST, but excluding targeted river rates) Northland Regional Council rates will be significantly less than all other local authorities in the region for the 2009/10 year, a situation expected to continue over the life of this plan.

However, this Draft also gives Northlanders the opportunity to let us know whether they also wish to fund some new projects which would add only a small amount to the average rates bill this year. These include:

- A \$12.83 (incl GST) annual rate levied across the Whāngārei District to help fund the public bus service in that area;
- A new rate of \$8.56 (incl GST) per rateable property that would help fund the provision of rescue helicopter services in the region.

Other key issues, intended actions and projects identified as priorities for the Northland region over the next 10 years can be found on pages 17 to 20 and include:

- Development of a Regional Growth Programme
- Future river management
- Sustainable Water Allocation Plan
- A new Council-Controlled Organisation.

As well as looking forward, this Draft also includes updates (see pages 15 to 16) to let you know the current state of play with a number of previously-approved Council projects/initiatives. These include:

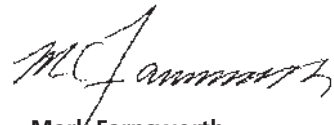
- The Northland Events Centre & other recreational facilities in Northland
- River management
- The Marsden Point rail link designation
- Hātea River maintenance and dredging
- Broadband.

Given Northlanders high expectations for their environment, we will continue to undertake a range of environmental management activities – including monitoring – over the life of this Plan.

Climate change is one of the key environmental issues facing our region over the next decade and we have already made significant efforts to ensure that mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change is an integral part of day to day Council operations. These efforts will continue.

We will also strive to further strengthen our relationship with the region's three District Councils to ensure that collectively we achieve the best outcomes for the people we represent.

We urge you to comment on this Draft. A submission form can be found on page 13 and submissions can be made until 3.00pm on Friday 8 May 2009.



Mark Farnsworth
Chairman



Ken Paterson
Chief Executive Officer

Welcome...

Welcome to Northland Regional Council's Draft Long Term Council Community Plan

The Local Government Act 2002 made changes to the way Councils engage, plan and report to their communities. The legislation is based on a philosophy that effective, responsible, responsive and accountable local government is fundamental to achieving the long term well-being of communities. The Act provides greater scope for community participation in determining what local authorities do and how they do it. Central to this philosophy is the requirement to adopt a Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP).

This LTCCP, made up of Volumes 1 and 2, complies with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 to have a Statement of Proposal.

The title "Long Term Council Community Plan" is a long-winded term, so from this point on the document you are reading will be referred to as Northland's "Community Plan".

During 2005, the Northland Regional Council and the Far North, Kaipara and Whāngārei District Councils, decided to undertake a joint process to identify regional community outcomes for Northland. Community outcomes describe what the people of the Northland region value, and what they would like the region to be like in the future. More information on community outcomes can be found in the "Community Outcomes" section of this plan starting on page 47.

Being regional community outcomes, they cannot be achieved by the Northland Regional Council alone. The Council will continue to work with a range of other organisations including government departments, industry and community groups, Māori, private enterprise and the region's three territorial authorities to achieve community outcomes.

The activities that the Council intends to undertake in the future to help achieve regional community outcomes are detailed in the "Council Activities" section of this plan starting on page 111.

What is a Community Plan?

Under the Local Government Act 2002, Northland Regional Council is required to produce, once every three years, a Community Plan covering the next 10 years.

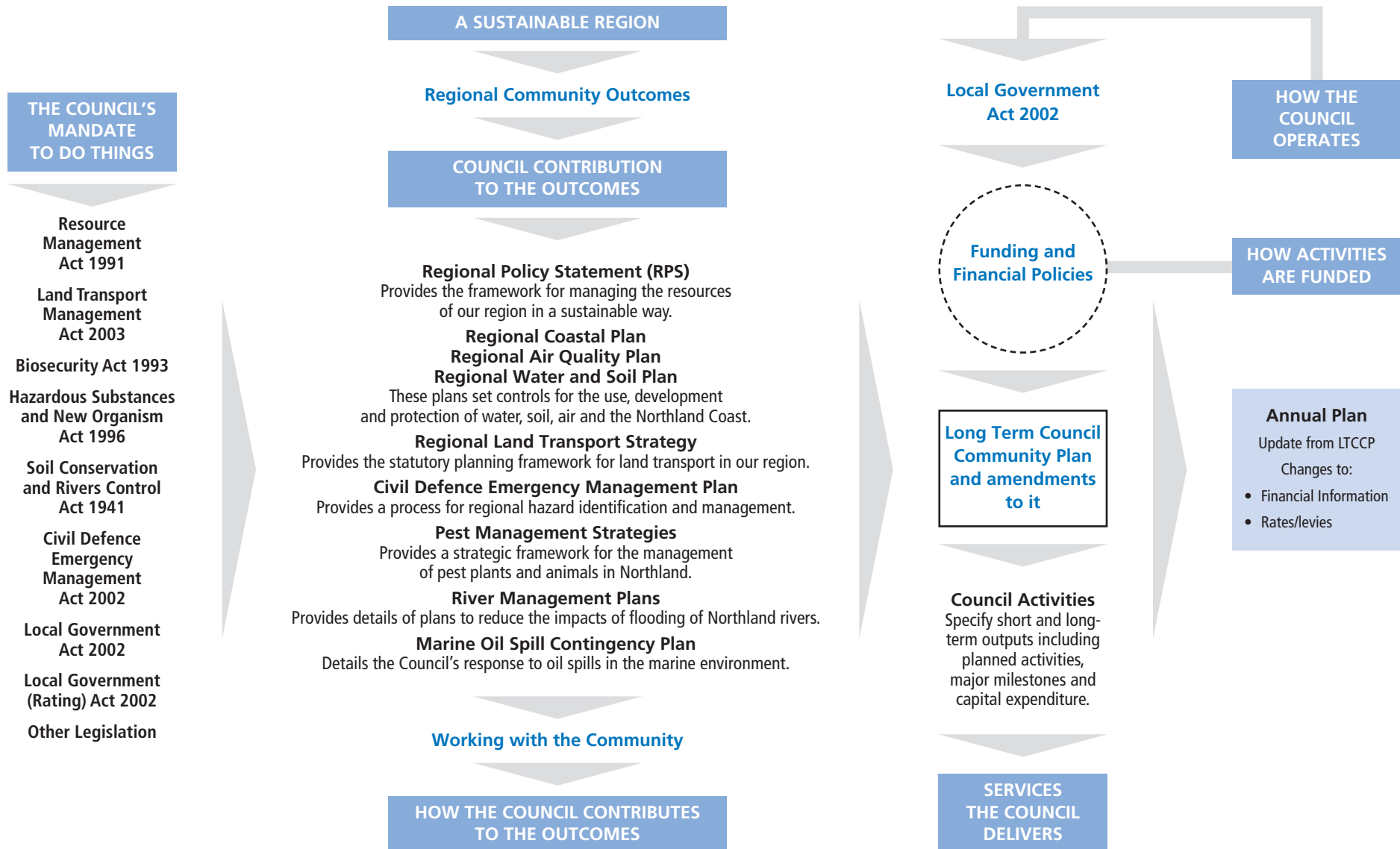
As the name suggests, a Community Plan is a document put together by the Regional Council and the community which sets the strategic direction for the Council. The following diagram shows the major components of the Community Plan and highlights the links between regional community outcomes, Council activities, as well as the partnership approach to achieving the community outcomes. The end result is a document that outlines Northlanders' expectations (regional community outcomes) and shows how the Regional Council will work with the community and other organisations to achieve these.

The Community Plan must be reviewed and evaluated once every three years, and the community outcomes contained in the document must be reviewed and evaluated once every six years to ensure that the changing needs of Northlanders are reflected in future plans. The Council intends to update existing regional community outcomes during 2010/2011 for inclusion in the next LTCCP in 2012.

The Council will produce an Annual Plan in the years in between LTCCPs which will provide an update on how the region is progressing and include any changes that may occur along the way.

THE DOCUMENT YOU ARE READING IS THE DRAFT NORTHLAND COMMUNITY PLAN.

Council Planning Process



About this Draft Community Plan

What is the difference between the Draft Community Plan and last year's Draft Annual Plan?

The main difference is that the Community Plan is an all encompassing document that includes:

- Community outcomes identified with the help of Northlanders for the region;
- Indicators that measure progress the community has made since the last LTCCP in achieving regional outcomes;
- Indications of how the Council currently works in partnership with other groups and organisations;
- The activities that the Council will undertake to help achieve community outcomes; and
- Council Policies in line with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002.

The Draft Community Plan has been provided in two volumes to make it easier for you to find the information that is of most interest to you.

Volume One includes information on:

- Regional community outcomes and how progress has been monitored;
- The priorities for Northland over the next 10 years for each community outcome; and
- The groups of activities that the Council will undertake to contribute to the achievement of regional community outcomes.

Volume Two includes:

- The Council's funding, financial and management policies; and
- Comprehensive financial information for the 10 year period covered by the Plan.

Members of the public requesting a copy of the Draft Community Plan will be sent Volume One. A copy of Volume Two, containing detailed financial information and Council Policies will only be sent if specifically requested.

Copies of the Summary and both volumes of the Northland Community Plan can be found on the Council's website www.nrc.govt.nz/ltccp

The Summary, Volume One and Two combined are available on CD.

Why should I be interested in the Community Plan?

Input from residents is crucial to developing the Community Plan and to developing Northland's future...

You may want to know about a particular Regional Council activity...

You may want to know about your rates and how they are decided...

You may want to know about Northland's community outcomes...

You may want to know about what is being planned by the Regional Council for your region...

Keep reading!

Draft Community Plan process and timeline

There is very little difference between the Draft Annual Plan and the Draft Community Plan process.

8 April 2009: The Draft Community Plan is publicly notified.

8 April 2009: Volumes One and Two of the Draft Community Plan will be made available at all Council offices and the Council website for people to read and make submissions. A detailed summary will also be sent to organisations and individuals currently on the Council's Community Plan mailing list.

Early April 2009: The summary document about the Draft Community Plan will be distributed to households in the Northland region. People will be able to make a submission, or request a full copy of both volumes of the Draft Community Plan if they would like to. Both the summary and the full plan are available on the Council's website www.nrc.govt.nz/ltccp

8 May 2009: The four-week consultation period ends. People who wish to make a submission and have their say on the Draft Community Plan, must have done so by this date.

21 to 25 May 2009: Submission hearings will be held for people who wish to present their submissions in person to the Chairman and Councillors. Final decisions will be made about what is to be included in the Northland Community Plan 2009-2019 following the hearings and consideration of all submissions received.

June 2009: The Council will adopt the Northland Community Plan 2009-2019 at its June Council meeting.

July 2009: The final Northland Community Plan comprised of both volumes, will be available on the Council's website www.nrc.govt.nz/ltccp

What is a submission?

A submission is a letter, fax, email or any other form of written communication, which outlines your opinion on a particular matter in the Draft Northland Community Plan 2009-2019. Please use the submission form on page 13 to make your submission.

The 'New Issues - Northland Community Plan 2009-2019' section (page 17) and the 'New Rates' section (page 225) and the 'Statements of Proposal' section (page 227), outline what the Council considers to be the important issues for the region.

Submissions on these sections will be very helpful to the Chairman and Councillors when making decisions for inclusion in the final plan.

Guidelines on how to write your submission

- To make your submission clear to the Council, it needs to be concise and to the point — background information can be important but the main points you are trying to get across should be highlighted in your submission.
- You need to make clear what you are supporting or opposing and why, and refer to the appropriate corresponding page numbers in the plan.
- If the topic in your submission is not in the plan now and you want to suggest a new project or expenditure, then please indicate what items currently in the plan you think are a lower priority.
- Requests for new projects or expenditure should include how you suggest these projects should be funded – general rates, targeted rates, user fees etc.
- Please read all the information available before making your submission. The plan will guide you to the relevant page numbers and website references with extra information.

Important to note:

1. The Regional Community Outcomes were identified by the community during a consultation process done by all Northland councils in 2005. As community selected outcomes they cannot be changed by the Northland Regional Council. Submissions that request their modification will have no effect on how the outcomes appear in the final plan. An opportunity to update the community outcomes will be available in a public consultation process that will be held in 2010.
2. The Council's focus has been broadened through the Local Government Act 2002 to include economic, social and cultural well-being as well as environmental well-being. Council believes that economic prosperity and appropriate infrastructure will provide the tools required to look after Northland's environment in the best possible way. This broadened focus is reflected in the Draft Plan.

Post your submission to:

Draft Northland Community Plan 2009-2019 Submission
Northland Regional Council
Freepost 139690
Private Bag 9021, Whāngārei Mail Centre
Whāngārei 0148

Fax your submission to:

09 438 0012

E-mail your submission to:

mailroom@nrc.govt.nz

Submissions should reach the Council by 3.00pm, 8 May 2009.

Submissions received after 3.00pm are classified as a "late submission". Late submissions are considered at the Councillors' discretion.

It is anticipated that the hearing of submissions will be held 21 to 25 May 2009.

In accordance with S583 (l)(k) Local Government Act 2002 and subject to the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, all submissions on this plan or policies will be made available to the public.



Submission Form

Name:

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Name of Organisation (if applicable):

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Address:

.....

..... Postcode:

Business Hours Telephone:

After Hours Telephone:

Please write your comments in the space provided and forward your submission to:

Draft Northland Community Plan 2009-2019 Submission
Northland Regional Council
Freepost 139690
Private Bag 9021, Whāngārei Mail Centre
Whāngārei 0148
Fax: 09 438 0012
E-mail: mailroom@nrc.govt.nz

Submissions should reach the Council by 3.00pm, 8 May 2009.

Would you like to attend a hearing to tell Councillors more about the matters you have raised in your written submission?

Please tick

NO I do not wish to be heard in support of my submission

YES I do wish to be heard in support of my submission

It is anticipated the hearing of submissions will be held 21 to 25 May 2009.

I support / oppose

..... on page/s

Because:

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I suggest:

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(use further sheets if necessary)

Signature: Date:

Submissions presented to Council are considered public documents subject to the provisions of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987. Those wishing to include any information of a private nature in a submission should first discuss this with Local Government Project Manager.

Update on existing Council projects

Since the last Northland Community Plan in 2006 and subsequent Annual Plans, the Council has previously consulted and made decisions on a variety of projects. Progress has been made in a number of areas of interest to Northlanders. These include:

Northland Events Centre

The Northland Regional Council has agreed to fund a \$13 million stake in a multi-purpose Regional Events Centre on the current Okara Park site in Whāngārei. The Whāngārei District Council will contribute \$3 million, with an independently appointed Trust to manage the facility. As detailed in the original Events Centre proposal, the amount that Whāngārei ratepayers contribute to the Events Centre will decrease from \$33.75 to \$28.13 from 1 July 2009. Contributions from Kaipara and Far North districts will remain the same at \$5.63. All figures are GST inclusive.

A contract with Argon Construction was finalised in early 2009 and it is anticipated that construction of the Events Centre will begin early to mid 2009. The Whāngārei District Council has agreed to be responsible (together with an independent trust), for the Centre's future maintenance and operation. For more information on the Events Centre project, visit the Council's website www.nrc.govt.nz/eventscentre

Other recreational facilities in Northland

The Regional Council has agreed, subject to certain criteria being met, to contribute \$700,000 to the new 50m swimming pool complex in Dargaville and \$500,000 to the Far North District Council to help fund a \$2 million multi-purpose building at the Kerikeri Sports Complex. These contributions will be made from the Council's Recreational Facilities Rate established in 2006.

River management

Following allocation of \$1.6M of funding in its 2008 Annual Plan, the Council continues to work on the development (or updating) of flood risk reduction plans for the top 27 rivers in Northland that carry the highest level of flood risk. Nineteen of the rivers are in the Far North District, six in the Whāngārei District and two in the Kaipara. It is anticipated that the plans will be completed by the end of 2010. More information can be found in the Land and Rivers Group of Activities section on pages 189 to 200 of this plan.

Dredging of the Hātea River Channel

A 4.5km stretch of the Hātea Channel from Port Whāngārei into the Town Basin marina channel has been dredged to remove around 10,000 cubic metres of built-up silt, providing a safer and deeper passage for boats. In addition, the buoys, beacons, mooring systems and lights in the area have also been upgraded. \$400,000 was allocated in the Council's 2008-2009 budget to complete this work, funded by a combination of ratepayer funds and user charges. Check the Council's news archives for the full story www.nrc.govt.nz/hateariver

Marsden Point Rail Link Designation

Following the Council's decision to establish a 50/50 joint venture with ONTRACK, the process has commenced to formally designate the land required for the Marsden Point rail link corridor by ONTRACK. The corridor is a 20 km section of rail line from the main North Auckland line at Oakleigh to the deep water port at Marsden Point. The main objective of the joint venture will be to legally protect the land needed for the rail link corridor from incompatible subdivision and development until the link is eventually built by central government. More information can be found in the projects section of the Council's website www.nrc.govt.nz/marsdenrail

Northland Regional Council Community Trust (Enterprise Northland)

Following a review of the Northland Regional Council Community Trust in 2008, the key focus for the Trust will be to work across all Northland industry sectors to implement the Regional Growth Programme. This requires Enterprise Northland, the District Councils, Northland Intersectoral Forum (NIF) the Regional Council and other key stakeholders to work together to ensure that all parties are jointly contributing to the success of Northland. More information can be found on the Trust on pages 230 to 231 of this plan.

Broadband

The Northland Regional Council has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with broadcast and telecommunications company Kordia™, Northpower and Top Energy as the first step towards scoping, developing, building and operating a fibre-optic based telecommunications infrastructure in Northland. It is anticipated that the MOU will lead to the forming of a Council Organisation between these organisations as equal partners to further develop this project. This group and other key stakeholders will work together on the possible development of a world class publicly owned broadband network, although it is likely that this project will require central government funding before it can proceed. Funding applications were made to the previous Labour Government's "Broadband Investment Fund". However, this fund has been recently disbanded and the Council is awaiting details of what funding priority the new National Government is going to allocate to broadband projects.

Any future updates on this project will be published on the Council's website www.nrc.govt.nz/broadband

Infrastructure Development Agency

The Council amended its Community Plan in 2007 to establish an Infrastructure Development Agency (IDA) as a Council-Controlled Organisation. The IDA is a separate legal entity whose primary focus is to facilitate infrastructure development projects, including the sourcing of internal and/or external funds to contribute to the region's infrastructure needs. The Council is currently seeking submissions on a proposal to transfer its majority shareholding in the Northland Port Corporation (NZ) Limited into the IDA. Full details of this Statement of Proposal can be found on pages 227 to 228 of this plan. The constitution for the IDA is currently being formalised and updated details will be included in the final Northland Community Plan in June 2009.

Shared services

The Council continues to investigate options and benefits of increased levels of shared services with the three Northland district councils and external agencies where appropriate.

Single planning framework for Northland

An investigation is underway into the feasibility of integrating Regional Council and District Council plans into a single resource management planning document for Northland enabling wider implementation of shared services. There are a number of possible options for combining some or all parts of each Council's existing plans into a single document. Unified planning will result in a more simple, streamlined process for the public, whilst retaining each Council's individual planning requirements. Once the feasibility study is complete in late 2009, the Council will consider its recommendations. This will include a review of the existing resource management plans of all Northland councils.

New issues - Northland Community Plan 2009-2019

This section highlights the key new issues, intended actions and projects identified as priorities for the Northland Region.

The future of Northland – platforms for sustainable growth

As outlined in the Annual Plan 2008-2009, the Council has commenced work on the development of a Regional Growth Programme for Northland. The result will be an action plan to develop the region to its full potential using a sustainable development approach. The programme will consider social, environmental and cultural factors alongside economic infrastructure, and growth opportunities. Once developed, it is anticipated that the Regional Council will work closely with its economic development agency, Enterprise Northland, Northland's three district councils, Northland Intersectoral Forum (NIF), iwi and other key stakeholders to implement, monitor and review the action plan over time to ensure maximum effectiveness and advantage for Northlanders is achieved. From 1 July 2010, the Council is intending to fund the Regional Growth Programme from a new targeted rate. The establishment of this new rate will be subject to further public consultation as part of the 2010-2011 Annual Plan process. More information of the Growth Programme can be found in the Platforms for Growth section on pages 21 to 22 and the Regional Economic Development Group of Activities section on pages 137 to 146 of this Plan.

Rescue Helicopter Services in Northland

The Council is intending to establish a new rate to contribute funding to the Northland Emergency Services Trust (NEST). NEST is a non-profit Charitable Trust that provides an emergency helicopter/air ambulance service to all Northlanders. Due to the high cost of fundraising and the loss of a major sponsor, NEST must now secure a more stable funding base if the current level of service is to be continued. While there are ongoing central government and district health board reviews, there is no evidence of an imminent increase in funding to ensure continued rescue services for Northland.

Therefore, the Council is seeking public submissions on its intention to introduce a new targeted rate of \$8.56 (GST inclusive) to fund a \$675,000 per annum contribution to NEST. In terms of this plan, the choice for Northlanders is to support this new rate and provide NEST with some level of funding certainty, or not support this new rate and accept that the current level of emergency services may not be able to be maintained if alternative funding cannot be secured.

More information on the new Rescue Helicopter Services Rate can be found on page 225 of this Plan.

New Transport Rate for the Whāngārei District

From 1 July 2009, the Northland Regional Council intends to take over the funding of the Whāngārei public transport services from the Whāngārei District Council. Under the Land Transport Act 2003, the Regional Council is already responsible for administering this service. This would see the administration and funding of the service carried out by one organisation (the Regional Council) resulting in increased levels of efficiency and accountability. The introduction of the new bus service provider on 1 July 2008 resulted in the first fare increase in six years. Transferring the responsibility from Whāngārei District Council to the Regional Council will largely have a nil effect on ratepayers. The Regional Council intends to introduce a new fixed charge of \$12.83 (including GST) per rating unit in Whāngārei district to further subsidise the increased costs of providing bus passenger transport services. In terms of this plan, the choice for Whāngārei district ratepayers is to support the new rate and maintain the new bus service, or not support the new rate and face increased fares and/or reduction of bus services in Whāngārei. Further information can be found on page 226 of this plan.

River management

The Council intends to complete flood risk reduction plans for the top 27 rivers in Northland identified as carrying the highest level of flood risk by June 2010. Detailed action plans will then be developed and it is anticipated that implementation will begin by 30 June 2011. Specific catchment works detailed in the completed flood risk reduction plans will be undertaken during the remaining term of this plan. Works will be funded from a further targeted rate levied on those properties that benefit from the works. No specific catchment works or setting of new rates will occur without full consultation with affected communities. In terms of this plan, the choice for Northlanders is to support the Council's ongoing efforts to mitigate future flood risk and damage to property or to accept the risks associated with the status quo. More information on Hazard Management and River Management can be found in the Lands and Rivers Group of Activities section on pages 189 to 200 of this Plan.

Ongoing dredging of the Hātea River Channel

During 2008-2009, Whāngārei district ratepayers paid an additional \$2.82 per rating unit to fund the dredging of the Hātea Channel and the upgrade of navigation aids. From 1 July 2009, it is intended to reduce this rate to \$1.69 (including GST) per rating unit to collect \$56,250 (including GST) each year to pay into a Hātea Dredging Reserve. This reserve would be used to help fund ongoing maintenance dredging of the Hātea Channel, disposal of dredged spoil material, and an annual hydrographic survey to maintain the established depth. It is recommended that the Hātea Reserve is capped at \$225,000.

In terms of this plan, the choice for Whāngārei District ratepayers is to support the Council's intention to collect \$50,000 to pay into the Hātea Dredging Reserve to be used to maintain the channel depth or not establish the reserve and wait until the channel depth reduces, at which time the Council could consider funding options and consult on these as part of the relevant Annual Plan. Further information on this project can be found in the Financial Highlights section on pages 104 to 106 of this Plan.

Other Recreational Facilities Rate

In recognition of the need to rationalise and prioritise services, the Council intends to stop collecting the other recreational facilities portion of the Recreational Facilities Rate from 1 July 2009. Ratepayers across Northland currently pay \$5.63 (including GST) for the development of recreational facilities in the region. In terms of this plan, the choice for Northlanders is to accept the Council's recommendation to cease collecting this rate, or to continue to fund the development of other recreational facilities in Northland at the current level, or at another level that the community feels is appropriate.

Sustainable Water Allocation Plan

To ensure the Northland's water resources are managed in a sustainable way and not over allocated, the Council intends to update and implement a more rigorous water allocation regime. This project involves firstly reviewing and improving our knowledge and understanding of Northland's water resources. In order to protect the environment and provide users with more certainty and legal security of supply, the Council will then revise its water allocation policy and set appropriate limits where needed. As water is an essential resource for almost all productive activity, the revised water allocation regime will be consistent with the actions detailed in the Regional Growth Programme. Implementing a sustainable water allocation regime is also consistent with current government initiatives signalled in the Sustainable Water Programme of Action. It is intended that the Sustainable Water Allocation Regime be reviewed and implemented over a five year period commencing in the 2009-2010 financial year. Initially \$123,750 (including GST) has been budgeted to target known areas where there is significant risk of over allocation. Furthermore it is intended that a component of the extra expenditure on this project will be funded from service fees and charges on water take consent holders. In terms of this plan, the choice for Northlanders is to support the Council's intention to update and implement a more rigorous water allocation regime in order to protect our water resources and provide certainty and security of supply, or not support and accept the risks of possible over-allocation and the possible future restrictions on water use.

Stock truck effluent disposal facilities

In order to reduce the amount of stock effluent spillage on the regions roads, the Council intends to provide two additional stock truck effluent disposal sites at an estimated cost of \$101,250 (including GST). Provision of these sites will not only reduce the incidence of illegal discharges, but will also improve road safety and promote public and environmental health. It is intended that one new facility be established in the Kaipara district and one in the Far North district. The respective district council's are investigating suitable sites and it is anticipated that this process will be completed by 30 June 2010 and construction take place in the 2010-2011 financial year. Whāngārei District Council is currently in the process of constructing a disposal facility in the Whāngārei District. In terms of this plan, the choice for Northlanders is to support the Council's intention to spend \$101,250 on two stock truck effluent disposal facilities, support only one facility at a cost of \$50,625 in either the Kaipara or Far North district, or not support the Council spending any money in this area.

Climate change

Central government has determined that climate change is an issue of national significance that will impact on Northland. The Council will respond to government directions by ensuring that mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change is an integral part of day to day Council operations. The Council currently utilises a combination of adaptation and mitigation approaches to deal with climate change in terms of adapting where changes in climate are already having significant effect, and taking action to mitigate future effects where possible and/or appropriate. The Council uses risk management assessment procedures to help prepare the community to adapt to known climate change, and takes climate change considerations into account when making decisions. The Council has a number of initiatives that are aligned with central government's Climate Change Work Programme some of which are detailed in the "Creating a Sustainable Organisation" section on pages 93 to 95 of this plan. Further references to climate change are contained throughout this 10 year plan as these considerations permeate all Council activities and processes and are not easily isolated.

Implications for Northland – Royal Commission of Inquiry on Auckland Governance

The Royal Commission for Auckland is expected to deliver its findings in March 2009.

Given the potential implications for Northland of the Commission's findings, the Northland Regional Council intends to form a working group of Councillors subsequent to the decision's release.

This group will examine the decision and make recommendations on an appropriate Council response/s.

Statements of Proposal

The Council is also seeking public submissions on the following Statements of Proposal:

Transfer of Northland Port Corporation Shares to the Infrastructure Development Agency

As a result of the Council's ongoing focus on improving operational efficiency and effectiveness, it is proposed to transfer the Council's majority shareholding in the Northland Port Corporation to the 100% Council owned and operated Infrastructure Development Agency (IDA). The transfer is financially beneficial to the Council (and therefore to ratepayers), and is therefore considered to be an opportunity to be taken advantage of in the current adverse economic climate. Transferring the shares would enable the IDA to benefit from the imputation credits attached to dividends received which the Council is currently unable to do. The transfer will also provide other opportunities such as increasing the Council's ability to raise money to finance future infrastructure projects for the benefit of all Northlanders. The transfer does not alter the Council's investment risk profile. In terms of this plan, the choice for Northlanders is to support the transfer of shares to the IDA and provide the opportunity for reduced costs associated with any future infrastructure projects the Council undertakes, or face potentially higher costs or reduced infrastructure in the future. A full Statement of Proposal on the transfer of ownership of Northland Port Corporation Shares can be found on pages 227 to 228 of this Plan.

New Council-Controlled Organisation (CCO) – Shared Services

The Council is proposing to establish a new CCO in partnership with a number of other regional councils in New Zealand. The Councils are working together for the purpose of collaboratively developing and maintaining a software application suite for use by those regional councils in the delivery of their activities. The suite has been called IRIS – Integrated Regional Information Software. The Council has a legal requirement to meet its statutory obligations and cannot do this without appropriate software. Therefore, in terms of this plan, the choice for Northlanders is to support the Council's proposal to develop and maintain software with other regional councils, or face the higher costs and maintenance uncertainties of developing the software alone.

Section 56 of the Local Government Act 2002 requires Council's to consult using the special consultative procedure when establishing a CCO. Consequently, all partner Councils are including identical information on these proposals in their Community Plans for the period 2009-2019. A full Statement of Proposal on the new IRIS Council-Controlled Organisation can be found on page 229 of this Plan.

You can make a submission on these Statements of Proposal using the submission form on page 13 of this plan. Submissions must reach the Council by 3.00pm, 8 May 2009.

The future of Northland

Platforms for sustainable growth and development

Northland Regional Council has identified the sustainable growth and development of the Northland region as a priority. Achieving a successful future for Northland will require a common understanding of where we are now and where we want to be as a region.

The Council has identified four main platforms for growth being; Economic Opportunities, Integrated Infrastructure, Regional Leadership and Environmental Management. These platforms for growth have been used throughout the Northland Community Plan to show how the Council's activities are being aligned to them. They will also be used as cornerstones for the development of the Regional Growth Programme for Northland.

The ability to converge economic growth, enhanced infrastructure, democratic leadership and environment protection will determine whether Northland has a prosperous future or continues with poor productivity and a low wage economy. Infrastructure, education, skills attraction, innovation, productivity and inward investment are all key areas that must be addressed with a focused approach and a clear direction, set objectives, timelines and measurable outcomes.

Economic opportunities

It is important to recognise that initially economic growth will be achieved through advancing Northland's main sectors which include; Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, Tourism and Hospitality, Manufacturing, Building, Retail and Distribution and the Marine Industry. The development of improved infrastructure will pave the way for other sectors to consider investing in Northland.

Increased productivity is a critical component for economic growth and in exploring ways of adding value to existing businesses. Consideration will be given to the development of leadership skills and the means of making informed decisions, an increased propensity to take calculated risks, striving for excellence, enhanced capacity and capability in the labour force/skilled labour force and investment in research and development.

Contribution to Growth Platforms	
✓ Economy	✓ Infrastructure
✓ Leadership	✓ Environment

Integrated infrastructure

The provision of improved basic infrastructure is a priority. This is much more than just roads and includes wider transportation including Rail and the Port, Broadband, Energy (both generation and availability), Water and Sewerage. The required investment in infrastructure is significant and often the benefits are not realised until many years later. This level of investment is beyond the financial resources of Northland and the Council and will require central government and private sector funding.

Regional leadership

There is a recognition that whilst there has been a considerable amount of work done already by stakeholders, there is a pressing need to provide regional leadership to ensure that the regional governance and planning frameworks are supportive and aligned to the agreed vision for Northland's future.

Environmental management

The Regional Council is responsible for the sustainable management of Northland's treasured environmental assets; this is at the heart of what we do. However, there should be no doubt that the long-term sustainable protection of this environment requires the Council to successfully manage the balance between these four critical building blocks. The Council will be ensuring that its decision-making is future focused.

What is known, is that the economic transformation of Northland requires everyone to pull together. It needs a committed collective approach with better co-ordination; this will require a change in focus from individual agendas to **putting Northland first**. Evidence from around New Zealand and globally, shows that partnership at a local and regional government level is essential to successfully achieve economic transformation.

Northland Regional Council will continue to work closely with a wide range of stakeholders including Northland Intersectoral Forum (NIF), district councils, Iwi, industry sectors, communities, the Chamber of Commerce, the Northland Regional Council Community Trust (trading as Enterprise Northland), central government and other key regional organisations.

Growth in Auckland will increase pressure on Northland's infrastructure and economy, and needs to be planned for. The opportunities provided by Auckland's growth also need to be identified. Similarly, growth in Whāngārei and the Bay of Islands will provide opportunities to the surrounding areas.

Northland's economic programme will grow out of our unique industrial structure, economic assets and limitations and business culture. We will understand Northland's economic strengths and weaknesses and how best to exploit the hand we have been dealt. The importance of partnership and collaboration cannot be stressed too highly and in ***putting Northland first*** we can achieve a prosperous future for Northlanders.